

Police as a Divorced Parent

Divorce is unfortunately common with police officers. Going through a divorce as any person is hard, but having the job as a police officer can add another layer of difficulty.

Make sure that you spend quality time with your child. You may not be able to have a great deal of time with your child with working shifts or with the different schedules that you and your ex-partner have. Quality time is much more important than quantity of time in this case: making sure that the time you spend is authentic, fun, and promotes support and love is much more important than the amount of time spent.

Make sure that you are communicating with your ex-partner. He or she may have divorced you, however, they are co-parenting and being united on parenting your child/children is important to keep stability and routine.

Be open and listen to your children after the divorce. They may be experiencing some reactions and feelings and want you to be there to listen to them. Being willing to listen and talk with them about the changes models behavior that you want your child to have: open, authentic, and willing to listen.



**For More Information, Call:
Nicoletti-Flater Associates**

303-989-1617

References:

Kemp, G. & Smith, M. (2015). Children and Divorce: Helping Kids Cope with Separation and Divorce. HelpGuide.org. Retrieved from <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/family-divorce/children-and-divorce.htm>

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2014). Children and Divorce: Helping Kids After a Breakup. MayoClinic.org. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/divorce/art-20047788>

Additional Reading:

Mom's House, Dad's House: Making Two Homes for Your Child, by Isolina Ricci

Putting Children First: Proven Parenting Strategies for Helping Children Thrive Through Divorce, by JoAnne Pedro-Carroll

Two Homes (Picture Book), by Claire Masurel and Kady MacDonald Denton

Divorce is not the End of the World, by Zoe Stern and Evan Stern

Children and Divorce

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Psychology

Being a Parent While Not Being Partners.

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Divorce and Children

Divorce can be a very stressful – period. It can be even more distressing when children are involved. Trying to find information on this topic is also terribly stressful, and not always helpful.

Based on studies, a broken home can increase chances of negative behaviors; however, the chances of prevalent negative disorders or traits are not common: your divorce is probably not going to hurt your child.

There are things that your child may experience as the divorce progresses, and learning to support and provide tools for your child can reduce some of the stress and anger that a child may have during this time.

Reactions can vary with your child. Younger children may revert back to other behaviors that they once mastered, like bedwetting. Younger children may also act out, which may be unusual for the child at that time.

Older children are more likely to ask about more details and want more information regarding the changes. They may also act out, as they may feel anxiety, sadness, anger or confusion. These emotions may mean the child will act out with anger, but it may also turn inward with anxiety or sadness that looks similar to depression.

In order to make sure that your child/children transition well, being there to support, talk, and listen can make a huge difference.

Explaining Your Divorce

If you are in the first stages of divorce, it can feel difficult to tell your child/children that you and your spouse are planning on separating.

Telling your child is important, and it can be done in a way that supports and reassures your child.

- Tell your child/children with your spouse, together.
- Speak honestly, but not with the details that would hurt your child.
- Divorce is only about the adult, not the child/children, so make sure that they know that they have no part in the change: they did nothing wrong and are not to blame for these changes.
- Make sure that your child/children know that you love them very much.
- Tell your child's teacher, counselor, and other people directly involved in your child's life that you are divorcing so that they can provide support and tell you about any behavioral changes that they see in your child.
- Keep the feelings toward your ex-partner away from your children. Your ex is not their ex and they still can love both of you equally.
- Try not to wait until the last moment to tell your children about the changes to your relationship.
- Explain some of the changes concretely in order to keep routines.

Divorce and Parenting

Even if you divorce, you are still parents to your child, and need to work together.

Parenting is important in this time, and certain things should be done in order to provide support and provide routine.

After the divorce, arguing in front of your children is in no way helpful, and can increase their stress. This also makes the child feel as if he/she is caught in the middle and to blame for the fighting.

Do not talk badly about your ex-partner to your child. This creates confusion with the child. They see your partner as their parent, and hearing negative things about them can create confusion and promote splitting behavior (where a favorite parent is present). This also can make your child feel terrible. They want to support both of you, and hearing these opinions can affect that.



Stay involved. Doing so keeps routine and also provides the support that would happen in a marriage. In times of stress, children need two things the most: predictability and stability/structure.