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How Can I Help My Child Adjust To Divorce?

By Jacqueline B. Sallade, Ed.D.

In separation or divorce, children are the greatest victims. Having witnessed family distress and then having lost their main sense of security, they blame themselves for causing, or at least not preventing the break-up of the family. They desperately seek ways to get their parents back together, including misbehaving, so the parents have to unite to handle or “keep” them.

Chances for adjustment of these children are poorer if the parents do not communicate well or consistently, especially regarding custody and visitation. If the parents make negative or nasty comments about each other to the children, or if they disagree significantly with each other about such important items as discipline, diet, schoolwork, and extracurricular activities, children can become quite confused, anxious, depressed and/or angry, often resulting in behavioral problems.

It is possible for children to enjoy two homes and be happy and well adjusted. Attorneys and psychologists can help separated and divorced parents negotiate and communicate better, so that the best interests of the children are primary, and they are raised to be healthy and productive people.

Talk to someone who can help. If you would like the name of a qualified psychologist in your area, please try our Psychologist Locator.