

Family Law Par Excellence

In this issue of *Bar Brief* we are pleased to feature **Mark B. Baer**



Mark B. Baer was raised in Beverly Hills, California. He graduated *cum laude* with a B.A. in Economics/Business from UCLA in 1987 and received his J.D. from Loyola Law School in 1990. In late 1993, Mr. Baer formed the Law Offices of Mark B. Baer,

which handles matters involving family law and estate planning. He has been a member of *The Order of Distinguished Attorneys* since 2007.

Because Baer recognizes the importance of diffusing emotions in family law matters and often involves mental health care professionals to assist in that regard, he joined the San Gabriel Valley Psychological Association as an affiliate member. Since September of 2008, he has been a regular columnist for their newsletter. Baer makes it a point to always remind his clients that if there are children, the family still exists even after the relationship ends. Mark, who was

trained in mediation by Forrest "Woody" Mosten, is a mediator and collaborative law practitioner who is also an experienced litigator.

In May of 2010, Baer added a blog to his website and began writing on a more frequent basis. Baer's most recent blog article, a study of child support, describes the usefulness of the USDA Cost of Raising a Child Calculator that helps family law attorneys, family law mediators, financial advisors and estate planners in issues involving child support or estate planning. The report from the United States Department of Agriculture, "Expenditures on Children by Families," breaks down the real costs each year on what parents can expect to spend to raise a child to the age of seventeen. Citing the latest statistics compiled by the U.S. Government, Baer states, "there has been a 22% increase in the cost of raising a child since 1960, taking into account inflation."

"When determining the amount for child support, federal law requires that it be determined in accordance with a guideline," states Baer. "What I'm suggesting is that trusted advisors involved in child support matters also refer to the USDA Calculator as a point of reference for the estimated costs of raising that

child in any given year." Baer utilizes the calculator in his practice and finds it invaluable in providing clients with a realistic expectation of the anticipated costs related to their minor children.

Other advisors, who have read Baer's blog, www.markbaeresq.com/Pasadena-Family-Law-Blog.aspx, also give credence to the value of using the calculator. In April of 2010, the California Psychological Association honored the San Gabriel Valley Psychological Association with the award as the most outstanding Psychological Association newsletter in California and specifically referenced Baer's column as a factor in its decision. As a result of that study, *California Lawyer Magazine*, recently interviewed Baer for an article in an upcoming edition. *Valley Lawyer Magazine* has also expressed an interest in publishing the study. **BB**

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