

Recommendations or *Wreckommendations*

Standards and Practice Guidelines in Child Custody Evaluations

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What's Your Roadmap?

Recommendations *or Not?*

Address Three Topics

- 1) What is the purpose of child custody recommendations?
- 2) How do ethics codes, guidelines, and license code provisions differ?
- 3) How can lawyers and child custody evaluators apply these documents to distinguish recommendations from *wreckommendations*?

Purpose of Recommendations

The court relies on the professional [acting as fact finder for the court] to provide information essential to the decision-making process.

Delcourt v. Silverman, 919 S.W.2d 777, 783 (Tex. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1996)

Complementary Psych-Law Principles

- Bases for Scientific and Professional Judgments: Psychologists' work is based upon established scientific and professional knowledge of the discipline. (APA Ethics Code 2.04).
- "An expert is permitted wide latitude to offer opinions . . . premised on an assumption that the expert's opinion will have a reliable basis in the knowledge and experience of his discipline." *Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals*, 509 U.S. 579, 592 (1993).

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