

How to make  
lemonade when life  
gives you lemons –  
single parenting



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Single parent families are different to families with two parents living under the same roof. There are different reasons why a person becomes a single parent such as divorce, broken relationship, death, adoption or living apart though being married. Whatever the reason is; the facts are as follows: The percentage of children who live with two parents has been declining among all racial and ethnic groups. There are 12, 687, 000 female single-parent households, and 4, 028, 000 male single parent households (or over 16, 715, 000 single parent families in the U. S.

(1) Furthermore 32% of all births were to unmarried women in 1997. (2)As a result 28% (20 million) of all children in the US under 18 live with one parent however 84% of children who live with one parent, live with their mother. Moreover 56% of single parent households had no other adult living in the house. (3)There are 11. 9 million single parents in the US. The number of single mothers (9.

8 million) has remained constant while the number of single fathers grew 25% in three years to 2. 1 million in 1998. Men comprise one-sixth of the nation's single parents. (4)On child basis, of children living with one parent: 38% lived with a divorced parent; 35% with a never-married parent; 19% with a separated parent; 4% with a widowed parent; 4% with a parent whose spouse lived elsewhere because of business or some other reason.

Most single-parent children live in metropolitan areas (14. 5 million), and six in 10 of them (9. 2 million) are in cities with populations of 1 million or more.

(5) The challenges faced by the single parent vary according to their circumstances (see resource #4), but there are also common experiences

that are shared by most single parent families. How Single Parenting Differs from 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, parents decide together how to run the household, while in single parent households, parent mostly decides together with the children. The delegation of some authority and responsibility of the other parent is carried out by the children. 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. And the single parent carries the rest of all authority and responsibility trying to be a perfect one emotionally and financially, usually feeling stressy as it is not easy to be a mom and dad for a child and all through a day and a life time...

(See resources # 21, 22, 26) Possible Problems for Children The extra responsibilities may sometimes reduce the time a child can take part in typical child activities such as hanging out with friends or playing. Because of having some kind of authority and right to express them in near-equal say within the family, they may experience clashes with authorities expecting unquestioning obedience like teachers or grandparents. Being closer with the single parent and sometimes jealous of, children may object to parent's friends or relationships. Despite loving and being in need of both parents, they might be forced to pick a side, lack the other or feel thorn between them by being under the influence of them. Possible Problems for the Single Parent However much and worthy is done for the child by the lived together, <https://assignbuster.com/how-to-make-lemonade-when-life-gives-you-lemons-single-parenting/>

the parent being not at home deserves and receives more love, respect and missing from the child. The child is more likely to misbehave the ones at 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. (See resource #9)Single parents feel sorry and sad when children admire others with dual parents. The children's jealousy or parent's lack of time or mood for new relationships might lead to anti-social, lonely, unhappy human. But mostly the biggest problem is having little or no time for themselves because of working both home and out, carrying both roles: mom and dad. Custody and non-custody parents might feel hatred and are usually in conflict with each other.

Therefore those do their best to prevent or minimize the rights of the other parent whereas maximizing the responsibility or financial share of the other party. After visits, some parents question the child about the other parent; make them feel guilty for an enjoyable day, stress children at changeover times, lack being civil when met. Those endless conflicts mostly harm the child and make the non-custody parent feel as a disposable parent. (See resources # 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19)Positives for the Single Parent and ChildA child from a single parent home who is loved and supported has no more problems than a child from a two parent home. Feeling the responsibility of carrying the role of a dual-parent , single parents can and usually do learn more about their child's ever changing emotional, physical, educational, nutritional, interpersonal, foundational, spiritual, and individual needs. The relationship between parent and child is close.

(See resource # 27) 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. (see resource # 25) The child is typically mature and responsible. The parent is typically self-reliant and confident. The relationship between parent and child is close.

Single parent families are less likely to rely on traditional gender-specific roles than two parent families. Single fathers are more likely to use positive parenting techniques than married fathers. Single parents tend to rely on positive problem-solving strategies rather than punitive discipline when faced with difficult child behaviors. (See resources # 8, 12, 13) As long as the communication between parents are effective and efficient; seeking for the "best" for the child and implementing the shares, single parenting can be turned into an art which both parents and mostly the child will benefit from (see resources # 20, 24, 28) Single parents are a lot more in close contact with other single parents when compared to dual-parents in sharing both the burden of problems / troubles and also joy of sharing and memories.

(See resources # 11, 23) Conclusion Lois V. Nightingale, Ph. D. Clinical Psychologist, very well expresses the rights of a child/children whose parents are divorced (can be applied to any kind of loss of the other parent) in her book, *My Parents Still Love Me Even Though They're Getting Divorced*. (see resource # 3). As long as those rights are not only written words but lived facts, all the possible negative effects of divorce can be solved or diminished and the end result is a healthy, happy kid and a single parent.

An article named “ Confronting the Myths of Single Parenting” by Loanda Cullen, a psychotherapist in Colorado, disproves all the myths about single parenting. These myths can be confronted successfully and new strength can be found in the truth. As with so many aspects of single parenting, we rise to the challenge and become better people because of it. (See resource #5)A new multiethnic study at Cornell University has found that being a single parent does not appear to have a negative effect on the behavior or educational performance of a mother’s 12- and 13-year-old children. What mattered most in this study, Cornell researcher Henry Ricciuti says, is a mother’s education and ability level and, to a lesser extent, family income and quality of the home environment.

(See resource #7)Many times single parents discover they are capable of doing more than they ever thought possible and that they have skills they did not know they had. They become more self-reliant and less co-dependent upon others for their existence. And hopefully they learn that true happiness must come from within, not from other people. Visitation, collecting child support, joint custody of children, and not to mention power struggles, are all issues that present challenges to single parents. Fortunate are the ones who can settle their differences harmoniously as it makes life much easier not only for them, but also for the children.

However, all challenges can provide opportunities for learning and growing. View them as challenges to be overcome, not obstacles of defeat. Children in single-parent homes can learn to help with household chores and care for younger siblings, which helps them develop maturity quicker than those families that have two parents who do everything for them. Children can <https://assignbuster.com/how-to-make-lemonade-when-life-gives-you-lemons-single-parenting/>

learn more quickly to be self-reliant, solve problems, and accept responsibility for their actions. They also can learn that life is not fair and to make the best of the situation. Children can also benefit by sometimes having the best of both worlds-quality time with each of their parents individually, which is something they may not get in a traditional two-parent family where the parents may get so caught up with making a living that they forget to make a family life.

Teach your children about love and respect for others. Teach them about living in peace with themselves and others. Teach them how to value life and enjoy it. In short, teach them to count their blessings and not look at the bad situations they cannot change. Help them find ways to learn and grow from the experience. Teach them how to make lemonade when life gives you lemons.

And do not forget, children learn by example, so be a good role model for them to follow by setting a good example.