

# Research paper on parenting styles changes after divorce and the effects on child...

[Family](#), [Divorce](#)



As commonly known, family life experiences many challenges in recent years, due to the increasing rate of divorce (Dilek). It is estimated that more than one million children in Western families have to cope with parental divorce, which in turns affects families to “ the levels of behaviour and adjustment problems of children, the parenting styles they perceive and the attachment styles they develop” (Dilek). It becomes obvious that not only children see their life changing after a parental divorce, but also parenting style itself, which is also affected by numerous factors, such as the child’s age at the time of the divorce as well as the way those families are treated socially within their communities.

Being a parent and performing your parental responsibilities is definitely different compared to parenting a child prior a divorce and is affected by the mother’s financial status and emotional state, among others (Wallerstein, Lewis and Rosenthal). For one thing, mothers tend to be more attached to their children after a divorce, which ultimately changes their relationship with their off springs, one way or another. Another great struggle is that of the two parents trying to find a way to resolve their issues and possible conflicts and re-define their relationship both with each other and their child. As it comes naturally, the way parents take on their parental role after they divorce directly affects their children. For example, mothers are usually very attentive, supportive and nurturing towards their children by nature and their own anxieties and memories coming from the unconscious combined with their own experiences in life influence them while bringing up a child. When a marriage ends up with a divorce, “ The emotional scaffolding of the marriage that created and supported the parent–child unit disappears, and

mothers (as well as fathers) must have resources [] to maintain emotional connection to their children and to create a new parenting structure” (Wallerstein, Lewis and Rosenthal).

What is more, a mother’s task is burdened with the need to sort her feelings for the failed marriage, her anger and disappointment, and try to keep them away from her parenting. If one adds the difficulties she has to confront, being a divorced mother within a rather strict society and the possible economic difficulties, things can get really tough. Unfortunately, some mothers never manage to get over the aforementioned negative feelings that are passed on inside the family and bring stress and negative atmosphere to the children, while others finally move on with their lives and turn a page, bringing back harmony and happiness to the female-headed household (Wallerstein, Lewis and Rosenthal). Studies have concluded that children have behavior problems triggered by their parents’ divorce, especially boys. Such, happens because “ Parent wellbeing and concerns about their ex-partner’s parenting were associated with child adjustment” (Trinder, Kellet and Swift). In other words, parents have a lot to sort out after they divorce and the sooner they are over them, the sooner their child will feel more balanced again.

Studies have shown that children that have experienced their parents’ divorce are more likely to have a poorer mental health compared to children living in families where both parents are together (Lucas, Nicholson and Erbas). Parents also seem to fail to identify the importance of both parents being an integral part of a child’s life and end up fighting or ignoring one another, letting their children unattended, which in turns appear with poorer

mental health among their peers that live in intact families. (Lucas, Nicholson and Erbas).

Another aspect that is interesting to note is when mothers start wanting to get involved with another partner. From longitudinal diary data that was collected over a 2-year period “ mothers who are more child focused engage in more active management of emergent relationships in repartnered families” (Anderson and Greene). Also, mothers that are adult-focused usually don’t have good relationships with their children and spend less time with them. Unfortunately, this condition is a vice versa situation and the same applies to children towards their mothers (Anderson and Greene), which make children, whose parents are divorced, experiencing neglect, rather than love, attention and affection.

Since a divorce separates the child with their father, in most cases, it is important to analyze the changes in paternal parenting as well. People usually consider the time and parenting of a non-resident father as rather shallow and brief, while a mother’s is always taken as deep and a given (Smythe). However, children experience different parenting styles after a divorce that affect their self-esteem and the way they perceive the family structure, which makes the father’s role equally important with the mother’s and affects the child’s wellbeing and development. Fortunately, the so called “ father-absence” parenting pattern seems to be declining over the last decade and staying overnights or shared time arrangements “ facilitate children’s social, emotional and cognitive development, as well as afford greater opportunities for parents to build emotional bonds with their children and to be actively involved in their children’s lives» (Smyth et. al). Results

from studies have revealed that parenting patterns coming from fathers are also different, depending on the father's involvements in the child's life after a divorce. In detail, fathers that did not have joint custody were less supportive towards their children and they had no practical control over them (Bastaits, Ponnet, Mortelmans).

Another very interesting study comes from Japan, where different parental styles were analyzed in families that divorce from a violent spouse or show poor parenting before and after a divorce. Based on a survey it seems that when there is a violent husband within a family and is then removed by divorcing him, poor parenting scores (parents that don't play with their child and don't provide the necessary for their survival and wellbeing) decline, which allow children to have a better life (Fujiwara, Okuyama, and Izumi).

Finally, it would be wise to mention the cases when parents have disparate parenting among siblings after a divorce that has proven devastating results when the children enter adolescence and end up feeling completely marginalized (Wallerstein and Lewis).

No matter how one tries to analyze the effects of a divorce on a child's life and the way parenting changes, one thing is certain and common among all the pre-discussed cases: Children are always affected by a divorce and parents always change the way they raise their children after a divorce. Depending on many variables, parenting can either forward the child's wellbeing and stability or reduce its self-esteem and the way it regards family values and family structure. The best way to cope with a divorce, is to allow the child to have both parents in its life, except in cases where one of the two parents is abusive or violent in any way.

## Works Cited

Anderson, Edward R. and Greene, Shannon M. " My Child and I Are a Package Deal": Balancing Adult and Child Concerns in Repartnering After Divorce". Print. Journal of Family Psychology. Print. Oct2011, Vol. 25 Issue 5, p741-750. 10p.

Bastaits, Kim Ponnet, Koen and Mortelmans, Dimitri . " Parenting of Divorced Fathers and the Association with Children's Self-Esteem". Print. Journal of Youth & Adolescence. Dec2012, Vol. 41 Issue 12, p1643-1656. 14p.

Dilek Sirvanli-Ozen. " Impacts of Divorce on the Behavior and Adjustment Problems, Parenting Styles, and Attachment Styles of Children: Literature Review Including Turkish Studies". Print. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage. Vol 42(3-4), 2005. pp. 127-151. Print. US: Haworth Press.

Fujiwara, Takeo, Okuyama, Makiko and Izumi, Mayuko. " Factors That Contribute to the Improvement in Maternal Parenting After Separation From a Violent Husband or Partner". Print. Journal of Interpersonal Violence. Jan2012, Vol. 27 Issue 2, p380-395. 16p.

Lucas, Nina, Nicholson, Jan M, Erbas, Bircan. " Child mental health after parental separation: The impact of resident/non-resident parenting, parent mental health, conflict and socioeconomics". Print. Journal of Family Studies. Print. Apr2013, Vol. 19 Issue 1, p53-69. 17p. Article

Smyth, Bruce, Rodgers, Bryan, Liz Allen And Vu Son. " Post-separation patterns of children's overnight stays with each parent: A detailed snapshot". Print. Journal of Family Studies. Dec2012, Vol. 18 Issue 2/3, p202-221. 20p.

Smyth, Bruce. " Time to rethink time? The experience of time with children after divorce". Print. Family Matters. Winter2005, Issue 71, p4-10. 7p.

<https://assignbuster.com/research-paper-on-parenting-styles-changes-after-divorce-and-the-effects-on-children/>

Trinder, Liz<sup>1</sup> Kellet, Joanne<sup>2</sup> Swift, Louise. “ The Relationship Between Contact and Child Adjustment in High Conflict Cases after Divorce or Separation” . Print. Child & Adolescent Mental Health. Nov2008, Vol. 13 Issue 4, p181-187. 7p. 5 Charts.

Wallerstein, Judith, Lewis, Julia M. “ Sibling outcomes and disparate parenting and stepparenting after divorce: Report from a 10-year longitudinal study”. Print. Psychoanalytic Psychology, Vol 24(3), Jul, 2007. pp. 445-458. US: Educational Publishing Foundation

Wallerstein, Judith, Lewis, Julia, Packer and Rosenthal, Sherrin. “ Mothers and their children after divorce: Report from a 25-year longitudinal study”. Print. Psychoanalytic Psychology, 07369735, 2013, Vol. 30, Issue 2