

What 7 most distressful situations to kids that divorced parents should avoid? Learn them to spare your kids from the painful consequences.

1. Carrying Message Between Parents

A child doesn't like the feeling that he or she must act as a messenger between hostile parents or carry one adult's secrets or accusations about another. Children want parents to talk with each other so that the messages are communicated the right way and so that children don't feel like they are going to mess up.

Parents must take the responsibility to talk directly with each other, especially if the topic is likely to anger the other parent. It is unfair to make your child carry messages to your "ex" because you find it too awkward or aggravating to do so yourself. It is also poor parenting to show by example to your child that you can resolve a problem with another person by not communicating or to suggest to a child that the other parent is such a monster that you cannot speak or be civil with each other.

Wherever possible, communicate directly with the other parent about matters relevant to the children, such as scheduling, visitation, health habits, or school problems.

2. Getting Involved With Money Issues

Avoid arguing and discussing child support issues in front of the children. How would you feel if you are that child hearing mom and dad arguing about your financial support? Most children upon hearing these things feel that their existence is some kind of parent's burden.

Who will pay for what and how available money should be spent are adult issues that the parents must discuss directly. Do not put your children in the middle of your child support disputes.

3. Hearing Criticisms Of The Other Parent

It hurts a child very much to hear one loved parent criticize the other loved parent. Children see themselves as half of each parent. When children hear bad things about one parent, they hear bad things about half of themselves. If they hear bad things about both their parents, they feel that both halves of them must be of little worth.

Even if you are sure you're right, try to avoid criticizing the other parent around the kids, and try to find good things to say, or don't say anything at all.

The following is a list of destructive remarks that you should not make to your child. If you find yourself saying words like these, stop and think about their impact on your child.

- You're lazy/stubborn/bad tempered, just like your mother/father.
- Your mother/father put you up to saying that.
- Your dad/mom doesn't love any of us or he/she wouldn't have left us.
- You can't trust her/him.

- He/she was just no good.
- If she/he loved you, she/he would send your support checks on time.
- Someday you'll leave me too, just like your father/mother.

All of these remarks raise fear and anxiety in children.

4. Quizzing Children About The Other Parent

Do not make your children a spy in the other parent's home. It is very difficult for a child of divorced parents to cope with feeling "caught in the middle". If they want to tell you about time spent with their other parent (and they usually don't), listen closely and politely, and then stop. If they don't volunteer any information, try simply, "Have a good time? Good."

Encourage your children to love both parents. They must not be burdened with having to align with one parent's anger against the other.

5. Taking Sides

Your child wants to love both of his or her parents. Asking your child to take your side in any situation regarding your ex-spouse can create a tremendous amount of stress for your child.

Avoid putting children in the position of having to take sides. Allow your children to continue to love both parents without being made to feel guilty or disloyal.

6. Dealing With Parent's Feeling

Complaining to your child about how lonely you are after the separation makes a child feel guilty and sad and want to "parent" you. It's not healthy for them to be consumed with worry for their parents' ability to survive.

Let your child be a child. They need the freedom to be children. It's easy, but wrong, to make your adolescent child, or even your adult child, a confidant in dealing with your recovery, your dating life, or your fears. Even if children seem capable of handling these concerns without ill effects, they rarely are.

7. Threatening To Cut Off Contact With The Children If The Other Parent Doesn't Do Or Stop Doing Something

The kids hear these threats and fear more loss in their lives. Such conduct hurts your kids and must not be continued.

Recognize that for your child to have the best chance of growing up to be a functional human male or female, he/she will need both parents as role models and nurturers. This means that there should be some pathway of getting through to the child whatever good that parent has to offer.

Anything that puts a child in the middle of dispute is unhealthy, and causes the most problems for divorcing families. If parents don't work issues through, those issues have a huge effect on their kids.

It can be hard to do, but parents can improve a situation by recognizing their divorce is from each other, not the children. Kids need to see that even though their parents might not love each other, they are committed to staying connected because of their responsibilities as parents. At times, this may seem absolutely impossible, because the parents can't tolerate the idea of being connected. Yet the child needs both of them, psychologically if not in reality.

About The Author

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Ruben Francia is an author of an indispensable divorce parenting guide ebook, entitled "101 Ways To Raise Your 'Divorced' Children To Success". Discover the ways to raising healthy, happy and successful children even if you're on divorced. Visit his web site at <http://www.101divorceparenting.com>