

Helping Your Children Adjust to Separation or Divorce

How Parents Can Help

DO NOT:

- Offer false hopes of reconciliation
- Put children in the middle of adult conflicts
- Pretend that nothing will change
- Burden children with financial stress
- Threaten children with abandonment
- Make more changes than necessary in the children's lives during the divorce process
- Make negative comments about the other parent or parent's new partner
- Use the children as messengers

DO:

- Reassure children that they did not cause the break-up
- Be sure to listen when your child talks to you
- Maintain adult and parental roles
- Allow children to express negative feelings about the break-up in non-destructive ways
- Provide as much stability as continuity in the children's lives as possible
- Reassure children that they will be safe and cared for
- Let children know that they are loved and wanted
- Seek emotional support from friends, professionals and family members
- Realize that your children need an ongoing relationship with both parents
- Avoid putting the children in the middle
- Support the children's relationship with the other parent and the other parent's family (regardless of whether child support is being paid)

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