

RIPPLES OF ASSISTANCE

HELPING HIM & HER HERE & THERE

Firstly, I would like to thank you very much for awarding us this financial assistance. It really means a great deal to me and my family. As is most likely normal in these situations after the huge turmoil of my divorce, I suddenly found myself living without my children. The family unit I had been part of for more than a decade was no more.

My children now live with their mother, a full-time student, more than 750 miles away; a 12-hour drive away. I am intimately familiar with it having driven it once a month for the last 4 years. My brother thinks I am crazy for doing the drive so much (and my car has what he calls "Pluto" miles on it), but it is the only way I get to see my children. So I drive 24 hours in order to see them for about 48 hours and I happily do it. My ex-wife does not have the time to drive here due to her hectic school schedule.

My brother used to ask me "why don't you just fly?" but now knows the answer; I simply cannot afford it. Because my ex-wife was a stay-at-home mom for several years, she needed to go to school in order to get a good job and so, as per our divorce agreement, I provide several thousand dollars of financial support every month. She is working hard to complete her education and is close to graduating with a Bachelor's degree and will then enroll in a master's program.

The summer then is the only time I can see my children for more than a weekend, but since I cannot take a month off work that means camp and here in Los Alamos, at least for us, the only choice is Y-Camp. This will be third year all of my kids have attended and they greatly look forward to it every year.

This year, however, due to some unanticipated medical and dental expenses for the kids and a new job, I was not able to set aside enough money to cover the entire cost of the camp. Although my ex-wife should pay half the cost of camp, I have taken care of it for the last two years and when I asked her to contribute this time she was not able to help. For them not to be able to attend camp this summer was going to be a major issue for the whole family. I would not have been able to see them for a longer period of time, they would miss re-connecting with their friends here and my ex's planned summer school sessions would be in jeopardy.

The financial assistance that you have provided is really a wonderful and generous gift for us all. I get to see my children for several weeks, they get to have another summer camp experience full of trips, swimming and lots of other fun activities, my ex-wife gets to enroll in a summer-only high-intensity multiple credit unit with homework due every night, which she could not do when the kids are with her. The whole family benefits both individually and together.

Thank you again for this generous gift.
Sincerely,
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