



Helping Your Child Cope with Divorce

Your divorce will affect your child forever. Parents can lessen the pain of a divorce for their children by handling the process in a positive and sensitive manner.

HOW TO TELL YOUR CHILD

- Wait until a firm decision has been made by both parents to tell the child.
- Both parents should be present to help the child through the fears and change.
- Do not blame either parent. The child needs to know it was a mutual decision.
- Explain the reasons for divorce in a language appropriate to your child's age and level of understanding.
- Reassure your child of your love and that the divorce is not his/her fault.

HELPING YOUR CHILD ADJUST

- Negotiate an agreement privately away from the child. If it is a conflictive divorce, deal with the conflict away from the child.
- Always talk positively about the absent parent to or around your child.
- Maintain the child's routine as much as possible.
- Be willing to use new parenting ideas.
- Never ask your child to take sides or report on the behaviors of the other parent.
- Encourage many visits to the other parent.
- Seek professional help for the child if problems arise.

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REMEMBER:

Divorce affects you as well as your children. Your own adjustment to the divorce will affect how your child adjusts. Seek professional help for yourself if this time is especially difficult for you.

CHILDREN NEED TO ...

- Understand that their family is not unlike many families who go through divorce.
- Accept the reality of what is happening.
- Recover from the loss of their 'ideal family.'
- Deal with their disappointment and anger towards parents.
- Know that they have security and a bright future.

WHO TO CALL FOR HELP

Parent Helpline
1-800-CHILDREN

**Center for Community
Support and Research**
1-800-445-0116

**For more online tip cards, visit kcsl.org
under the "Resources" tab.**



Kansas Children's Service League

Parenting questions? Call the Parent Helpline.
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