

Redacted Email Exhibit Packet

Public-Facing Download Companion for Blog Post

Prepared from user-provided email strings and source excerpts

Redaction & Use Note

This public-facing packet was prepared from user-provided email strings and text exhibits. It is not intended to be a complete legal archive. It preserves the substance and tone of the exchanges while redacting direct contact details and sensitive identifiers. Redactions are textual placeholders, not hidden overlays, so the redacted content is not present underneath the PDF. Names used in the public narrative are retained where necessary for context. Minor contact details, private email addresses, phone numbers, precise addresses, URLs, case numbers, and some provider-specific details have been replaced with bracketed descriptions.

Redaction key: [EMAIL REDACTED], [PHONE REDACTED], [URL REDACTED], [CASE NUMBER REDACTED], [ADDRESS REDACTED], [MEDICAL FACILITY REDACTED], [DATE/CASE REDACTED], and similar bracketed phrases indicate material intentionally removed for public circulation.

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Editorial Context

This packet intentionally retains the imperfect tone of the documented exchanges. Russ and Melissa do not always sound calm. Some replies are blunt, sarcastic, angry, or openly weary. That tone is part of the record. It should not be sanitized away, because it shows the accumulated effect of years of unpaid or delayed support, disputed communication, sports logistics, medical crises, resisted tools, and emotional fallout. The goal is not to portray Russ and Melissa as perfect. The goal is to show the documented pattern and the human cost of carrying it.

Important distinction: tone is not the same thing as cause. A sharp email does not erase the underlying conduct it responds to. A sarcastic line does not erase missed support. Frustration does not erase refused communication tools, missed appointments, disputed medical care, or court orders. This packet should be read with that distinction in mind.

Exhibit 1 - Family Wizard Offered to Remove Excuses

Date/period: August 30, 2022

Theme: Communication, access, documentation, refusal of structured co-parenting tool

Source note: Unanswered email from Melissa to Mark

From: Melissa
To: Mark
Subject: Communication from Melissa

Hi Mark,

I wanted to touch base, and reiterate how critical it is that we use The Family Wizard.

For years now, I have communicated via email, and there are months that you don't respond via email at all. I don't know if you've even read some emails. It's mostly radio silence. And I hear back every now and then about complaints and excuses about how you didn't get information from me.

This Wizard is the tool to take away any excuses and miscommunication. It holds all information in one spot: medical, email, calendar, expenses, everything.

It is actually more work on my end, but I'm happy to do it to make the situation better. I'm being solution based. You told me you'd use it only if we paid for it. I offered to pay, and you backed out.

So, this seems like you are refusing this tool, so that you can keep complaining and have excuses as to why you won't coparent with me. I hope that's not the case, but that's how it comes across when you simply refuse it.

If you refuse this service, I don't want to hear any more complaining about you not having "access." I'm providing the information in an accessible tool. You are choosing to deny access.

Texting is for emergencies or short exchange updates. Texting is not for communicating future plans. We tried the notebook you mentioned. The court said go electronic because I kept sending notebooks, and they were disappearing.

Thank you,
Melissa

Why it matters: This is one of the cleanest records that access was offered, cost was removed as an excuse, and Mark's refusal became part of the communication problem. Melissa's tone is firm but still solution-focused.

Exhibit 2 - The App That Removed the Excuses

Date/period: November 28, 2022

Theme: Family Wizard refusal, accountability, tamper-proof records, calendars, expenses

Source note: Russ email to Mark and Tori

From: Russ
To: Mark and Tori
Subject: Nathan and Liam

There are few things that need to be said. Feels like a broken record, but we keep going round and round like one when it comes to matters with you.

We have set up a way to communicate with the best interest of the boys in mind. First you say you will do it only if we pay for it. We agreed to pay for it. Then you say you can't get it to work. Then you later say that you aren't going to do it because you "don't want to."

Then I look at the Family Wizard website again. It plainly talks about reducing conflict through amicable communication. It also talks about accountable co-parenting by being a reliable source of

truth with on-the-record documentation, an audit trail to request expenses and schedule changes that are time-stamped and organized for easy review and accepted by family courts.

Considering all of the above and your track record. I can absolutely see why you would refuse.

You don't want accountability. You want to have excuses. You want to blame others. Abusive people want to operate in the dark. They don't want a record of it.

You don't want a clear calendar. You want excuses as to why you don't do what a good parent does. You want to tell everyone that you didn't know or were told last minute.

You are not interested in amicable co-parenting. You constantly show combat parenting style.

Good thing the boys have Melissa and I. We make sure they don't go without regardless of your lack of and refusal to be financially responsible. We make sure we cover the gap so they don't feel it.

Why it matters: Russ's tone is harsh and accusatory here. That tone should not be sanitized. It reflects exhaustion after repeated refusal of a tool that would have documented calendars, expenses, and communication.

Exhibit 3 - 'Not Blood' and the Business of Consequences

Date/period: August 17-19, 2022

Theme: Relationship deterioration, step-parent role, boys' lived experience, Mark's 'none of your business' response

Source note: Russ warning email; Mark response; Russ reply

From: Russ
To: Mark and Tori
Subject: Boys

Melissa and I would like for you both to be a healthy part of their lives. We keep trying to find ways to make that happen for the boys.

The boys have long been saying they don't want to go with either of you on Mark's time. Melissa tries to mitigate the issues they have going with you. When she tries, she is met with contempt and a response that everything is great there and she must be making them not want to come.

This past visit Nate flat tells Melissa he isn't going. She encourages him to go. He gives the reasons he doesn't want to go. She again encourages him to go and/or call you. He tries. Over and over.

His response to you not answering texts and calls: "He's never not on his phone. He's ignoring me."

The boys are also abundantly aware that they "have no choice" when it comes to going to your home. At the same time, they are also absolutely aware that they are merely an option when it comes to you taking them on your time or your involvement in what is important to them.

A kiss demanded is not a kiss received.

From: Mark
To: Russ

This is between Melissa and our boys, not you. This is none of your business. Please stop lying. I am close to my boys.

From: Russ
To: Mark

Unfortunately, Mr. Stephens, you make it my business on a regular basis. When you refuse to be a responsible dad, I pay the bill. When you don't take them on your time, I am covering for you. When coaches call me because of your antics, calls, showing up late, or refusing to attend parent meetings, I am apologizing for Nate and asking them not to judge Nate because of you.

You have made it my business over and over in almost every way imaginable: emotional, financial, educational, and standing in the gap when you are a no-show.

Why it matters: This exchange shows both the boys' growing awareness and Russ's blunt, weary response. Mark tries to reduce family to blood. Russ responds by listing the actual labor and consequences.

Exhibit 4 - Back Child Support, Domains, and 'Name Defamation'

Date/period: March 2020

Theme: Child support, business/domain ownership contradictions, reputation management

Source note: Tori/Mark demand; Russ response

From: Tori and/or Mark
To: Russ
Subject: Back child support / name defamation

We are trying our best to make payments toward paying off the back child support owed. Please remove these notices you placed on our domain names. This does not just affect Mark but our whole family.

From: Russ
To: Tori and Mark

I am confused. This domain name is not registered to you or Mark at a domain registrar. Under oath and penalty of perjury Mark swore that he had nothing to do with the business/domain other than helping a friend out, or any other business for that matter. This was at a time it was to determine his income.

Now you are saying Mark and yourself own that business and the domain as well as others that he supposedly never owned or was part of?

This is in direct conflict with what Mark has stated under oath in sworn declarations.

Defamation is the tarnishing of one's good name by false statements. What in the screenshot is untrue, degrading, or slanderous? It appears to only say to contact his support officer and gives contact numbers.

I will also remind you that support is due on the first of each month, not the 15th, 18th, or whenever Mark feels like paying it.

From: Tori and/or Mark
To: Russ

Russ, cut the BS. You and I both know you go to great lengths to try to get under Mark's skin. Please take down that notice regarding Mark owing back child support. You, through your business, have targeted Mark to create a bad name for him. Take it down. Knock it off.

Why it matters: This is a classic image-control thread. The complaint is framed as reputational harm, but Russ points back to records, child support, and conflicting ownership/income claims.

Exhibit 5 - Basketball Information Sent, Then Answered a Month Late

Date/period: October-November 2020

Theme: Sports communication, unread email, shifting burden back to texting

Source note: Russ and Tori/Mark basketball email

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori
Subject: Nate Basketball

From Coach: Trying to see who will be able to play basketball this Saturday at 11am. Please let me know ASAP so I can round up players.

[Nearly one month later]

From: Tori/Mark
To: Russ

Hi Russ,
Sorry just saw this email. Sure he can attend. I will let the coach know as well.

From: Russ
To: Tori/Mark

This game day was nearly a month ago.

From: Tori/Mark
To: Russ

Oh jeez. I apologize. I saw the date wrong. Feel free to send text that gets to me sooner.

Why it matters: Information was sent. The issue was that it was not read until after it expired. The response then shifted the burden back to Russ to use faster communication.

Exhibit 6 - Basketball Worked When They Chose to Engage

Date/period: March 16, 2021

Theme: Cooperative sports communication and direct coach contact

Source note: Russ and Mark/Tori basketball exchange

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori
Subject: Basketball

Here is the tourney info. Nate is one of the kids coach hasn't heard from.

From Coach: For the Centralia tournament the cost is around \$520, so budget about \$65 per kid. The Seaside tournament is about \$350, so around \$44 per kid. I still haven't heard from three kids. If you haven't confirmed yet please do soon.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ

Thanks Russ. Yes we will all be going. Thanks for the update. I will have to get us on these emails. We haven't received anything yet from the coaches directly.

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Thank you for the heads up. We will make sure to let the coach know for the time being. On these individual tournaments that are on your weekends, we will let you take care of the tournament fees directly with the coach.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ and Melissa

We contacted both coaches and will take care of it. Thanks Russ.

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Perfect. Thank you.

Why it matters: This shows communication was possible. They could contact coaches, confirm attendance, and handle fees when they chose to.

Exhibit 7 - Dedicated Email, Texting, and the 'Easy Button'

Date/period: December 2022

Theme: Communication method conflict, refusal of Family Wizard, 'not blood' objection, sports responsibility

Source note: Melissa, Mark/Tori, and Russ thread

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

Will it be okay if I pick Liam up at the basketball game tonight? I also sent a text three days ago.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

I'm glad you emailed because that's the form of communication I use. Or Family Wizard.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

Just making sure. Texts work very well and they are free.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

You requested - or rather demanded - that I set up this email just for communicating with you, and now you are passively-aggressively complaining that this email is more tedious than texting, which is not how we are supposed to communicate anyway.

You want to know what's easiest? The Family Wizard. It instantly notifies you of any changes I post in the kids' calendar or messaging. For someone who claims to like the easy button, you sure are refusing the easiest method of communication.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ

I don't want Russ to be on this. He is not family. He is not blood. Stay out of this, Russ.

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

You want to be able to avoid responsibility while demanding that the man who cares for your children when you refuse should not have any part in their care. Melissa and I are a team in every sense of the word.

Why it matters: The pattern is clear: Mark demanded a channel, complained about the channel, resisted Family Wizard, and then attacked Russ's standing rather than the substance.

Exhibit 8 - Dance Weekend: His Time, His Responsibility

Date/period: January 2023

Theme: Nathan's school dance, exchange, safety concerns, responsibility on Mark's time

Source note: Melissa, Mark/Tori, Russ follow-up

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori
Subject: Dance and Friday exchange

Nathan has a dance this Saturday night that he said he talked to you about. Here is how exchange can go, and I would like a response by Thursday night.

A. It is your time. I would encourage you to take Nathan and pick him up, and provide the money for his and his date's meals. I have already paid for dance tickets, transportation, and clothes.

OR

B. Nathan stays back with us, and we make sure he is there and picked up. But that would mean he stays back the whole weekend, as I am not doing double exchanges. I will still bring Liam Friday night.

He mentioned an after-party. I feel uneasy because I do not know details. I am not keen on house parties with limited supervision.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

I asked Nate to have you email me, not the other way around. I sent him a text requesting info on time of drop-off, contact information for his date's family, food cost, and to make sure he brings his clothes for the dance. He will not be going to the after-party. The dance ends at 11. I will be picking him up at school then.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

Thank you so much for the communication. I am glad you figured out how to get him to and from and details.

From: Russ
To: Melissa and Mark/Tori

When it is Mark's time, it is up to him to manage that time in the way he sees fit. If something takes place on his time, it is up to him to communicate if he is unwilling or unable to participate in their care and activities. We cannot attempt to anticipate Mark's responses no matter how many times he has refused inconvenient parenting tasks.

Kudos for Mark for stepping up and taking care of Nate and his needs during his time this weekend.

Why it matters: This shows Melissa offering options, Mark handling the dance, and Russ giving credit while also setting a boundary: Mark must manage his own parenting time.

Exhibit 9 - Dance Handled, Practice Missed

Date/period: January 2023

Theme: Basketball practice, traffic safety, driver education, selective response

Source note: Melissa/Mark/Russ thread after dance weekend

From: Melissa
To: Mark
Subject: Communicating

Thank you for taking Nate to and from his dance.

He was very disappointed he did not make it to his practice today. He may not get to swing up to varsity if he is not making each practice. His goal is to be a varsity player.

Nathan is wanting to start driver's education this year. It is a program in which he cannot miss at

all. It costs money to start and insurance will be expensive. Are you willing to support him in that and get him there when it is your time?

It is coming up on the end of the month. Are you planning on paying child support?

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

I called the coach. He said Nate did not lose his place and everything is fine so you are once again lying or completely misinformed. Nate came home late because of the dance you signed him up for on our weekend without asking. He was extremely tired and needed rest. I informed the coach and he was fine with it. Focus more on your own time with Nate.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

You didn't answer about traffic safety.

You can't sign up a 16-year-old for a dance. That was his desire, and I had him talk to you because it was your weekend.

He was so tired that you had him move furniture? That's weird.

As far as basketball goes, Coach stated at the parent meeting that kids who do not go to practice may get passed up for opportunities. He also said he does not want to hold a child responsible for an irresponsible parent.

I am not causing problems. I am exposing your behavior as a problem.

From: Russ
To: Melissa and Mark/Tori

The dog comparison was not about hating the dog. It was about priorities. Mark could make room in his budget for what mattered to him, while the boys' needs - sports, medical care, transportation, food, housing, school, and stability - were carried largely by Melissa and Russ.

Why it matters: Mark completed one visible task but avoided the next commitment. Melissa's tone becomes sharp because the issue is no longer theoretical; Nathan's opportunities were affected.

Exhibit 10 - Detailed Schedule and Care Transfer for Nate and Liam

Date/period: June 2023

Theme: Complex schedule, Kartini care, food plan, medication, sports logistics

Source note: Melissa, Mark/Tori, Russ thread

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori and Russ
Subject: Nate and Liam schedule

Nathan wants to do basketball camp.

Friday-Sunday: War of the Border. Nate has games and is expected to be there to help run the tournament with his teammates.

Monday-Thursday: Red Devil camp from morning to late afternoon.

Monday-Thursday: football practice after camp.

Friday: football scrimmage with early bus departure.

Liam has clinic Monday-Friday. At least one parent has to stay nearby in case of emergency pickup.

Russ and I have been splitting time - one of us with Nate, one of us with Liam. Whoever is with Liam needs to be ready with meal plan, supervision, and medication management. It is up to you how you arrange your time. Just wanted to give an early heads-up so you and Tori can figure out logistics.

Additional note: Liam has a bone scan appointment at [MEDICAL FACILITY REDACTED]. He would go straight to clinic afterward.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

Food and clinic info: here is a list of current foods he liked for at least one day: beef and veggie stew, spaghetti with meat sauce, whole cottage cheese with fruit or garbanzo beans, beef borscht, filet with rice, Simon shake, and others. He is still on the mellow plan and still needs supervision during and after meals.

Additional breakfast idea: migas. He is focusing on one food item, so I will go back to splitting the meal and serving the second half after he finishes the first half. It may lower anxiety if he sees it served in smaller portions.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

Regarding meds: I am very cautious. My process is that I check multiple times and have Russ cross-check me before sending it to you. Here are photos of the front and back of the same medication in different dosages so you know what it looks like.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

Russ gave Mark the replacement medication for the meds lost last night.

Why it matters: This is a major contradiction to any claim that Liam's care was hidden. Melissa provided dates, logistics, recipes, medication details, and supervision needs. Russ and Melissa still remained the backup system when medication was lost.

Exhibit 11 - Braces Became Urgent After a Year of Silence

Date/period: February 2022-June 2023

Theme: Orthodontic care, financial responsibility, sudden renewed interest during ARFID treatment

Source note: Melissa/Russ/Mark/Tori email chain

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori
Subject: Liam's braces

Braces are on, and Liam did well. Just a little sore. Orthodontist said to stay on top of brushing each day, at least twice a day. This is critical. He recommends a sonic toothbrush and dental floss that works with braces. If he does not brush, he can end up with scarring. He still needs accountability.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

Thanks for the update. We'll get what he needs for here as well. My twins had braces so I am very familiar with this process.

[More than a year later]

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

We called Liam's orthodontist but neither of us has been authorized to speak with them. Please sign the form for authorization so we can ask questions.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

This email was sent a year ago. It seemed it was a priority. You pushed me to get him braces, I got them once recommended by health professionals for medical reasons, I emailed you about it several times, and never received any response once it was time to be financially responsible.

Sure, when I go to his next appointment, I will give them your number or fill out necessary forms. Just out of curiosity, what questions do you have now - a year later?

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

If you are suddenly wanting to be involved in that portion of Liam's care, we can support that. We urge you to come to Liam's next appointment where they will assess him and his orthodontic progress. Hear it firsthand by being present for the appointment.

Why it matters: The braces were communicated when they began. The renewed urgency came much later, during Liam's eating-disorder treatment, raising the question of whether braces were being sought as another alternate explanation.

Exhibit 12 - Ortho Appointment: Included, Invited, Absent

Date/period: June 2023

Theme: Access versus attendance

Source note: Mark/Tori and Russ orthodontic update

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa and Russ

Liam is going to school tomorrow to pick up his things and say goodbye to classmates, but is his ortho appointment still tomorrow?

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori and Russ

Yes, same day.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa and Russ

We have decided it is unnecessary to sit in the dentist office with you both to wait for Liam's appointment to end to hear the results, so we will just speak with the dentist afterwards. Thank you for adding us to his contact info.

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Here is what the orthodontist had to say. His bottom teeth are done shifting. His top teeth are two to three months away from having braces removed once adjustments start again. His canine teeth have come down enough to start adjusting them with bands, but until Kartini Clinic is done, adjustments will not be made. They removed the upper wire to allow the canine to continue coming in without interference.

You were welcome to join the appointment just like any other appointment.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ and Melissa

Wonderful news. Thank you so much for the update.

Why it matters: Mark and Tori demanded access, were invited to attend, declined the appointment as unnecessary, and then relied on the update from the people who showed up.

Exhibit 13 - ER Tube Reinsertion: Close Enough to Come, Distant Enough to Excuse It

Date/period: May 31, 2023

Theme: OHSU ER, feeding tube, presence versus assumptions

Source note: Melissa/Russ/Mark/Tori exchange

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori and Russ
Subject: Hospital ER visit

Regarding the text: I was there in the ER over two hours, which is fast for an ER but still long enough if Mark wanted to visit. I would not have asked Liam if he wanted someone else there if you had not offered. I would not put that on Liam if I thought Mark would change his mind. Liam does not do well with last-minute changes or inconsistencies.

If I am dealing with an emergency, I will let you know and you have an open invite to come in person to get live updates from the doctor. After trying to go through the ER on my own last night, it is better for Liam if I focus on him and keeping him calm, and just update you afterwards. He really needs me to be present during those times, not on my cell.

I still have not heard back from Mark about the genetic testing we ordered. He was on board, pushed for it, and said he would pay his portion. I fronted the cost. Is he going to pay half?

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa and Russ

We saw that within fifteen minutes of our text the tube was placed fast, so we assumed that by the time Mark got there you would be done and gone. Liam was so tired because of medication last time that it did not seem like he would notice. Next time, if there is one, we will make it clearer.

Do you have a payment app to pay for the genetic testing?

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Waiting in the waiting room because he asked for us to be there and we said we would be showing Liam that we are there to support him whether we are in the room or not, whether it is our time or not, whether it is just a few minutes or hours.

We drove an hour each way to wait in the waiting room to support Liam and to support you and Mark. Him knowing he is supported regardless is what is important to him. He notices when his parents are there to support, and he notices when they are not.

Why it matters: The later context makes this even stronger: Russ and Melissa had previously driven farther to the same hospital while Liam was in Mark and Tori's care, arrived before them, and sat in the waiting room in support. The issue was willingness, not distance.

Exhibit 14 - Feeding Tube Update and the Immediate Cost of Care

Date/period: April 2023

Theme: Feeding tube, Option Care supplies, financial support, child support timing

Source note: Melissa/Tori/Russ email thread

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori
Subject: Liam tube update

Update: Feeding tube went in well. Still at the hospital, and they are pumping in nutrition. He is doing well. Process went smoothly. He will be at clinic tomorrow.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa

Oh man. Thank you for the update. So glad he is okay.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

It was an overall positive experience. Liam hardly remembers the tube being put in. They took good care of him. He is not talking much because he says the tube feels funny. I let him know you called and said maybe today he might feel up for a phone call.

The clinic referred me to a place that will supply the pump and liquid food while he is on the tube. I just made a payment today, and I will be turning those receipts in because it is above and beyond what insurance covers. Just a heads up that I will need help supporting Liam through this process. The sooner in the month I can get child support, the better.

From: Russ
To: Melissa

I can see it now. This is going to go ignored.

Why it matters: The tube made Liam's condition undeniable. Melissa still had to think immediately about costs, receipts, and child support timing. Russ's sarcastic response reflects weary expectation based on prior patterns.

Exhibit 15 - Urgent Appointment Versus Yakima Exchange

Date/period: March 2023

Theme: Urgent medical appointment, exchange location, late support, Kartini involvement

Source note: Mark/Tori, Melissa, Russ exchange

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa
Subject: Exchange this weekend

Due to Nathan's tournament all week and weekend, we will need to meet there for exchange Friday night. Obviously I will have to reschedule Liam's doctor visit this Friday as well. Let me know what day and time works. Child support payment comes on [DATE REDACTED]. It was the soonest I could make it. I apologize.

From: Melissa
To: Mark/Tori

I cannot meet there on Friday as I am working. Exchange is the usual location. Liam is here in town. Liam's scheduled doctor appointment will remain on Friday. It can't be cancelled. It is urgent. I will be there with Liam. That is why I moved around my schedule and made sure the pediatrician worked it out that you would be there, which you already confirmed. We are moving forward with that.

If you can't take Liam because you are out of town, then just confirm that by Thursday. Child support needs to be paid each month.

From: Russ

To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Melissa and I already took Friday off after you confirmed with his doctor that you would be present for Liam's urgent appointment. We will not be rescheduling this appointment. This appointment is urgent. I cancelled the trip for Nate's basketball games and Melissa took time off work and scheduled a substitute. You really need to make your son a priority.

From: Melissa

To: Mark/Tori

You also did not address whether you are willing to do counseling. The clinic said they have been leaving messages and trying to get a hold of you. That is urgent. Are you going to be involved in Liam's care?

Why it matters: The word 'obviously' is revealing. Mark treated an urgent medical appointment as movable around sports/exchange logistics, despite having previously confirmed attendance.

Exhibit 16 - Family Wizard Reminder and Selective Response

Date/period: March 2023

Theme: Kartini calendar, food journals, driver's education, selective silence

Source note: Melissa, Mark/Tori, Russ exchange

From: Melissa

To: Mark/Tori

Subject: Family Wizard Reminder

Just as a reminder, our calendar on Family Wizard is now updated with all important clinic dates and information on food journals. This is our tool we use, so if you want updates, you might reconsider using that tool. Otherwise, you can get calendar dates from the clinic directly.

Also, Nathan really wants driver's education, and I have not heard back from you about that. It would be great if you could support him in those efforts, including paying half and helping get him there on your time.

From: Mark/Tori

To: Melissa

We can support Nate in his driving school if he signs up with either of these two online options, which will eliminate most transportation issues. It is more affordable, he can work from home most of the time, and during summer week-on/week-off schedule this makes sense since he will also be in sports.

Will Liam be attending his band concert tomorrow evening?

From: Russ

To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

In short, they will only support it if it solves their transportation problem. They are not concerned about how taking drives in another city will interfere with Nate's sports schedule. They are only concerned with their schedule.

From: Melissa

To: Mark/Tori

You did not respond about Family Wizard. I find a pattern in emails that some main content is ignored, or emails are ignored altogether for months. Co-parenting is not just an option for when one feels like it, or when the more responsible step-parent is around. It is a responsibility that should be taken seriously always.

Why it matters: Mark responded to the convenience problem but ignored the accountability tool. Melissa names the pattern directly.

Exhibit 17 - Continued Weight Loss and the Flood of Alternate Explanations

Date/period: August 2023

Theme: ARFID, anxiety, weight data, alternate theories, blame dispersion

Source note: Russ email and Mark/Tori response

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori, Melissa, and business email
Subject: Continued Weight Loss

Before clinic, Liam only lost weight during summers and we could not pinpoint the cause of failure to thrive. We were searching for answers through care providers. During that time, we suspected anxiety and/or depression.

More than three years ago, we asked you to stop oversharing about what you considered dangerous foods, water, foods making a person gay, medical conspiracies, vaccines killing people, 5G causing cancer, and similar topics. The same messages both boys came home and told us about, and showed fear and anxiety over, were the same things you were posting on social media.

In family therapy, Liam told all of us that he struggles going to your home during your parenting time. He has told you many times he does not want to go. He tries to use his voice and you ignore him and blame us.

During his time in clinic, he lost weight two of the three times he was in your care. The time he did not lose weight with you was while he was on the feeding tube, and he gained at a slower rate than with us. Presently he is being weighed weekly and still only losing weight while in your care.

The data does not lie.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ

I am sure the kids' anxieties have nothing to do with changes in their lives: new parents on both sides, a house fire, moving, parents fighting, dogs dying, family moving in, grandfather dying, COVID isolation, school stress, bullying, gut health, acid reflux, vaccines, and more.

He lost weight on our time because it is summer and we allow him to go outside, jump on the trampoline, play with his friend, and go to the fair, not just float in a pool and sit on a couch.

If you truly wanted to leave no stone unturned, you would look into his gut health and additional testing.

You need to stop finger-pointing and hating us for differences in opinion.

Why it matters: Russ's email is angry and accusatory. Mark/Tori's response is also expansive and defensive. The central contrast is measurable weight data versus a flood of alternate causes.

Exhibit 18 - Fire Report Response

Date/period: November 2021

Theme: Fire report, blame-shifting, boys carrying the burden, anger after public records review

Source note: Russ email after receiving fire report

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Subject: Confirmation [NUMBER REDACTED]

Congratulations to both of you. You have once again created a situation that shows you both will lie to save yourselves and will throw the boys under the bus to protect yourselves and your agenda.

If you are confused about what I could be referring to, please know that Fire Marshal reports are public record. Considering your history, we felt it prudent to acquire the fire report to see for ourselves what took place.

The official finding described the fire as accidental. The timing raised questions for us because of the surrounding financial and legal pressure, but the report itself did not state intent.

You both said the boys were cooking alone. One version referenced hot dogs and another referenced s'mores. Both versions appeared to implicate the boys as the cause of the fire. After looking at the evidence, it appeared to us that the adults were shifting blame to protect themselves.

The worst part is that the boys could be left shouldering the burden of the home, contents, and death of the family dog.

This is not what good Christians would do. God will know you by your fruits.

Why it matters: Russ's tone is explosive. For public use, the official accidental finding should be clearly preserved, while the emotional focus should remain on the concern that children were left carrying blame.

Exhibit 19 - Temporary Protection Orders Served

Date/period: November 2023

Theme: Immediate narrative after being served, withholding accusation, CPS/court threats

Source note: Mark/Tori email forwarded by Melissa

From: Mark/Tori
To: Melissa
Subject: Liam and Nate being withheld on our weekend

Our kids and we were looking forward to our weekend together, but instead you served us papers with false allegations and withheld our children on our court-appointed weekend.

Serving papers to a family court outside the county where the parenting plan legal documents were issued, keeping our kids from communicating with us with no court-appointed changes made to the parenting plan. This will be brought before CPS and the court.

Nathan asked us to schedule his driver's school, which is at 3:00 Sunday. If he misses it, they will charge a fee. Liam and I were texting this morning and he called me last night. He planned on fixing his video game issue with me and his uncle tonight.

Now you are trying to keep them from us because you want more money and full control over our boys without my court-appointed rights as their father. That is emotional abuse and negligence on your part.

Forward note from Russ:

Received last night after Mr. Stephens was served.

Why it matters: The response to service is not compliance or concern; it is immediate reframing as withholding, money, control, and victimhood.

Exhibit 20 - No Contact Order and Social Media Side Doors

Date/period: May 2024

Theme: No contact order, social media tagging, cease and desist, later contempt finding

Source note: Russ cease-and-desist email to Mark

From: Russ
To: Mark
Subject: Cease and Desist - Violation of No Contact Order by Tagging Children on Social Media

Dear Mr. Stephens,

I am again writing to formally request that you cease and desist from tagging your children on social media platforms. This action constitutes a violation of the No Contact Order issued by the court on [DATE/CASE REDACTED].

Blocking adults from the page does not circumvent the legal ramifications of reaching out to your children via social media or other means, directly or indirectly.

The new page was recently started, with Nathan added as a friend. Based on timing and circumstances, it appears the connection could only have occurred through direct or indirect contact initiated by you or on your behalf.

The No Contact Order explicitly prohibits direct or indirect communication with the children, which includes tagging them on social media. Failure to comply may result in legal action, including enforcement of the order.

This has also been sent through attorney channels and entered into Our Family Wizard for records.

Context note: Mark later ignored the warnings and was held in contempt for this conduct.

Why it matters: This shows notice. The later contempt finding matters because it removes the 'misunderstanding' defense and shows the boundary was explained before sanctions.

Exhibit 21 - Copyright and Sponsor Logo Removal

Date/period: July 2020

Theme: Image control, removal of sponsor logo, professional boundary

Source note: Russ copyright notice to Mark/Tori

From: Russ / MY Agency
To: Mark and Tori
Subject: Copyright Infringement

Our image tracking software has tracked one of our images to your social media account. It has been altered and is in direct and clear violation of MY Agency copyright.

This image was only shared to the baseball representative for acceptance for printing and was not approved for external changes outside our office.

This material needs to be deleted forthwith.

Thank you.

Why it matters: This is not only a copyright issue. In context, it shows a pattern of erasing Russ's visible contribution while still benefiting from his involvement in the boys' activities.

Exhibit 22 - Ordinary Health Update That Worked

Date/period: January 2022

Theme: Normal communication when no accountability burden was attached

Source note: Russ and Mark/Tori exchange

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa
Subject: Nate and Liam

Nate is back in school and will be back to normal activities. He has an occasional cough and feels pretty much back to normal.

Liam has a stuffy nose, but we feel that may just be allergies as he gets those as it dries out after raining for a while. Last tested, he was negative with the same symptoms.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ and Melissa

Thank you for letting us know.

Why it matters: This shows communication channels could work when the information did not require money, follow-through, or accountability.

Exhibit 23 - The Olive Branch and the Limit of Forgiveness Language

Date/period: July 2020

Theme: Forgiveness, accountability, spiritual language, trust requiring action

Source note: Tori/Mark and Russ exchange

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ

Will you please forgive us for all wrongs we have ever said or done to offend you in any way. We do not want anything to come between our families. It is time for us all to grow into maturity. Please forgive us for our immaturity. It is not pleasing to God.

From: Russ
To: Mark/Tori and Melissa

Although we appreciate your message, forgive us if we wait to see the actions of maturity and respect from both of you moving forward. Melissa and the boys, not to mention myself, have endured a great deal of chaos and strife created by and from Mark.

Forgiveness is not the same as forgetting. Mark has acted irrationally, childish, irresponsible, and abusive on a number of levels when it comes to being a father and co-parent.

True repentance would require that a believer in Christ turn from their wicked ways.

Please be patient with us while we wait and watch for consistent and humble change in Mark's ways.

From: Tori/Mark
To: Russ and Melissa

We have closed the door to the past and are prepared to walk forward in humility, forgiveness, and kindness.

From: Russ
To: Tori/Mark and Melissa

We appreciate your message and will wait to see Mark's actions. His actions will determine what and how this goes moving forward. Not your words about it. Mark really needs to be the person addressing the trespasses, not you.

Why it matters: This is an important balanced record: Russ does not reject forgiveness, but he refuses to let forgiveness language replace accountability.

Exhibit 24 - Speakerphone, School Pickup, and Accusing Melissa of Misunderstanding

Date/period: September 2021

Theme: Alleged school checkout discussion, lying/misunderstanding, boundary around school pickups

Source note: Russ and Mark/Tori exchange

From: Russ
To: Mark and Tori

Before you claim Melissa is misunderstanding, consider that Liam had you on speakerphone. She was not listening in. She happened to walk into the room as Mark was asking Liam about checking him out of school for lunch.

I asked Liam independently to see if she heard it wrong. Liam said Dad was asking to pick me up and take me to lunch and asking about checking out with my backpack.

I find it highly unlikely that both Liam is lying and Melissa misunderstood what she heard.

Do not take Liam or Nate off campus for any reason before, during, or after school without first clearing it with Melissa. You are welcome to have lunch with the boys at the school within the cafeteria/school building if school protocols allow.

From: Mark/Tori
To: Russ and Melissa

This was the conversation via Mark: he asked Liam to lunch and Liam said you can't take me off campus. Mark said no problem, I can take lunch to you, and Liam said he likes lunch from Subway.

Mark and I do not appreciate you calling us liars. I do not appreciate your angry attitude toward us at all. You can be quite rude.

We are fully aware that we must contact you first if we ever consider taking anybody off campus and would not do so without consent.

Why it matters: This is another example of a disputed fact becoming a trust issue. Russ's tone is direct and accusatory, but the boundary he states is clear: no off-campus removal without prior approval.

Exhibit 25 - Continued Sports Inclusion Through Coach Emails

Date/period: 2021-2023

Theme: Coach emails, schedules, parent expectations, undercutting 'I didn't know'

Source note: Sports email chains summarized from user-provided strings

Summary of recurring sports email evidence:

- Coach emails were repeatedly sent to parent lists including Mark/Tori's email.
- Schedules, game changes, practice expectations, banquet information, tournament dates, summer opportunities, volunteer needs, academic eligibility reminders, and program expectations were distributed by coaches.
- Russ and Melissa also forwarded information and asked coaches for future planning details so Mark could be prepared.
- In multiple threads, Mark/Tori demonstrated that they knew how to contact coaches directly.
- Later claims of not knowing, being told last minute, or needing the children to manage communication should be weighed against the repeated inclusion of adult parent emails.

Representative language from Russ:

Nate's dad should have received the same email from you, but I am not sure what likelihood Nate will

be able to attend while on his time. Nate has decided to focus on basketball this summer. We are encouraging Nate to communicate about the schedule with all involved.

Melissa and I would like to help with adult volunteer opportunities to support the program.

Why it matters: This consolidates the repeated sports strings. It is not one missed message; it is a pattern of Mark having access to the same coach information as other parents.

Closing Note

Taken together, these exhibits support a pattern: information was provided, tools were offered, schedules were forwarded, medical updates were sent, and opportunities to participate were created. The recurring conflict was not simply communication. It was responsibility, accountability, and the record that made excuses harder to maintain.

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