

5 Ways Divorced Parents Can Manage Holiday Child Visitation

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By Wall Legal Solutions

While [custody](#) and [visitation](#) agreements can do a great deal to [maintain a healthy parent-child relationship](#), you may find yourself the odd person out on certain holidays. Not spending those times with your child can be difficult. As an [experienced Utah family law firm](#), our [attorneys at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law](#) understand emotions can run high during the holidays. That's why we have compiled these suggestions to **help you manage holidays you spend apart from your child.**



1. Discuss The Yearly Visitation Schedule

One of the issues that parents run into is that children don't understand when or why you won't be together. It's important to have a broad discussion about which holidays you will spend together and the ones they will spend with the other parent. As holidays approach, reinforce the schedule and explain why it works overall. **Children do well when they are prepared in advance.** Talking it out will help them and you.

2. Create Alternative Holiday Schedules

Because you may be splitting time with the other parent, **creating an alternative schedule can be a huge plus.** For example, Thanksgiving always falls on a Thursday and kids usually have next day off from school. That Friday or that weekend can be an excellent time to plan a big holiday feast, get-together or special event all your own. The same holds true for special days such as Christmas, Hanukah and others. **The particular day of the week a holiday falls on is not nearly as important as the quality time you will spend together.** That's where you can find joy.

3. Work Out Gatherings

While not every estranged couple can manage spending holidays together, time does heal many wounds. **Once things aren't so raw, you may be able to spend certain holidays together.** If parents can [get along](#) well, **it can be a wonderfully grounding experience for the child.** Other parents may [work together](#) to spend part of the holidays together as a way to transition to new lives. This can also be helpful for both parents because it takes the brunt of being alone away. Transitions can ease emotions.

4. Call Your Child On Holidays

If you are not able to be there on special days, most people are just a phone call away. It can mean the world to your son or daughter to hear from you. It can also help you during this difficult separation. ***It's important to keep conversations light and if you feel emotions swell, calmly exit and perhaps call back later.*** Your intense emotions can impact the child. Everyone feeling good about a call matters in the short- and long-term.

5. Make New Plans

One of the keys to managing the holidays is to have a plan and stay busy. Consider spending the time with extended family members or friends. Be that helpful person who sets up, does some cooking and washes dishes afterwards. Being alone and idle may lead you to remorseful thoughts and feelings of depression. ***If you have limited options, many people donate their time at community organizations that provide and deliver meals to those in need.*** The charitable focus tends to create a family-type atmosphere among volunteers. Doing good work can be uplifting.

SLC Attorneys at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law Can Help

It's up to you to do your best to make the holidays work. But, ***if circumstances have changed since the initial child custody and visitation order or they just aren't working, it may be time to petition the court to modify.*** [Contact Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law](#) at our Salt Lake City law office by calling us at **801-639-9275** for a **free 30 minute consultation**.

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Partner Attorney at [Wall & Wall Attorneys At Law PC](#)

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