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Before having children, most people may picture a family with two parents. However, for many people, the reality is that they are the only parent. There are different reasons why a person becomes a single parent. They may choose this lifestyle, they may have been in a relationship which they left, or perhaps their partner has died or left them. Although raising a child as a single parent can be challenging, it can also be rewarding. The life of a single parent can be very busy. In addition to parenting and taking care of their home, they may be working or going to school. So it's

important to find a way to balance all of the parts of their life. They may not get enough time with their child so they have to look for creative solutions. Like find out the job that lets them work flexible hours. Sometime they take a break from their busy routine to plan something special for them and their child like take a trip to the zoo or go out for ice cream together. The demands of income earning, child raising and housework mean the single parent may have little or no time for themselves. Single parents may involve their children in more decision-making than in dual parenting families.

Finding Help Single parents are probably not alone. They may have family members or friends who are willing to help. If they don't have family members or friends who can help them, they can look for a support group for single parents. The support group gives them chances to share their feelings and get advice. **Positives for the single parent and child** Some of the positives of a single-parent household include: A child from a single-parent home who is loved and supported has no more problems than a child from a two-parent home.

Whether or not the child uses their free time constructively (for example, reading or playing sports) depends on discipline, family routine and quality time between parent and child -? not whether the child has one or two parents living in the house. The child is typically mature and responsible. Children may have more duties and responsibilities around the home from an earlier age, simply because there isn't another adult around. The parent is typically self-reliant and confident. The relationship between parent and child is close. Single fathers are more likely to use positive parenting techniques than married fathers.

Single-parent families are less likely to rely on traditional gender-specific roles than two-parent families. Single parents tend to rely on positive problem-solving strategies rather than punishment or discipline when faced with difficult child behaviors. Balancing a Busy Life The following are some tips: Accept help. If friends and family offer their help, take it! This can mean having someone play with your child while you run errands or having someone to call when 1 OFF groups, after-school activities and parenting classes. These can give you and your child a chance to have fun, learn and make new friends.

If you Don't forget to have fun. Make time for yourself. You need to relax once in a while too! This can be as simple as taking 15 minutes to look at a magazine after your child goes to bed. When You're Overwhelmed Parenting is hard work. All parents have times when they get angry or frustrated. But don't take out your feelings on your child. They might hurt your child. The challenges faced by the single parent vary according to their circumstances,

but there are also common experiences that are shared by most single-parent families.

Single parenting and dual parenting Single parenting differs from dual parenting in many ways, but the most common difference is the way in which the parent interacts with the child. In dual-parenting families, the mother and father usually decide together how to run the household, while in single-parent households, issues such as holidays or major family purchases may be more likely to be decided with the children. Other common differences include: Children of single parents may have more duties and responsibilities around the home from an earlier age, simply because there isn't another adult around.

The single parent may feel stressed because they try to be the perfect parent and the sole breadwinner when there are only 24 hours in every day. Children and single parenting Some of the common problems faced by children in single-parent households include: The need for 'extra hands' around the house may sometimes reduce the time a child can take part in typical children's activities such as hanging out with friends or playing. If a child is used to having a near-equal say in the household, they may clash with teachers and other authority figures who expect unquestioning obedience.

The child may not appreciate that their parent needs adult companionship at times. The child may feel torn between their two parents and feel they must 'pick sides' - this is especially the case if the parents are hostile towards one

another. Single parenting problems Some of the common problems faced by single parents include: The child is more likely to misbehave for them - the day-to-day disciplinarian - than for the parent who lives outside the home. It can be hard work to be the only disciplinarian in the house - you may feel like you're the 'bad guy all the time.

You may feel grieved if your child envies friends with two parents at home. New relationships may be difficult, particularly if your child is suspicious or Jealous. A lonely parent may cling to their children for support and company, making it harder for the child to eventually leave home. Common issues facing separated or divorced families include: The single parent may (even if not deliberately) make the child feel guilty for having fun with their other parent. Some parents involve their children in their marital disputes, instead of discussing the issues in private.

Some separated parents find it next to impossible not to fight at changeover time, which can place the child under stress. Some parents ask their child about what they did or who they saw during the visit (perhaps asking about their ex-partner's new partner). The child may take some time - from a few hours to a few days - to settle down again after visiting their other parent. Things to remember There are different reasons why a person becomes a single parent. Single parenting differs from dual parenting in many ways, but the most common difference is that.