

The trouble with being a parent is that by the time we're experienced, we're unemployed.

-Vern McLellan

One of the highest causes of stress for children is being exposed to conflict between their parents, under any circumstances, so parents should strive to avoid this situation.

Children are also stressed by changes in their routine: moving, new schools or childcare arrangements.



Divorced parents are likely to have less money than they did before, and this is another source of stress; in addition, parents are more likely to be angry, sad, worried or preoccupied with their own emotional states, and so may be less available and less capable during the time of divorce.

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How Divorce Really Affects Children & Teens



Parents' greatest struggle to decide about divorce usually focuses on their uncertainty about how it will affect their children's lives.

Rather than deliberating whether divorce is bad for children, a more useful question is to identify what factors in divorce cause children to have trouble, and which make it possible for them to manage and cope.

Statistical differences do show up in research between kids from divorced families and from intact households; however there is much more that is similar between kids from these two types of families than there are differences. Not all divorced

families have troubled children.

Some researchers have social or political

attitudes that bias them against divorce, and they use statistics to support their beliefs. However there is no respected research study showing that divorce is consistently bad for children.



It's true that children from divorced homes, as a group, tend to have more emotional, academic and social problems. However only a small percentage of these children have such severe

difficulties that they require professional help.



Unfortunately there are no clear, authoritative answers on whether divorce is the right decision, but kids consistently report that they are relieved when a divorce ends chronic conflict in their household.

Staying together "for the kids" may not actually be to their benefit if you're really in an unhappy marriage.

When parents rearrange the family there are many ways they can handle their choices that potentially make it better for the children.

You will want to consider:

- how you tell your children about the separation or divorce
- what kind of living and custody arrangements you anticipate
- how much flexibility you expect in these arrangements
- how often they will see each parent

As life progresses after the divorce, it's important to keep talking to kids.

How do they feel about their parents' dating and new partners? How would they like to be informed and included if you're contemplating remarriage?



If they will enter a stepfamily arrangement, what do they think of the new family configuration? What routines are important to keep the same, and what can they tolerate changing?

Children have a range of preferences for discussing these matters, but whether or not they have the language and self-awareness

to express their emotions, they always appreciate being asked and included in decisions and timelines.

