

# The negative effects of divorce on children

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



" So many persons think divorce a panacea for every ill, find out, when they try it, that the remedy is worse than the disease" (Qtd in Harper 192). Divorce in any situation tears a child apart, tossing them from one house to another, limiting the time spent with their parents, and confusing them. There aren't very many reasons that would show to be more beneficial for the parent to leave than to stay and keep their marriage. Usually it's better for the children if their parents work through their differences rather than get a divorce. To anyone, divorce is a horrible word.

There is no way to make the word sound better or make it less painful. According to the Webster's Dictionary, divorce is " the legal dissolution of marriage or the termination of an existing relationship or union" (Webster's 370). This definition makes it seem formal and doesn't show the feeling that people have when the word is mentioned. To most children, divorce is much more than a legal dissolution; it is their whole world being torn apart and thrown on the ground in pieces. One of the biggest problems that divorce imposes on children is the decision of who they should live with.

Usually parents divorce when children are small and the children have no say in where they go. Since the child can't choose, this usually leads to custody battles that end in split custody or joint custody. Whatever the choice turns out to be, either one of them will be detrimental to the child. When split custody is decided, it forces either the child or the court to choose which parent to live with and which one is in the child's best interest. It limits the time the child spends with both parents. When the child only lives with one parent, the relationship with the other parent can be severely damaged.

According to the National Survey of Children, close to half of all children with divorced parents have not seen their nonresidential parent in the past year, and only one in six had weekly contact (Whitehead 2). Since the children don't see both their parents often, the parent that the child lives is usually thought of as strict and "no fun" because that parent is always there and is always responsible for disciplining the child. This can damage and cause social problems with the child. The nonresidential parent is usually viewed as the fun, exciting one that the child wants to be with.

This parent usually tries to give the child presents, and money almost like they are using it in an attempt to "buy" the child's love. The child doesn't usually feel the love and security of having a close family, since they are constantly moving from house to house. Because of the constant movement, the child doesn't usually receive quality time from either parent, and it makes it more difficult to feel loved. Joint custody, on the other hand, proves to be even less successful (Zinmeister 29). This type of custody is now allowed in half of the states in the US, although, joint custody is very unusual because of the extreme complications.

In California, where divorce is more common than anywhere else, only eighteen percent of divorced couples have joint custody. Even when the divorced parents maintain regular contact with their children, truly cooperative child rearing is rare (Zinmeister 29). Research shows, that the parents have no communication or mutual reinforcement; this usually leads to very unhealthy relationships with their children. Joint custody is even worse on a child because there is even more movement involved. With split

custody, the child goes to the nonresidential parent's house on a certain schedule.

In joint custody, however, the child is constantly moves back and forth between houses, causing an even larger lack of time between parent and their child. The custody battle can be damaging, but the divorce of a child's parents can also confuse the child, suggesting that it is better for parents to stay together. The child does not really know what commitment really means. Since these children see their parents breaking vows without a second thought, they start to think that whats right for the parents must be the right thing for them to do too.

Children are basically shown that they dont have to work out their problems as long as they can run away. This is one reason that today, when someone makes a promise, there is really no promise of whether it will happen or not. According to The Effects of Divorce on Children, an article written by J. Lynn Rhodes, young adults whose parents have divorced previously are likely to have social problems and trouble forming and maintaining intimate relationships (Effects 1). The value of a person's " word" has lessened.

Partly because of bad examples parents are setting for their children when they get a divorce. Generally, its better for children to suffer a bad marriage than to cope with divorce. According to University of Michigan psychologist and divorce expert Neil Kalter, the misery of an unhappy marriage is less significant than the changes after a divorce. The children would rather their parents keep fighting and not get divorced (Marriage 64). Although it doesnt seem logical, it shows that children want their parents to be together no matter what the cost.

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The alternative to most divorces is not life in a war zone (Zinmeister 30). In the most of the number of divorces there is no problem or issue that could ruin a person's childhood. These divorces almost always make the child worse off and create many unnecessary problems for the child. If parents would concentrate harder on working their problems out rather than their own personal happiness, the children would be better off. Divorce, however, isn't always a terrible thing. In a few situations it is for the best.

The two situations that can prove beneficial for a person to get a divorce are abusive relationships and adultery. When one parent is abusive, whether verbal, physical, or sexual, to the children, it is more beneficial to the child if the parent leaves (Huffman 4). Also, if one parent is physically abusing the other, the marriage should be ended. If a child watches their parent get beaten their entire life, they could think that it's okay to act that way to other people or they can begin to hate the parent for staying.

Also, when a spouse is committing adultery, divorce is definitely an option. When one spouse is faced with the affairs and still won't stop having them, the Bible gives the option of divorce. In Matthew 19: 8-9 it says, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery" (Huffman 9). Even under these circumstances, Jesus permitted divorce, but he didn't encourage it. It generally shows to be more beneficial for a child if their parents stay in an imperfect marriage rather than getting a divorce. The things that are involved with a divorce severely damage a child. The child lacks a "sense of belonging" and becomes very confused.

Therefore, when a person gets married, they need to think long and hard to make sure that it is the right choice for them and for possible children that they may have one day.

The person needs to make sure that they don't settle for the person they can live with; they need to wait for the person that they cannot live without. As Jesus says in Mark 10: 5-9: It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law. But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one. Therefore what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder (Huffman 1).

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