



Supporting Children During a Divorce

During a divorce, it is a must to make your priority your children(s) wellbeing; in fact it is undeniable that divorces can be quite challenging for children of all ages, however, there are some strategies that could be applied to ensure that they feel supported during this difficult process. Once you've told your kids that you're getting a divorce, it's common for them to go through an adjustment period. You, too, will likely be going through a period of adjustment as family bonds are being reconfigured and a new "normal" is established.

Make sure to respect their emotions

Allowing children to know that it is okay to feel angry or sad will encourage them to let out their emotions. Children tend to repress their emotions to avoid hurting their parents' feelings. It is a must to make it clear that, as a parent, you are interested in what they have to say. Moreover, doing your best to just listen to them talk without interrupting will ensure that the kids feel that their emotions are being respected. In fact, careful listening and empathizing is a form of "validation" of their feelings.

Responding to different reactions

Adjustment period right after a divorce is to be expected as well as different reactions and emotions. There are few strategies that you can do to assist your child cope in a healthy way.

Guilt is a very common feeling that kids feel during a divorce, especially for younger ones; they tend to blame themselves and it is essential that you make sure they explicitly know that it's not their fault.

As divorce comes with drastic changes, it is very natural that children develop some **anxiety**. In the situation where your child shows signs of anxiety, sitting with them and making it clear what they should be expecting in the next period of time will reduce their anxiety. Children will be reassured if you are able to establish a consistent routine.

Kids during a divorce may also start **acting out more**; this could be a different sign of anxiety, but also they might be testing or understanding what

are the new boundaries and limits. In both situations, creating a structured and consistent routine with clear expectations of what is expected from them will reduce such disruptive behavior.

Moreover, it was observed that some kids experience difficulty in staying **concentrated at school**. As this period

of time may seem very challenging and complicated, establishing a routine at home right away, including time for school work will prevent them from being behind at school. Also, alerting the school that the family is going through a divorce is a must to allow staff members to provide any extra support that your child might need.

Parenting tips during a divorce

Modeling calm and protecting your children from conflict are important during this time. Maintaining a normal routine and homelife is essential to maintain calm during such times. When changes need to be made, create new routines and try to be consistent to them.

Be civil about their father/mother; in fact, it is highly recommended to not speak negatively about their parents as

it's unhealthy for children to have conflicts in their relationship with their parents. As conflicts may arise during the beginning of co-parenting, presenting yourselves united in front of the kids is highly recommended. If your former partner isn't willing to be cooperative, set routines and expectations as much as possible in your household, as you do have control over that.

Resources

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