



Co-Parenting: Your Marriage May Be Over, But Your Family Is Not

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Short-Term Impacts

Can the consistency of parents affect a child?

With consistency, the child will feel less stressed about his/her parents separating (help guide.org).

- Create routines
- Having encouragement from both parents can affect the child tremendously!
- “Ideally, kids benefit most from consistent support from both parents” (Kids health, 2010).
- Consistency in discipline is essential in maintain a healthy environment for the child!

Does respect parents have for each other impact on the child?

When parents show respect to each other, it makes a child feel secure in the environment they are in. If parents do not show respect to each other, the child will immediately feel obligated to take sides.

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 need with the child will eliminate any confusion on the child's part. (Star-Telegram, 2007).



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:

“Simple manners are often neglected between co-parents, even though they should be the foundation for team parenting” (Block, M.A., & Smith, M.A., 2010).

Figure out the big stuff:

Going ahead and getting the major decisions out of the way will lift a huge burden off you and your ex's backs such as medical needs, education, and financial needs.

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)

Theoretical Link

Attachment Theory Applied to Co parenting

“The attachment relationship between parent and child reflects a system promoting survival and competent functioning in children.” (McDermott, 2008). Arguments are inevitable in any relationship. When arguments happen around children, they can hear it even if they are not in the room. Children that do not have a secure attachment will feel guilty and unloved by their parents if they are caught in the middle of arguments (Dougless, 2006). To create a secure attachment, you need to make sure that you encourage children and spend quality time with them.

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.

