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LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, March 26, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When it comes to matters of child custody in family law, understanding the distinctions between joint and sole custody is essential. Judge Paul W. Burmaster, a distinguished authority in the Family Division of the 10th Judicial District Court in Johnson County, Kansas, recently provided valuable insights into this aspect of family law.

In a recent interview, Judge Burmaster clarified the terminology surrounding custody arrangements. "Full Custody is not a term used by the courts in Kansas," he stated unequivocally. Instead, he outlined the two primary types of custody recognized by the courts: Joint Custody and Sole Custody.

"Joint Custody," Judge Burmaster explained, "is when the parties work together to decide issues of Health, Safety, and Welfare." This arrangement entails shared responsibility for major decisions impacting the child's life, such as education, religious affiliation, and healthcare.

On the other hand, "Sole Custody," Judge Burmaster continued, "is when one party makes the ultimate decisions regarding Health, Safety, and Welfare." Despite the unilateral decision-making authority conferred upon one parent in sole custody situations, Judge Burmaster emphasized that the custodial parent still has an obligation to consult with the other parent whenever possible.

Expanding on the concept of Health, Safety, and Welfare, Judge Burmaster underscored the significance of these major decisions in shaping the child's well-being. "These decisions may affect the child's life profoundly," he remarked. Examples include determining the child's school, place of worship, and healthcare provider.

Furthermore, Judge Burmaster addressed the terminology used to describe a parent's time with their child. "Visitation," he noted, "is a term that is currently not favored by Kansas courts." He explained that the term conveys a sense of transience, suggesting that the child is merely a visitor in the other parent's life. In contrast, "Parenting Time" is the preferred term utilized to delineate a parent's defined time with their child, signifying the importance and significance of this relationship.

Moreover, Judge Burmaster emphasized the role of the court in determining custody arrangements. "In Kansas, the court's primary consideration is always the best interests of the child," he stated. When making custody determinations, judges take into account various factors, including the child's age and needs, the parents' ability to cooperate, and any history of domestic violence or substance abuse.

Judge Burmaster also addressed common misconceptions regarding custody arrangements, particularly the notion of "winning" custody. "Custody is not about winning or losing," he emphasized. "It's about creating a stable and nurturing environment for the child to thrive."

In conclusion, Judge Paul Burmaster's elucidation of the differences between joint and sole custody, as well as the terminology surrounding parenting time, provides invaluable clarity for individuals navigating family law proceedings. By understanding these distinctions and prioritizing the best interests of the child, parents can work towards cooperative custody arrangements that foster healthy and supportive environments for their children. In his view, the core objective is to ensure that children get to enjoy the love of both parents regardless of whether they are divorced or not.

Jon Smith
News Live
[email us here](#)

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