

**IN THE FAMILY JUSTICE COURTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

**[2026] SGFC 67**

Divorce No 905 of 2024  
HCF/DCA 8 of 2026

Between

YDD

*... Plaintiff*

And

YDE

*... Defendant*

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**FOUNDATIONS OF DECISION**

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[Family Law — Custody — Care and control]

[Family Law — Custody — Access]

[Family Law — Maintenance — Child]

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**YDD**

**v**

**YDE**

**[2026] SGFC 67**

Family Court — Divorce No 905 of 2024  
District Judge Edmund Chew  
14 August 2025, 12, 23 January, 16 March 2026

5 May 2026

**District Judge Edmund Chew:**

1 This case concerned the ancillary matters following the dissolution of the marriage between the Plaintiff Wife and the Defendant Husband. The Wife acted in person while the Husband was represented by Counsel.

### **Introduction**

2 The parties were married on 5 January 2014 in Singapore. Interim Judgment dissolving the marriage was granted on 7 January 2025. This was a 11-year marriage. After hearing arguments on the ancillary matters, I called for a Custody Evaluation Report (CER). I then made the following orders on 23 January 2026:

**Custody, Care and Control, Access**

1. The parties shall have joint custody of the children of the marriage, Child 1, Child 2 and Child 3, (collectively, the “Children”).
2. The Defendant shall have care and control of the Children, with effect from 1 February 2026.
3. The Plaintiff shall have access to the Children as follows:
  - a. On alternate weekends from Friday after school to Sunday 8.30pm, starting from 6 February 2026. The Plaintiff shall pick up the children after school on Friday and the Defendant shall pick up the children from Plaintiff’s residence on Sunday.
  - b. For up to 2 weekday evenings a week, from 5.30pm to 8.30pm. The Plaintiff is to confirm the date of such access no later than 3 days before the intended access.
4. In addition, for the June and November/December school holidays, the parties shall share half of the holidays as follows:
  - a. In even years beginning 2026, the Defendant shall have the first half of the June holidays and the second half of the December holidays, while the Plaintiff shall have the second

half of the June holidays and the first half of the December holidays.

- b. In odd years beginning 2027, the Plaintiff shall have the first half of the June holidays and the second half of the December holidays, while the Defendant shall have the second half of the June holidays and the first half of the December holidays.
  - c. The parties are at liberty to bring the Children for overseas trip during their half of the school holidays. The party who is travelling must provide the details of the trips to the other party at least 2 weeks in advance of the travel start date.
5. The Plaintiff shall also have access to the Children for Chinese New Year holidays on Chinese New Year Day 2 from 9.30am to 8.30pm.
  6. The Plaintiff shall have access to the Children on alternate Public Holidays from 10am to 8.30pm, except that the Father shall have the children on Christmas.
  7. In order to ensure that both parents will have sufficient time over the weekends with the children, the parties shall not enrol the children in enrichment or tuition classes during the weekend, unless otherwise agreed to by both parties.
  8. Parties are at liberty to mutually agree on changes to the access timings.

**Division of matrimonial property**

9. The Plaintiff shall, within 4 weeks from the date of this order, write to the Defendant to confirm whether she intends to retain the Matrimonial Flat.
10. If the Plaintiff writes to the Defendant on or before 20 February 2026 to confirm that she intends to retain the Matrimonial Flat, the following orders shall apply:
  - a. The Defendant shall transfer all his rights, title and share in the Matrimonial Flat to the Plaintiff within 3 months from the date of the Final Judgment, upon the Plaintiff paying the Defendant cash of \$218,998.87.
11. In default of clause 10 above, clauses 12 and 13 shall apply:
12. The Matrimonial Flat shall be sold in the open market within six (6) months from the date of the Final Judgment, and the sale proceeds shall be utilised as follows:
  - a. To make full payment of the outstanding loan to the Housing & Development Board (“HDB”);
  - b. To pay all legal costs and expenses related to the sale; and

- c. The net sale proceeds are to be divided 58% to the Plaintiff and 42% to the Defendant. Each party is to make the necessary refunds to their CPF accounts of the monies withdrawn for the purchase of the Flat with accrued interest.
  
- d. In the event that the sale proceeds are insufficient to pay the requisite CPF refunds to either party's CPF accounts upon the sale of the matrimonial property, each party shall be responsible for topping-up the shortfall to his/her own CPF account in cash, and such shortfall shall be topped-up in one lump sum at the time of completion of the sale.

13. The parties shall have joint conduct of sale.

14. The above orders are made subject to the Central Provident Fund Act (Cap. 36) ("the CPF Act") and the subsidiary legislation made thereunder. The CPF Board shall give effect to the terms of this order in accordance with the provisions of the CPF Act and the subsidiary legislation made thereunder.

15. The Registrar of the Family Justice Courts under section 31 of the Family Justice Act (No. 27 of 2014) is empowered to execute, sign, or indorse all necessary documents relating to the Matrimonial Flat on behalf of either Party should either Party fail to do so within seven (7) days of written request being made to the other Party.

**Wife's Maintenance**

16. There shall be no wife maintenance for the Plaintiff.

**Child Maintenance**

17. The Plaintiff shall pay to the Defendant monthly child maintenance of \$1,190 with effect from February 2026 as follows:

- a. \$450 for Child 1;
- b. \$515 for Child 2; and
- c. \$225 for Child 3.

18. Payment shall be made into the Defendant's designated bank account and is to be made on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Others**

19. Parties shall retain all other assets in their sole names.

20. Liberty to Apply.

3       The Wife filed an appeal on 6 February 2026 against part of my decision, viz paragraphs 2, 3, 4c, 5, 6, 7, 17, and 18 above. These are orders relating to care and control, access and child maintenance. I now provide the grounds for my decision on these issues.

**Facts**

4 The Wife is 43 years old this year and works as a Financial Advisor. The Husband is 45 years old this year and works as a Private Hire Driver.

5 Parties have 3 children to the marriage:

- (a) Child 1, who is 13 years old this year;
- (b) Child 2, who is 10 years old this year; and
- (c) Child 3, who is 6 years old this year.

6 The Parties filed the following documents:

<b>Wife's Documents</b>	<b>Husband's Documents</b>
Affidavit of Assets and Means filed on 4 March 2025 ("P1")	Affidavit of Assets and Means filed on 5 March 2025 ("D1")
2 <sup>nd</sup> AM Affidavit filed on 4 July 2025 ("P2")	2 <sup>nd</sup> AM Affidavit filed on 6 June 2025 ("D2")
	Written Submissions ("Husband's Submissions")
	Fact and Position Sheet ("Husband's FPS")

7 At the hearing before me on 14 August 2025, both parties agreed that a CER would be helpful. While the Wife was initially concerned about the time taken for such a report to be done, she eventually did not object to the calling of

such a report, save for raising her request that the matter be expedited. As I was of the view that a CER would be helpful to me in making child-related orders, I called for a CER. The CER was submitted to the Court on 16 December 2025. Thereafter, I sought clarifications in relation to some parts of the CER. The clarifications were duly provided on 7 January 2026.

8 Having had sight of the CER along with the clarifications, having considered the evidence put before me in the affidavits filed by the parties, and having heard and considered the oral arguments made by the parties, I made the orders at paragraph 2 above.

### **Care and Control; Access**

#### ***Parties' Position***

9 The Wife sought care and control of all 3 children.<sup>1</sup> She was prepared to offer access to the Husband as follows:

- (a) Tuesday dinner from 6pm to 8pm;
- (b) Alternate weekend overnight access from Saturday 1pm to Sunday 6pm; and
- (c) Alternate Public Holiday from eve 7pm to the next day 6pm.

10 Her reasons can be briefly summarised as follows:

- (a) She has been the primary caregiver of the Children, being involved in the Children's activities in school and outside of school.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Para 27 of P1.

<sup>2</sup> Page 7 of P2.

- (b) She arranges events and activities for the children to attend.<sup>3</sup>
- (c) She has obtained a Personal Protection Order (PPO) for herself against the Husband on 6 July 2021.<sup>4</sup> She has also obtained a PPO for Child 1 against the Husband on 23 September 2021.<sup>5</sup>
- (d) As of March 2025, there were ongoing police investigations regarding the breach of the PPO. A police report was made on 17 March 2025 and the children have stopped visiting the Husband since then. Given that the Husband has breached the PPO by caning Child 1 even when a PPO was in place, the Husband was highly incapable of taking care of the Children and she was fearful for the safety of the Children.<sup>6</sup> Child 1 has also expressed to the Wife that he does not want to visit the Husband at all.

11 The Husband also sought care and control of all 3 children.<sup>7</sup> He was prepared to offer access to the Wife as follows:

- (a) Alternate weekend from Friday 7pm to Sunday 7pm; and
- (b) Alternate Public Holiday, save for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Chinese New Year Eve and Chinese New Year Day 1 for which he wishes the children to spend with him.

12 His reasons can be briefly summarised as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Pages 217-218 of P1.

<sup>5</sup> Pages 219-220 of P1.

<sup>6</sup> Page 12 of P2.

<sup>7</sup> Para 24 of D1.

(a) The Wife lacks caregiving abilities for the Children, as she was unable to properly supervise the Children. She would frequently be engaged with her mobile devices instead of focusing on the Children. The Children were unsupervised at home and the Wife does not monitor the media content which they watch. She also delegated some of the caregiving duties to her parents who did not treat the Children well. As a result, there were instances when the Children were able to leave the home without adult supervision.<sup>8</sup> Child 1 was also found to be accessing pornographic material at a young age.<sup>9</sup>

(b) The Wife also has hoarding tendencies, which made the home environment uncondusive for the Children to grow up in. This has resulted in such a messy and poor environment that the Wife was chosen to participate in a local TV show which focus was to assist participants to declutter their home.<sup>10</sup>

(c) Given the above, the Children do not cultivate proper sleeping habits and study routine. The Husband subsequently received a call from the Children's teacher who informed him that Child 1 and Child 2 were sleeping in class.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Para 16 of Husband's Submissions. See also paras 26.a, 26.b, 26.f., 26.g and 26.h of D1.

<sup>9</sup> Para 15 of D2.

<sup>10</sup> Para 16 of Husband's Submissions. See also paras 26.c, 26.i, 26.k. and 26.n of D1. Photographs of the state of house were also exhibited at pages 119-131 of D1.

<sup>11</sup> Para 26.m of D1.

***The Law***

13 In all matters involving a child, the paramount consideration of the court is always the welfare of the child. In the context of divorce proceedings, this is statutorily provided for in section 126(2) of the Women’s Charter 1961:

*In deciding in whose custody, or in whose care and control, a child should be placed, the paramount consideration is to be the welfare of the child and subject to this, the court is to have regard —*

*(a) to the wishes of the parents of the child; and*

*(b) to the wishes of the child, where he or she is of an age to express an independent opinion.*

14 Therefore, while the views and wishes of the parents are relevant considerations, these are subject to the court’s consideration of the welfare of the child. Where the children are of sufficient maturity, the court may also take their views into account, such as through their views expressed to a counsellor who prepares a child report. However, their views are also subject to the court’s consideration of the welfare of the child.

15 Simply put, in all matters where the custody or upbringing of the child is in issue, the welfare of the child is paramount and this principle ought to override any other consideration: *UBQ v UBR* [2022] SGHCF 13 at [8]; *BNS v BNT* [2015] 3 SLR 973 at [19]. Ultimately, whatever the views of the parents and the children are, the court must decide based on what it believes to be in the welfare of the children.

16 The term “welfare” is to be taken in its widest sense and what would be in the best interests of the child must necessarily depend on all the circumstances of the case: *IW v IX* [2005] SGCA 48 at [26]-[27].

17 In my determination of the child issues, I have called for a CER. In considering the contents of the CER, I am mindful of and remain guided by the Court of Appeal's comments in *WKM v WKN* [2024] SGCA 1 in relation to the use of such reports, at [74]-[75]:

*74 In the process of generating their reports, the professionals would have engaged directly with the relevant persons involved in the child's life and observed some of their interactions with the child. Their observations serve as crucial insights into the child's world and greatly assist the court by presenting the realities of the child's situation. Given their expertise, they are well suited to identify issues, such as excessive gatekeeping behaviour by the parents and even possible signs of abuse. The judge, on the other hand, does not have the benefit of such extended interactions with the child or other family members. The court should, nevertheless, be very mindful that the information in the reports remain untested by cross-examination. Such reports must thus be carefully considered. Where there are observations made in the reports which contradict the narrative presented in the parties' affidavits, it is important that the court carefully considers whether the observations in the reports are clearly explained and the factual bases for the observations and assessments. The court may also seek clarification from the professionals who had submitted the report or ask further questions in respect of the content in the report.*

*75 If the judge chooses to place reliance on child welfare reports in the court's decision-making process, this should be included in the court's grounds of decision. We emphasise that references to the content of the reports must be made in an appropriate manner that will not compromise the child's interests, bearing in mind the confidential nature of these reports. For example, a court may state that it accepts the observations in the report that a parent has attempted to alienate the child from the other parent and provide instances of the factual bases for such observations which are facts already known to both parties. Such a manner of referencing avoids disclosing details that the child may have provided in confidence.*

***My Decision***

18 In coming to my decision, I have relied on the CER and the evidence that were available before me in the affidavits. In my view, the children's welfare would be best served by granting care and control to the Husband, with substantial access time to the Wife. The key considerations in my mind were the urgent need for a stable routine, which included having good sleeping habits, and the need for close adult supervision.

19 As I explained to the parties at the decision hearing on 23 January 2026, having considered the affidavits and the CER, it was clear to me that all three children have their unique personalities and I believe they can grow up to be wonderful people, so long as the appropriate guidance is given to them. At this young age, they need the appropriate guidance in order to help them flourish and mature to the best of their abilities. In this regard, both parents possessed different strengths, and they each also had their own limitations. This was manifested in the way they interacted with the Children, and their different views in their caregiving styles. The Wife exhibited a more permissive stance towards parenting the Children, mostly leaving them to their own devices. On the other hand, the Husband took a firmer and active stance in supervising the Children, seeing the need to discipline the Children when they did something wrong.

20 I am glad that from the CER and from the affidavits before me, it was evident that both parents loved the Children very much. While they may have different views on what is best for the Children, and may have disagreements on these, I would encourage them by saying that such disagreements are not uncommon between parents, whether divorcing parents or otherwise. Unfortunately, the disagreements between the parties now were made worse

because of these divorce proceedings, and their very different parenting styles. The conflict that both parties had at home were relational, and often escalated due to the conduct of both parties. This prolonged parental conflict has also affected the Children negatively. The instability in routines and in building the relationship with both parents have also adversely affected them.

21 At this point in the Children's lives, what they require most now is a stable routine with a structured environment for close adult supervision. It was not desirable for them to continue with a relaxed routine coupled with very permissive adult supervision. In my view, this would go a long way in addressing their concentration issues in school, behavioural issues and overall development. The home environment they were in was cluttered and messy, with barely enough space for all 3 children to sleep and do their homework in.<sup>12</sup> This would not be helpful for their mental well-being and developmental growth.

22 At this young age, it was important for the children to have a stable and predictable routine, where they can have structure and guidance. With such arrangements in place, the Children would then enjoy a conducive home environment in which they can thrive, not least in their physical growth and academic work. By this, it meant that the adult at home must enforce a certain measure of discipline in the Children. This included matters such as having a regular bedtime routine, instead of allowing them to use mobile devices until late in the night. It was particularly concerning to me that the Children remain unsupervised in their usage of such devices and there was no limit on the amount of screen time they could have each night. At their young age, without proper

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<sup>12</sup> See pages 121-126 and 131. It was clear that the children barely had much space to move around in, much less find a proper tabletop surface to do their homework.

adult supervision and guidance, the Children have traded much of their sleep time for more screen time. Such poor sleeping habits have already adversely affected the Children, including the inability to stay awake and focused during school classes. Bedtime routine is an important aspect of growing up, as insufficient rest will impede their developmental growth, as well as their concentration in school.

23 It was not desirable for the Wife to be at home with the children, but simply did her own things, without engaging the Children or supervising them. At this young age, it was important for parents to be actively involved in giving the Children structure, routines and developmental guidance. It was not helpful to take a passive supervision approach, leaving the children to do their own things.

24 Further, I was also of the view that it was not appropriate for the Children, at their young age, to go to school on their own without adult supervision or be left alone at home without an adult. This took place when the Children were in primary school and younger. It was worrying that the Children could also leave home whenever they wanted without the knowledge of the supervising adults.<sup>13</sup> This was dangerous, especially when Child 3 was able to leave home on his own at 2 and 3 years old.

25 In my view, this needs to change. Collectively, these pointed strongly to the conclusion that the Children required close adult supervision, with a fixed routine. This would go a long way in their safety and growth.

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<sup>13</sup> See para 26.g.

26 As I observed at the beginning of this section, both parents are loving to the Children. Both parents also had different strengths and weaknesses. In this instance, the Husband was able to provide a more structured environment and would be more involved in guiding and supervising the Children. As such, it was my view that the Children's interests would be best served to grant care and control to the Husband. In that way, the Children would reside with an adult who would closely supervise them and give them the structured routine required.

27 I was mindful that this would be a drastic change in the home environment of the children, as I was effectively switching care and control. However, I was still of the view that this would be in the best interests of the children. A more structured and tidier environment was what the children needed now, at this point in their lives. If nothing was done to change the course of where they were headed, I was concerned that it would only impact them even more as they continue to grow up.

28 At this point, I must also add that I did not find the Children to be fearful of the Husband, as alleged by the Wife. Any decline in the relationship between the Children and the Husband, if indeed true, was due to the Wife's refusal to continue with access since March 2025. Based on the evidence before me, I did not find the allegations of safety concerns to be made out. There was nothing to suggest that the Children were fearful of the Husband, nor was there anything to suggest that the Husband would harm the children.

29 For completeness, I had also considered the appropriateness of such a care and control order, given that there was a PPO in place and there were allegations of the breach of the PPO. On this, the Wife had clarified at the hearing before me that while CPS was initially involved, the family has since

been stepped down to be managed at a Family Service Centre (FSC) given that they deemed the case to have no safety concerns. Having reviewed the matter, I noted also that the alleged breach of the PPO was based on concerns that the Father had engaged in harsh discipline practices on Child 1, i.e. by caning the child.<sup>14</sup> Having had the benefit of the CER which contained the views of the child professionals, I believe that with proper relationship building between Child 1 and the Husband, the Husband would be able to develop more suitable discipline methods appropriate for Child 1 and the child would then be more receptive to his father's guidance. At the end of my decision hearing, I had asked counsel to convey specifically to the Husband that he would now have to develop more suitable discipline methods, especially given that Child 1 was now going into his teenager years and would start developing his own personality. It is my hope that the Husband would bear this in mind. He must be mindful that Child 1 must be treated with care and I would encourage him to continue engaging with his counsellors to promote stability and to assist him in the transition to full-time caregiving of the Children.

30 At this point, I must take pains to emphasise that the change in care and control was meant to give the Children a structured and more conducive environment, which in my view was what they really needed at this age. This was what would be in their best interests. Close adult supervision was necessary, and I am of the view that the Husband would be able to do so.

31 At the same time, I must also take pains to emphasise that this decision does not disregard what the Wife has done for the Children thus far. I have seen the efforts and pains the Wife has gone through just to bring the Children up to where they are now, and I commend her for that. Her love for the Children has

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<sup>14</sup> See page 12 of P2.

come through in the course of these proceedings. My decision in no way discounts the sacrifices she has put in for the Children. The parents simply have very different parenting styles and it was my view that the Children would be best served, at this point, to transit into a more structured environment.

32 Having granted care and control to the Husband, I now consider what the Wife should have in respect of access time. I was prepared to give her generous access time with the Children so that she could also see the children regularly, and continue to maintain her relationship with them. I understand that this was very different from having the Children under her care and seeing them everyday. I hope that a change in this arrangement would also prompt the mother to plan her access time with the children in advance, so that the time spent with the children would be spent meaningfully, doing activities together and talking to one another, instead of simply being around one another passively.

33 At the hearing before me, I had asked the Wife for her proposals on access if I were to grant care and control to the Husband. She had stated that she would like to have overnight weekend access. In addition, as she was working in sales, she wanted flexibility to arrange weekday access. As for public holidays, she expressed that she had no issues with the Husband having Christmas day and Christmas eve. Additionally, at the decision hearing before me, she also stated that she was agreeable to let the Husband have Chinese New Year Day 1 each year and she would have the Children on Chinese New Year Day 2. This was because this reflects the current arrangements between the parties.

34 I was of the view that it was reasonable to grant the Wife overnight weekend access, albeit on an alternate basis. This would ensure that each party

would have the entire weekend with the Children on an alternate basis. Further, as the Wife wanted flexibility to arrange weekday access, I granted her 2 weekday evenings a week, and for her to confirm the date of such access beforehand. I had also granted the parties equal sharing of the June and November/December school holidays, with each of them to take half of such holidays. For March and September school holidays, the regular access arrangements would follow. As for public holiday access, I had granted the Wife alternate public holiday access, except that the Husband shall have the Children on Christmas, which was what the Wife had agreed to at the hearing before me. Finally, for Chinese New Year, I had also apportioned it in accordance with parties' current arrangements.

35 As such, I granted the Wife access as follows:

- (a) On alternate weekends from Friday after school to Sunday 8.30pm, starting from 6 February 2026. The Plaintiff shall pick up the children after school on Friday and the Defendant shall pick up the children from Plaintiff's residence on Sunday.
- (b) For up to 2 weekday evenings a week, from 5.30pm-8.30pm. The Plaintiff is to confirm the date of such access no later than 3 days before the intended access.
- (c) In addition, for the June and November/December school holidays, the parties shall share half of the holidays as follows:
  - (i) In even years beginning 2026, the Defendant shall have the first half of the June holidays and the second half of the December holidays, while the Plaintiff shall have the second half of the June holidays and the first half of the December holidays.

(ii) In odd years beginning 2027, the Plaintiff shall have the first half of the June holidays and the second half of the December holidays, while the Defendant shall have the second half of the June holidays and the first half of the December holidays.

(iii) The parties are at liberty to bring the Children for overseas trip during their half of the school holidays. The party who is travelling must provide the details of the trips to the other party at least 2 weeks in advance of the travel start date.

(d) The Plaintiff shall also have access to the Children for Chinese New Year holidays on Chinese New Year Day 2 from 9.30am to 8.30pm.

(e) The Plaintiff shall have access to the Children on alternate Public Holidays from 10am to 8.30pm, except that the Father shall have the children on Christmas.

(f) In order to ensure that both parents will have sufficient time over the weekends with the children, the parties shall not enrol the children in enrichment or tuition classes during the weekend, unless otherwise agreed to by both parties.

(g) Parties are at liberty to mutually agree on changes to the access timings.

## **Child Maintenance**

### ***Parties' Position***

36 When the matter came up for hearing before me, the Wife had a maintenance order against the Husband for him to pay \$2,000 a month towards him in the following proportions:<sup>15</sup>

- (a) Child 1: \$850;
- (b) Child 2: \$700; and
- (c) Child 3: \$450.

37 The Wife thus initially proposed that the current maintenance payable continue in the sum of \$2,000.<sup>16</sup> At the further hearing before me on 12 January 2026, she then proposed that she take over the matrimonial flat and she would not claim any maintenance.

38 The Husband proposed that the parties be responsible for the Children's expenses in proportion to their respective incomes.<sup>17</sup> According to the Husband, this would mean that he was responsible for 1/3 of the Children's expenses while the Wife would be responsible for 2/3 of the expenses.

39 As I have ordered that the Husband be granted care and control, it would follow that the Wife be ordered to pay the Husband child maintenance.

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<sup>15</sup> See the Maintenance Order dated 21 February 2024 exhibited at pages 215-216 of P1. This was varied upwards from the previous maintenance order of \$1,200 dated 10 January 2023, exhibited at pages 213-214 of P1.

<sup>16</sup> Para 25 of P1.

<sup>17</sup> Paras 20-21 of Husband's Submissions and para 13 of D2.

***Children's Reasonable Expenses***

40 In respect of the Children's expenses, as with the majority of cases, parties differed in their estimate of the various items.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, there were some items which quantum was undisputed. For these items, I ascribed the value as agreed between parties.

41 At the hearing before me, the main areas of dispute related to the number of tuition classes and extra classes the Children were attending. According to the Husband, the Wife has not provided sufficient documents to prove that the expenses were indeed incurred. He was therefore content to proceed on the basis that the Children were attending only certain classes as he asserted. In any event, it was also his position in oral arguments before me that the tuition were luxury items which the parties were not in the position to afford. As such, having taken such a position, it does not lie for him to claim a higher amount for tuition given his position that such classes were a luxury. Indeed, he also did not make such a claim.

42 Further, given that he was now the party claiming child maintenance, where there was a difference in the figure, I was more inclined towards allowing the quantum as asserted by the Husband. After all, he is the one pursuing the claim now and if he was prepared to attribute a lower quantum to that expense (which had the corresponding effect of lowering the child's total expenses and hence the amount of maintenance the Wife would be ordered to pay), I would take that as his position of what the Children's reasonable expenses were. His position on what the Children's reasonable expenses were ought not fluctuate based on whether he was liable to pay for the child maintenance or whether he

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<sup>18</sup> Para 17 of P1 and para 13 of D2.

was claiming for child maintenance. In either case, the children's expenses would not change as it involved the same Children and the Children would incur the same expense. The only difference was that the paying party and the receiving party would change.

43 As such, I set out my assessment of the expenses below:

Table 1: Child 1's Monthly Expenses

S/N	Item	Wife's Position (\$)	Husband's Position (\$)	Court's Assessment (\$)
1	Food	250	250	250
2	School Fees	6	6	6
3	Tuition Fees	448	285 (coding class)	285  As the Husband was content to claim only for one extra class, I was prepared to allow for this full amount based on his claim.
4	Extra classes fees	384		
5	Transport	100	100	100
6	Phone charges	15	15	15
7	Insurance	568	0	0  As the Husband was not claiming for insurance, I did not ascribe a value to this.
8	Medical & Dental Fee	70	20	20  In my view, \$20 a month would total \$240 a year and

				would be a reasonable amount.
9	Books and stationery	50	20	20  In my view, \$20 a month would total \$240 a year and would be a reasonable amount.
10	Clothes and uniforms	20	20	20
11	Hair cut	10	10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,921</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>726</b>

Table 2: Child 2's Monthly Expenses

S/N	Item	Wife's Position (\$)	Husband's Position (\$)	Court's Assessment (\$)
1	Food	150	150	150
2	School Fees	6	6	6
3	Student care	235	235	235
4	Tuition Fees	349	150 (dance classes)	150  As the Husband was content to claim only for one extra class, I was prepared to allow for this full amount based on his claim.
5	Extra classes fees	473		
6	Transport	200	200	200
7	Phone charges	15	15	15
8	Insurance	395	0	0  As the Husband was not claiming for insurance, I did not ascribe a value to this.

9	Medical & Dental Fee	70	30	30
10	Books and stationery	50	20	20  In my view, \$20 a month would total \$240 a year and would be a reasonable amount.
11	Clothes and uniforms	50	20	20  In my view, \$20 a month would total \$240 a year and would be a reasonable amount. In any case, there was no explanation given for the higher expense claimed by the Wife compared to Child 1.
12	Hair cut	5	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,998</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>831</b>

Table 3: Child 3's Monthly Expenses

S/N	Item	Wife's Position (\$)	Husband's Position (\$)	Court's Assessment (\$)
1	Food	50	50	50
2	School Fees	398	200	200  The Wife did not produce any documents to prove that the school fees were \$398. As such, I was prepared to allow

				the Husband's claim of \$200.
3	Extra classes fees	361	0	0  As the Husband was not claiming to claim only for one extra class, I was prepared to allow for this full amount based on his claim.
4	Transport	50	50	50
5	Insurance	505	0	0  As the Husband was not claiming for insurance, I did not ascribe a value to this.
6	Medical fee	270	55	55  Based on the documents exhibited at pages 133-170 of P1, the total expenses incurred from Apr 2024 to Feb 2025 totalled \$1,118.04. As such, the average per month across these 11 months was \$101.64. As the Husband was only claiming \$55, I was prepared to ascribe \$55 to this amount.

7	Hair cut	10	10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,644</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>365</b>

44 In the circumstances, I found that the reasonable monthly expenses of the Children were:

- (a) Child 1: \$726;
- (b) Child 2: \$831; and
- (c) Child 3: \$365.

#### *Apportionment of Maintenance*

45 Given the disparity of the parties' income, I was of the view that it was fair to apportion the child maintenance in proportion to the parties' income. However, I did not agree with the Husband's computation that he was responsible only for 1/3 of the expenses while the Wife was responsible for 2/3 of the expenses.

46 In the Husband's affidavit, he declared his monthly income as \$4,200.<sup>19</sup> However, the Wife disagreed with this and was of the view that he would be earning more.<sup>20</sup> The Wife contended that the Husband "used to work as Sales executive, Private hire driver and also a waiter at a pub". She then asserted that his income would be in the region of \$5,500-\$6,500. However, there were no documents provided to support the Wife's contention that the Husband was working in other jobs and would earn more. As such, I found that the Wife's objection must fail.

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<sup>19</sup> Para 2 of D1.

<sup>20</sup> Page 2 of P2.

47 Nonetheless, based on the documents available before me, I did not find that the Husband was earning only \$4,200 a month. He has produced the income statements based on his work as a private hire driver in his affidavit.<sup>21</sup> Based on my calculations of his earnings from these statements, the average weekly income would actually come up to \$1,235.32. Therefore, the average earnings in a span of 4 weeks, or 28 days, would be \$1,235.32 x 4 which would be \$4,941.28. As such, I found that his monthly income was more likely in the sum of \$5,000 instead.

48 As for the Wife's income, she stated this to be \$8,300.<sup>22</sup> The Husband did not dispute this. As such, the ratio of the parties' income would be 38% to the Husband and 62% to the Wife, with the numbers rounded off to the nearest whole number. As such, I was of the view that parties ought to bear the children's expenses in the proportion of 38% to the Husband and 62% to the Wife.

49 Accordingly, I ordered that the Wife was to pay the Husband monthly child maintenance of:

- (a) \$450 for Child 1;
- (b) \$515 for Child 2; and
- (c) \$225 for Child 3.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See pages 21-44 of D1.

<sup>22</sup> Para 2 of P1.

<sup>23</sup> The figures were rounded off to the nearest 5 or 10.

## Conclusion

50 Accordingly, I made the orders set out in paragraph 2 above.

51 I have made various observations on the difference in parenting styles of the parties. It is my hope that each of them can see that they have different strengths. I hope that they leverage on their respective strengths to journey with the Children in their many years ahead. It is also my sincere wish that the parties can work together to co-parent the 3 very lovely children that they have, enabling them to flourish and mature. To do this, they must see themselves not as adversaries standing on opposite ends of the room. Instead, they are co-workers and co-partners in this journey of parenting.

52 As the Court in *VXM v VYN* [2021] SGHCF 42 observed at [52]:

*Parenting within a functioning marriage already has its challenges, because children are both wonderful and in need of much care, time and guidance from their parents. A recent op-ed in the Sunday Times (Li Xueying, “Let’s have an open conversation about how hard raising kids is”, Sunday Times [Singapore], (5 December 2021) at p A24), offered a frank and candid look at how hard parenting can be. There are great joys in parenthood, for children are precious and delightful. Yet, the responsibility and sacrifices that come with parenthood are very heavy. Divorced parents may experience some loss of the cooperative support or shared resources that would have been present in functioning marriages, and hence post-divorce parenting may be even more challenging in this way. Divorced parents can be stronger parents when they let the other parent share in the responsibility of child-rearing, including simply spending time with the children, which will in turn give the other parent some time to rest, focus on work or on self-care. Children will benefit from such strong parents.*

53 It is my sincere hope that parties can see themselves as sharing in the responsibility of child-rearing, working towards a common aim: to guide the Children and help them develop into their best possible version of themselves.

54 I wish both parties and the Children all the very best.

Edmund Chew  
District Judge

Plaintiff in person.

Mr Lee Wei Fan (Anthony Law Corporation) for the Defendant.