

The negative effects of single parenting

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Introduction

Single parenting has nowadays become one of the most controversial topics among many communities. Common in the past few decades, single parenting can be caused by a number of factors, and these factors can either be voluntary or involuntary. Involuntarily, single parenting, can be caused by the death of one spouse; it can also be voluntarily initiated by the disagreement between the two parties, ultimately leading to separation. In case of abandonment, separation or divorce, one party will function as the main provider most of the time for most of the child's life. Because of separation, children are far more likely to have a calmer and happier household, unlike parents with fewer arguments and outbreaks. Arguments and fights are very common in almost every single household, yet if arguments are not dealt with strategically, children will be the first victims. In fact, divorce could be the ultimate solution. In the United States, one child out of two lives with a single parent due to separation. Statistics has proven that single parenting is increasing steadily every year. Children perceive divorce as a confirmation that their parents will never get back together. However, when two parents split up children usually feel hopeful that their parents may get together again one day. Separation of the two parents deprive children of their emotional, financial and educational stability.

Mental Illness and Alcohol Abuse

There are many factors that participate in Children's emotional and mental distress due to separation. Boys whose parents had split up had the highest rate of childhood mental illness in 2004, the office for National Statistics

(ONS) said, In contrast, only 8% of boys living with married parents suffered from mental disorders. Studies proved that children from single-parent families are twice as likely to experience mental illness, suicide attempts and alcohol abuse. It can permanently alter the child's brain structure; it was found that those who grew up without a father, in particular, had a variation in brain development, particularly in the frontal cortex responsible for social and cognitive abilities. This provides a biological explanation for the aforementioned increased risk of substance and alcohol abuse.

Too Busy Parents

Moreover, parents cannot afford to pay for good education and activities, thus, children lack a good quality life. Moreover, children grow up differently because their parents have to take two roles and under more stress trying to support while at the same time being there for the children. It does not always work out well because while worrying about other things, another could be left out such as being there for the kids. It is proven that the most common problems for single parents' household is that parents are too busy working to provide for their family. That creates detached children who are trying to cope with their problems at home. Elder children end up having to take so much responsibility, taking care of the younger sibling or even taking care of the household.

Stepfamily

One of the common factors that affects children emotionally is being a part of a stepfamily. A stepfamily will never function like a biological family. It is distressing for children when their single parent starts a new relationship,

they may not like their new guest or feel overly protective of their parent. When you are related by blood, many things naturally come such as love, forgiveness and grace. Whereas in stepfamilies it is usually the opposite. The stepparent has to form a relationship from scratch and will never be accorded the same amount of love. With stepfamilies, there is usually more than one household; therefore children have to move from one house to another to spend time with their biological parent. This is usually the area of all conflict, especially around the area of scheduling and visitation position. In biological families usually, the dad is the head of the family then comes the mom and the children in the order in which they were born. In stepfamilies, this is different, simply because a stepparent comes to find an already made home. This causes a lot of confusion for children, in the regard to what their roles are and what is the position or the authority in their family. In addition, children have new stepsiblings to build a relationship with. It is a challenge for stepparents to treat their stepchild as if they treat their own flesh and blood. A stepfamily could survive as long as both parents have understanding how to treat all children equally. This could be true but not in all situations.

Education, Financial Problems and a Lot of Pressure

Living with a single parent affects the child's academic progress, financial stability and behaviour at school. Academic progress and discipline are not only the teacher's responsibility; it also requires both parents involvement. National Assessment of Educational Progress in the U. S have examined children's mathematics and reading scores between 1990 and 2011, scores were significantly decreasing. Most single parents have financial problems

because they have a single sided income, unlike traditional families. Parents put themselves into an excessive workload to provide for their children everything they need. Apparently, it puts high pressure on single parents, who thrive to do their best. It is a lot of pressure for one parent to make all the decisions, it is indeed emotionally exhausting. It is a single parent responsibility to meet his/her children emotional needs, as well as, their personal needs. Some children who live with single parents, exhibited disruptive behaviour and anger tantrums at school.

Need for Role Models

Some people argue that, children do well with a single, loving adult role model as long as this parent offers to spend quality time and shows interest in their lives. In addition, physical communication and paying positive attention provides children with a sense of security and an increased self-worth. This could be true; however, researches proved that boys need their fathers around them to have a male role model, who teaches them lessons about how to become a man. Second, they suffer from low self-esteem and may not take an active role in their community. Children growing in single-parent families do not have a role model for their relationships in the future and will develop trust issues. In addition, it is common at schools that children who live with single parents exhibit introversion and social detachment.

Conclusion

This is a very argumentative topic, although the effects of single parenting has shown to be mostly negative, it is also significant to point out that single

parenting maybe the only option for many families living under the same roof. In conclusion, single parenting takes a toll on children's emotional life and it controls almost every part of their lives. Single parenting will remain one of the hardest jobs someone could ever have. Creating mentally healthy children who can take part in society is one of the greatest things a person could ever do; however, unfortunately it takes two parents to create a healthy human being.