## Introduction

Life after divorce is hard, especially when there are children in the mix. The following are tips and impacts of Co-parenting.

### Co-Parenting Survival Guide

**Be consistent:**

When it comes to schedules and rules, both houses should "develop some routines which remain consistent" (Wolf, 2010), so that the children are in a stable environment.

**Have consequences:**

Not only should the rules be the same but punishment for bad behavior should also be on the same page. Some questions that you should ask your ex-spouse include:

- Are you committed to giving warnings?
- Will you use time-out?
- Will you revoke privileges when necessary? If so, which ones? (Wolf, 2010)

**Handle transitions well:**

Since this can be a hard time on the kids, you can make this time easier on the children by creating standards of how the transition will take place. Some suggestions are:

- Make drop off and pick up times the same each time.
- Have a consistent way to say bye to the children.
- Be civil during this time and communicate well in front of the children. (Wolf, 2010)

**Show some respect:**

"Ideally, kids benefit most from consistent support from both parents" (Kids health, 2010). Being realistic with the child about the child's part. (Star-Telegram, 2007).

### Short-Term Impact on the BIG stuff

**Education**

School plays a MAJOR role in a child's life. When both parents are involved in a child's schooling, the child feels secure, and can trust both parents better (help guide.org). Constant communication between parents about their child's activities and events can avoid the child becoming frustrated. (Dougless, 2006).

**Financial Issues**

When parents are in agreement financially, it enables the child to feel stable in the environment. Being realistic with the child about money and determining wants and needs with the child will eliminate any confusion on the child's part. (Star-Telegram, 2007).

**Look inward:**

As responsible parents, you must evaluate how your divorce and embarking on single parenthood is affecting your behavior.

Don't fear the big "T" word, also known as therapy:

- **Structural family therapy** Stresses the importance of flexible boundaries between family members. (Ramisch., McVicker., & Sahin, 2009)
- **Solution based therapy** “Solution-focused therapy is a therapeutic approach in which the building of solutions takes priority over the solving of problems.” (Ramisch., McVicker., & Sahin, 2009)

### Long-Term Impacts

**Can the consistency of parents affect a child?**

By being consistent, the child will “know that just because the parents are not together anymore doesn’t mean there are a different set of rules, or procedures” (Ricci 2009). Being consistent can have a lasting impact on a child’s life because “A sensible routine, with regular meals and regular times for shared recreation, translates into ‘home’, being cared about, and a sense of security” (Ricci 2009)

**Long term impact on the BIG stuff**

**Education**

Getting an education plays a major role in a child’s life. Constant communication from the beginning of their child’s schooling will help in the long run. If parents agree with each other on schooling then the child will more likely become happier with his/her education.

**Financial Issues**

When parents get divorced, that stable environment for the child sometimes disappears. It might be difficult to put a child through college because “the financial barriers are still higher than everyone else”. (Brackey 2006) If the two parents are in communication about who is going to pay for what and how they are going to support their child financially, the child can receive everything a child with two parents can receive.