

13 Remarkable Thoughts for Helping Your Kids during the Divorce

It is simply not enough to love your children and want to minimize the effects of the divorce upon them. Parenting during divorce is a heroic task. It requires doing certain things that most people do not want to do. Heroes force themselves to overcome this resistance. They help their children despite their personal discomfort or likes and dislikes.

While this website contains many sound (and often, little known) parenting tips, the insights on this page deserve special mention and recognition. They are just a sampling of the helpful ideas of Charles and Barbara Asher, the hosts of three pro-children websites:

www.UpToParents.org (for divorcing and divorced parents)

www.ProudToParent.org (for never-married parents)

www.WhileWeHeal.org (for parents working through marital problems).

Charlie is an Indiana divorce lawyer and mediator, and Barb is a social worker and family counselor. They have put their "day jobs" on a back burner and have formed a Family Foundation to benefit children of divorce. Talk about heroes!

Again, this is just a sampling of some of Charlie and Barb's insights:

- The only job of children is to be children. They cannot be children unless their parents are adults.
- Always remember this is your child's one and only childhood.
- If parents are in conflict, their children are in danger, and only the parents can protect them from that danger.
- Children of divorce experience any attack between their parents as an attack on them. Children have no defense against their parents' anger with each other.
- Parents in conflict have 10,000 minutes each week to sort out their differences when the children are not present. There is no excuse for arguing in front of the children during the three or four minutes that you are all together. This time should be totally dedicated to your children and to their need for peace in the family.
- Challenge yourself to think of ways to make the visitation pick-ups and drop-offs smoother and more tranquil.
- On visitation pick-ups and drop-offs, make it a point to say a few pleasant words and give a smile to the children and to the other parent. These little scraps of time are the children's time; they are helpful in assuring the children that their world is safe.
- Few things are as hurtful to a child as expecting a parent to be there—and then being disappointed.
- Make a list of ten good memories or of complimentary things about the other parent. Mention these items to the children from time to time, and make them specific. "Daddy is nice" is not nearly as effective as is:

"Your feet are shaped just like Mom's. Thank goodness they don't look mine – Mom has beautiful feet."

"When you were 2 1/2, you started to swing by yourself on your swing set. I remember Mommy panicking about it. I told her to relax and see if you could do it, and you did. You were very proud of that. Mommy has always been so protective of you."

"Remember when you and Mommy made breakfast in bed for me on Father's Day? You both did a great job. That was really nice and I'll never forget it."

"I remember when Daddy spent hours teaching you to ride your bike. You were almost six, and he was determined to get you riding without training wheels before your birthday. It took about week, but you did it. He was exhausted from running after you to make sure that you didn't fall."

This page is compliments of Charles and Barbara Asher

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