

Navigating the challenges of blended families summary



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Chris Sims Professor Betty Keel English 1101 15 September 2008 Navigating the Challenges of Blended Families Summary A blended family not only creates a larger family, it also creates much chaos. It oftentimes seems as if the workload almost doubles for single parents when they decide to combine families through marriage. Almost seventy-five percent of the 1.

2 million Americans who divorce each year will eventually remarry. The stepfamily life is much more complicated than one would expect. On average, it takes from two to five years for a stepfamily to establish itself. There are many obstacles to overcome when daddy's girlfriend becomes step mom; a child who once thought of the nice woman as a playmate may have a hard time obeying her new disciplinary procedures. Many parents are hesitant to discipline their children after a divorce because parents feel as if their child is having a hard time adjusting and just needs a few days to become acclimated with the changes. It is suggested that the new spouses sit down ahead of time and "hash" out child rearing and discipline expectations.

Discipline is actually one of the main causes of tension in a blended family. Kids become confused and insecure when there is no parental consistency. Young children develop trust when they experience fair, effective discipline. Parents should also develop a list of values they both want to teach.

Next, they should sketch a list of household rules. It can be particularly difficult for a new stepparent to lay down the law. It is advised that the biological parents take responsibility for enforcing the rules, while the

stepparent acts as deputy. Nurture is a key component to a successful blended family.

Parents must not only nurture their children, but they must also nurture the spousal relationship. Putting more energy into the couple may improve the relationship with all the children, who will begin to see the parents as a strong, cohesive unit, instead of two squabbling individuals. Set aside time to discuss family issues. At the end of each meeting, do something special, such a massage, or watch a movie. Also, plan regular date nights and weekends away where kid topics are off limits.

No matter how harmonious the relationship within the house is, the relationship with the ex is not always the same. Research indicates that the primary sources of children's problems come the inability of the parents to keep the negative feelings about their ex to themselves. Children take their emotional cues from their parents. In the end, one must remember that a blended family is first and foremost, a family. It is a family within a family.

The more parenting experience and knowledge, the better one will become at tackling this situation. Easing the Pain of Divorce Summary Almost half of all marriages end in divorce, with one-third of all break-ups occurring within the first five years of marriage. Coincidentally, this is the time when most couples decide to start a family. Divorce is not only painful for adults, but it also takes a toll on children. Just like adults have their own way of coping with divorce, young children also cope in different ways. Most of these ways happen to be negative ways.

How the divorcees handle to divorce will have a direct impact on how the children identify with the world around them. If the child constantly hears arguing and cursing throughout the day, he will feel frightened, insecure, and frustrated. This, in turn, can affect both psychological and intellectual development. In many cases, parents become so involved in their own problems, they tend to fail to meet their baby's emotional needs. When babies become upset, they can't eat or sleep.

They develop excessive crying, an inability to be soothed, clinginess, and a lack of interest in the world around them. Toddlers are also affected by this change. They may become afraid of the dark or being left alone. Young kids whose parents are separated may develop a sense of abandonment.

They may assume that because one parent left, there is a possibility that the other parent will also so. In response, they oftentimes will cling to the primary caregiver. Separation anxiety is very common in children with divorced parents. In order to help a child adjust to divorce, stick to daily routines.

It is crucial to make the child feel safe and loved. Regular routines allow for a sense of security. Answer questions honestly. The older a child becomes, the more inquisitive he will be about changes around him. Explain the situation simply and reassuringly.

Avoid arguing in front of children. Children ages three and under don't understand the complexity of relationships. Therefore, if they witness an argument, they may feel it is their fault. Even when there is a disagreement,

speaking in normal tones. Being divorced brings up many new parenting challenges.

Communication makes this transition much easier to handle. Works Cited
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