

Parenting - Co-Parenting After Divorce

Most people are confused about boundaries on communication after divorce. Many adults are plagued by the communication problems between their divorced parents. Here are some good communication rules to follow if you are living through a divorce: 1) Remind your children (even if they are adults) that their relationship to each parent is separate and special; 2) Let the children know that if one parent asks them about what the other parent does, who they see/talk to or what they say, it is appropriate to say, "I don't want to talk about it;" 3) Tell the children that it is not a parent's business to know the details of the other parent's life when they are no longer together; 4) But, be sure the children know to tell a parent, counselor, or other trusted adult about anything that hurts, confuses, or bothers them a lot, even if it is Dad or Mom they have to talk about; 5) Remember that when you or another relative speak negatively about a child's parent, you are degrading the child who was made by that parent; 6) If you and your co-parent are unable to rise above your previous patterns of arguing to flexibly solve financial or visitation problems for the sake of your children, get mediation or counseling (these battles keep you married emotionally and are not fair to your children, no matter how necessary they may seem); 7) You must be able to co-parent with tolerance and kindness from teacher conferences to grandchild dedications if you expect your children to blossom emotionally after divorce! You don't have to love each other any more- your kids just need you to be cordial friends. 8) Buy the old, favorite book on this topic: "Helping Your Child Through Your Divorce" by Bienenfeld; 9) Finally, please know that if you are an adult child of divorce, you can start living by these rules even if your parents don't (especially #2 & #3)!