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mediation + collaboration = resolution

CREATING A HEALTHY DIVORCE FOR YOUR CHILDREN - MY TOP 20 TIPS

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1. Divorce is not the end of a family; it's just a reorganisation. Reorganise it well for the benefit of everyone, especially your children.
2. It's not their fault. Tell them this and make sure you come up with a plan that continues to show them this.
3. It's not a game. Don't make your children pick a side.
4. COMMUNICATION is key. Find a way to communicate with your former partner. Do not use your children as a messenger. It is not their job to communicate for you.
5. Keep it short and sweet. Don't give long-winded explanations about the reasons you're your separation or divorce. Keep it factual and always have a plan that provides them with certainty. AND, talk to them together (if you can).
6. Nastiness isn't nice. Behave in front of your children. Fighting in front of kids can make them feel that the divorce is their fault. Conflict damages children, not divorce.
7. NEGOTIATE, negotiate, negotiate. Negotiate a healthy parenting relationship with your ex. Don't back each other into a corner.
8. Stay active and involved in your children's life. They are your children – they need you.
9. CHANGEOVERS should be free of anger, arguments and hostility. Meet in a neutral location if necessary.
10. CONSISTENCY and ROUTINE rule. Try to be on the same page with when it comes to rules: bedtime, homework, screen time, etc. Children thrive with boundaries and guidelines.
11. If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all. Don't talk poorly about your former partner or their family in front of the children. Your child loves you both.
12. Form a TEAM. Consider reaching out to experts who can help, health professionals, mediators, collaborative family lawyers. Pick the right team that won't escalate your conflict.
13. LISTEN to your children, but don't always do or believe what they say. From time to time, discuss with your children how they are feeling but remember, you are the parent and we can all bend the truth.
14. Let them TALK. When they are with you, it is natural that they might miss their other parent, Facilitate private communication with each parent by phone, Skpye, facetime or email.
15. SECRETS are never okay. Don't ask your children to keep secrets from the other parent.
16. Provide your child with their own safe place, a sounding board for them. This might be a friend, therapist or teacher who has the child's interest as their primary concern.
17. New relationships might come and go, but your children won't forget. Do not expose your child to transient romantic relationships. Be sure of your new partner before you introduce them to your children.
18. Don't become DISNEYLAND. Parenting shouldn't be a competition, gifts and cool/fun activities aren't a substitute for love and attention.
19. Be honest and transparent – ALWAYS!
20. LOVE them, hold them, reassure them and let them love you both!