

Blending families after divorce

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



Introduction

Most people think of marriage as a joyful step that entails staying together with their loved ones happily forever. The reality is different because most people find marriage does not always turn out as they expected after being together for some time. In the contemporary world, changes in marriages are evident as divorce cases have heightened significantly in comparison to the previous years. According to some research, divorce rates stands at approximately over 45%. Moreover, close to half of those who divorce end up remarrying and forming new families. Causes of divorce are many ranging from lack of money to drug abuse by either spouses. However, one of the more common and irreconcilable cause of divorce is infidelity, in which one of the partners cheats. Divorce has become common because people do not find true reasons to marry but often do so as a requirement, a stage of life, or because of material gains. Personal interests often trigger issues in marriage and might result to conflicts that end up as divorce cases.

Divorce is the effect of a marriage, which comprises of difficulties that are insurmountable as partners grow apart and cannot get along anymore. When partners undergo divorce and end up remarrying, a blended family forms. Blended families come from divorce cases, widows and remarrying with or without the presence of kids. These type of families face challenges more than the other families. For instance, the struggle involves divorce traumas by either of the spouses. In a case where children are involved, they take a while before getting used to a new figure for a parent, as well as siblings that they have to get along with. However, blended families experience

advantages as well, such as a bigger family to share experiences. This essay focusses on discussing blending families after divorce when one spouse cheats.

Step parenting is tricky under many circumstances even if there are some people who still believe in it. The minefield comes in when one or both partners have to attend to the needs of a kid who probably does not like you and you have to get along with due to a blended family. Reports say it can take several years before blending families inclusive of the children from both partners, some of which are adult children of the spouses, as well as the aunts and uncles that come in hand with blending families. More challenges perpetuate in blended families and close to half of those spouses who engage in blending families end up divorcing one again. According to research, over 40% of marriage dissolutions in present years subject to people who had been married before. It is without doubt that a child's loyalty lies with biological parents. Therefore, most problems influencing step households is the fact that children have to identify with a new 'parent' in these blended families(Zeleznikow & Zeleznikow, 2015). Despite the fact that most divorcees engage in co-parenting, children's lives depend on the surroundings that they live and play in. Arrival of new children who probably have to share rooms, toys and attention will automatically change the order of things, and is likely to transform into tension.

The truth about blended families

Blended families do not precisely fall under the same structure offered in traditional families. These types of families bring different characters who

obviously have grown in completely different ways under one roof. Stepfamilies involve two households who do not relate by blood and the kids make stressful trips back and forth. Moreover, blended families bring into the picture an ex or a deceased person from either families. These families face social bias, ignorance and compete with each other with the aim of determining which family is better than the other (Browne, 2016). Most cases, when the term “blended families” occurs, many people tend to ignore the differences between the first and stepfamilies. Many perpetuate the idea that the only step required for these families to work is melding. Moreover, the claim that looking, feeling, and acting like first families are the way to attain a successful blended family. This is wrong and the reality is different because there are different factors that must not be ignored for the family to coexist. This belief creates expectations and more often, stresses the people involved preventing the authentic connection that is important from happening. According to one teenage girl in an interview, “I like her but I don’t want her to be my mum” is all she said (Sanner, Coleman & Ganong, 2018).

Pros of blending families after divorce

There are different pros and cons involved in blending families after divorce when one partner cheats. Living in a blended family is not easy, however, with compassion, love willingness, and sacrifice; it will turn out to a wonderful journey worthy of the sacrifice. The pros of blended families include:

- Advantageous on economic grounds

Judgmental people tend to think this advantage as an evil cause. Most people deduce “ he’s remarrying for money. In addition, suggest how horrible it is. Everybody knows that the blending families are all because of genuine companionships and love (Ransom, 2016).

However, denying the fact that blended families enjoy two sources of income is not realistic. This only means a raised standard of living for everyone in the family. Single parents families go through struggles to ensure ends meet. When blended families happen, there is reduced struggles and stress since both partners involved help in supporting the family financially. Two families that had married before come together for love and to help their children through supporting each other. Both parents often have something to put on table so that it does not appear one is exploiting another. If the marriage is for love, some lucky people may find wealthy partners that are willing to help both families as long as they remain husband and wife to their children, but rarely is this the case.

- When parents are happy, children become happier

In previous marriages prior to divorce, formation of the blended families, the atmosphere at home was quite intense as both parents were sailing through a tough road due to breaking apart (Christiansen, 2015). This period affects the children and makes them act and feel some type of way. Parents in a blended family tend to be happier in comparison to previous families who were at the verge of separation. When parent are happy, this means a positive environment at home

with lots of love. Ultimately, this results into happier children whose performance at school improves as noted by research.

- More role models

In blended families, there are two parents involved and this offers the children two figures to imitate. It is primarily an opportunity for the children to have added role model apart from the usual biological parents. According to research, availability of a new parent as well as the relatives that come along with blended families positively influence the development of an all-round child (Ransom, 2016). Children also get to learn how intimate relationships should really be due to the relationships between partners in a blended family, which in most cases comprise of love and support.

- Added family members

There are many differences between a blended family and other families. It does not only rotate around added parents and step siblings, it involves more family members such as relatives in which developing relationships with is amazing (Leary, & Baumeister, 2017). The presence of more aunts, uncles, and grandparents offers an opportunity to the children to enjoy life more, celebrate with the added family members, and generally support each other. Blended families allows for presence of more shoulders that offer love and support.

- Ability to adjust to a new environment

Blended families do not just involve a few individuals; it is all about two households raised differently with contrasting norms, values, and

ideals who live under a single roof (Riness, & Sailor, 2015). Despite how difficult it may be to adjust in the beginning, the truth is that blended families offers both the kids and parents a new opportunity to learn living with each other, share different things in life while at the same time sacrifice without complaints. In this case, children in blended families learn how to tackle life problems, how to endure managing relationships and how to enable them adjust in instances when there are so many different people. This prepares the children for life instances when they will have to undergo situations needing these abilities.

Cons of blending families after divorce

However much people wish it works, the reality in blending families can be a far cry from the rosy picture most people tend to paint for themselves. This is about people who have different personalities living together; it is not a bed of roses. For those couples who marry without children, there is always that period of getting to know each other before kids appears. This is not the case in blended families. People go through challenges. The disadvantages of blending families include:

- Children acting out

In a fair manner, this is not always something the kids do deliberately. Blending families is a big change for the children, even among the spouses in these families, they take time to accept the situation (Bengtson, 2018). More often than not, children become rebellious and insecure due to the anger they have towards their parent involved or

the other spouse in the blended family. This scenario may lead to them acting out either in school or at home. Acting out is broad, and may involve tantrum throwing or instances when they tell the other spouse that he or she is not their biological parent (Bengtson, 2018). Children may bully the other children as well or go through a listless feeling or a sense of withdrawal from everything around them.

- Jealousy and confusion

The most common emotion that children undergo in blended families is jealousy. There are instances when the children get jealous because of the new stepparent taking their biological parent's love and affection and even the feeling that their stepsiblings are trying to get all the love meant for them (Turunen, 2014). In most cases, these children are always confused on what to feel in their new families. The thought of betraying the estranged parent always haunts them and they have to live with it due to the current situation. Moreover, they may be feeling guilty for not being happy for their other parent's happiness. It is always a mixed reaction that most do not know how to deal with. In the case of younger children, the thought of having to share their toys makes them jealous and the fact that the biological parent involved has to engage the other kids as well, may make them act out.

- Disciplinary related problems

The issue of discipline is the most challenging situation in most blended families. Children at times may even refuse to take up punishments from their step parents due to the feeling of them

abusing their rights. In most cases, due to the difference in the type of punishment they have to endure from what they normally do, couples in blended families may end up breaking and divorcing as well.

Disciplining the other person's child may usually result in feelings of doubt and anger. Moreover, when stepparents discipline the children from the other parents, feelings of resentments may occur between the kids and them, which grow with time leading to even worse scenarios.

- Ill feelings among people in blended families

Research shows that it is not necessary for every individual in the new blended families to like and support each other, in fact, some cases involve people not being civil with each other let alone creating harmonious and peaceful relationships. What parents should realize is that the change is about not only them, the children and other members of the family have to endure as well. In essence, the children go through tougher situations since they do not have that loving partner who supports them throughout the journey. Sometimes, one spouse may have hatred towards the other's children or even among the step children love may not exist. Therefore, it is only realistic for blended families to undergo ill feelings in the process of adjusting to each other.

- Feelings of insecurity

Insecurity is one problem that needs a significant attention if one person hopes for a successful blended family. Children tend to feel

insecure when they have to move into a new neighborhood. Moreover, they share space with complete strangers as well as someone different taking up all the attention their biological parent makes them insecure. What is interesting is the fact that insecurity issue does not relate to children alone, even spouses tend to feel intimidated when they see their partners showing too much love for their biological kids.

Strategies for making blended families work

Both pros and cons are present in blended families. However, in most cases, people look into the cons than the pros as risking one's family is very challenging in the name of trying to blend families. However, it is worth noting that all it takes to blend families after divorce is the readiness of partners to endure both bad and good moments and stick to their families. It is a saying that no issue is great to the point of no solution. The will to tackle the challenges is what makes it work. There are different strategies to make blended families work. They include:

- One has to acknowledge the challenges

Every parent hopes for the blended family to get along. However, it is not easy to endure co-parenting with the new partner. Off course, it takes putting in work to plan on how the new family will handle issues such as finances, children discipline, and the rest. However, acknowledging the problem is the first step to a successful journey (Turunen, 2014). There are cases when the other partner makes it clear that they are not willing to stand up for kids that are not theirs. It

is upon a person to stand up for his or her own children at the end of the day.

- Creating a plan

Most people ignore this step in blending families. However, this is a significant step for both parents in blended families have to endure. For instance, they both need to know their roles in the parenting process to ensure the children develop well. Moreover, the division of labor among the kids will suppress issues to do with jealousy when one child feels overworked. Creating time for themselves is also a significant step during planning (Riness, & Sailor, 2015). In most cases, the feeling of dealing with new people may be overwhelming to partners; therefore, it is imperative for them to have some time set out for themselves. In essence, the parents need to identify the level of access the extended family may have in the newly formed family as most times, breakages happen due to cases of grandparents not liking members of the other family.

- Stepping into the children's shoes

More often than not, it is always difficult to understand what the other person is undergoing if you have not walked in their shoes. Both a person's biological children and stepchildren are sailing in the same boat. They did not get an opportunity to make a choice whether they wanted to be part of the blended family or not. Therefore, it is imperative for both partners to be patient and take good care of them (Christiansen, 2015). The kids should be given time to adapt to the

situation. Talking to the children often by both parents should be a driving force to make them understand their parents' point of view.

Conclusion

In conclusion, dealing with extended families is complicated and this becomes worse when the handling two divorced families with parents that have decided to remarry. Children often ask about their original parents but as they attain teenage years, they understand but become rude to their stepparents. These are some of the consequences of divorce and blended families. Psychologists suggest that a stepparent must allow the children to express themselves but also make them understand you are their guardian and parent despite not being biological parent. Most developed countries experience coping issues in blended families because children often question their stepparents despite the parents offering the best parenting services. In third world countries, the case is different because a child has no say over marriage and divorce and must acknowledge their new parents. However, family support and love are some of the core values needed for these families to work. Parents should not try making blended families appear as first families. This primary step breaks blended families. When all the challenges pass, there will be joy and happiness despite difficulties.