

Helping Your Child With a Separation or Divorce



Brought to you by ValueOptions

ADULTS HAVE A VERY HARD TIME GETTING THROUGH A separation or divorce. Children have a hard time, too. Their family is their whole world. When the family changes, a child's whole world changes.

Here are some things that happen to children when their parents separate or divorce and what you can do to help them:

- Your child may blame himself for what has happened. He may say things like “If I behave better, daddy will come home.” You can let him know that the divorce is not his fault and there is nothing he can do to make your marriage better.
- Your child may try to make you and your spouse get back together again. She may try to get in trouble by acting up in school, shoplifting, or doing other things so that the other parent has to be called in to help. You must let her know she has no control over your marriage. It is a decision that does not belong to her.
- Younger children may start doing things that they grew out of like wetting the bed or sucking their thumb. You should not make your child feel bad about these things. But you must let him know that he is more grown up and must keep doing “big boy” things.
- Older children may complain about being sick when there is no physical reason. They may also start fights with other children or say bad things to you. You need to be patient and listen to your child's feelings, even if you don't always like what she says. Let her talk.
- Teenagers sometimes do better talking to another adult instead of their parent. You can help by giving your teenager time to talk to some other people.
- Your child may begin to think that you owe him something because of the divorce. You may feel guilty enough about it to think so too. You must make sure your child keeps whatever rules you make. Make sure his bed time, meals, and homework stay on the same schedule.
- Don't buy your children extra things to “make up” for what they've gone through. This will only cause more problems later on.
- While a separation or divorce is a very hard thing, it is a chance to learn something good. All of you can become closer by talking to each other a lot.
- Your children can learn how to deal with hard things in the right way instead of doing things that only cause more trouble.
- You are the adult. You can teach your children to do better by showing them you can do better, too.

Call or visit ValueOptions today: **(877) 615-8503**



TTY - (877) 615-8502

www.vbh-pa.com

