

Additional Resources for Divorced Parents

- **Psychological Effects of Divorce on Children:**
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/psychological-effects-of-divorce-on-kids-4140170>
- **Helping Children Through a Divorce:**
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/help-child-divorce.html>
- **Co-Parenting Tips for Divorced and Separated Families:**
<https://www.survivedivorce.com/co-parenting-tips>
- **Making Stepfamilies Work:**
<https://www.apa.org/topics/stepfamily>
- **Custody & Parenting FAQ:**
<https://seattledivorceservices.com/resources/qa/custody-parenting/>

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A Parenting Guide to Divorce



AFTER THE DIVORCE: ADVICE FOR CO-PARENTING & KEEPING THE PEACE

A Brochure Prepared by
Seattle Divorce Services

REDUCE STRESS ON YOU AND YOUR CHILD ONCE THE DIVORCE IS FINALIZE

While the divorce process takes time, eventually, the process will be over. When it is, this is when reality sets in for most children, and this is when parents learn how effectively they have addressed and managed all of the various aspects of dividing their household and bringing their marriage to an end.

Importantly, while it is possible to modify certain aspects of a divorce in some cases, parents should generally consider the terms of their divorce final—especially in the short term. But, with a comprehensive and mutually-agreeable parenting plan in place, divorced parents (and their children) will usually be able to settle into their new lives with a solid foundation and minimal risk of conflict.

Adjusting to post-divorce life can be very different for parents who establish joint custody arrangements and for those who choose to co-parent. Here are some tips for parenting after a divorce in each scenario:



TIPS FOR PARENTS WHO WILL SHARE JOINT CUSTODY AFTER THEIR DIVORCE

If you will be splitting parenting time with your former spouse after your divorce, it will be important to:

1. Make Sure You Know the Terms of Your Divorce

You worked hard to arrive at a workable parenting plan, so make sure you use it. Stick to your plan, and try to avoid miscues or oversights that could lead to issues with your former spouse.

2. Make a Commitment to Communicate Amicably

You will still need to communicate with your former spouse about various issues. To minimize the likelihood of confrontations, make a commitment to always communicate amicably, and never discuss potentially-heated issues while your children are around.

3. If an Issue Comes Up, Address it Proactively

If you run into an issue, do not let it linger. Lingering issues usually get worse over time, and waiting can make it harder to find a mutually-agreeable solution.

4. Keep Your Children's Interests First

Your children will continue to feel the effects of your divorce long after it is over. As you move on, keep your children's interests first, and continue to monitor for signs of adverse emotional effects.

5. If You Need to Make a Change, Seek Help First

If circumstances change and your parenting plan no longer works, hire an attorney to help you [request a modification](#) before you do anything inconsistent with your plan.

TIPS FOR PARENTS WHO WILL BE CO-PARENTING AFTER DIVORCE

If you and your former spouse will be co-parenting after your divorce, these tips will help you, your former spouse, and your children adjust to your new post-divorce life:

1. Make Sure Your Children Understand Their Situation

Co-parenting can be confusing for children who have just seen their parents go through a divorce. Make sure they understand their situation, and explain how things will be different (and similar) going forward.

2. Emphasize Open and Honest Communication

Making co-parenting work is all about communicating effectively. You and your co-parent will need to talk on a regular basis, and it will be important to make sure you are always cordial and cooperative in front of your children.

3. Don't Ignore Your Own Personal Needs

Co-parenting can be stressful, especially in the immediate aftermath of your divorce. While your children need to come first, you need to take care of your own personal needs as well.

4. Err On the Side of Mutual Benefit

When in doubt, err on the side of doing what is best for you, your former spouse, and your children. For co-parenting to work, both parents need to be committed to the arrangement's success.

5. If Something Isn't Working, Talk About It

Finally, if something isn't working for you, or if things aren't going quite how you expected, talk about it. Just like joint custody arrangements, letting issues linger can lead to bigger problems, while being proactive can reduce stress and alleviate uncertainty for everyone involved.