

# How to Co-Parent Effectively After a Divorce

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Are you in the beginning stages of divorce and have questions and concerns about how to best help your children transition to a new family structure? If so, you'll be glad to know that things have changed significantly since the days when judges routinely awarded custody to one parent while the other made do with cookie-cutter visitation rights that entailed every other weekend, every Wednesday night, and six weeks during summer break from school. Today's courts are far more likely to consider co-parenting solutions and other variations from traditional custody arrangements. Here's what you need to know about effective co-parenting after a divorce.

## What is Co-Parenting?

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The accepted co-parenting definition is a situation where parents share the responsibilities and duties of raising a child even if they are no longer living under the same roof. Effective co-parenting after divorce is something many former couples struggle with, particularly if the breakup and subsequent divorce have been contentious. After all, it's difficult to focus on developing effective co-parenting skills and strategies with someone you're angry at. Fortunately, co-parenting classes exist designed to help those in this position as well as their counterparts whose breakups are more amicable learn co-parenting communication guidelines.

## Co-Parenting Tips for Divorced Parents

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Although many people actually prefer the concept of co-parenting, they often make the mistake of thinking it'll all work itself out if they play it by ear. This sometimes presents obstacles, however — keep in mind that co-parenting is a learned skill rather than something that simply happens naturally. The following are several tips and tricks designed to provide those currently in this situation or soon to be in it with the tools necessary for them to learn how to co-parent effectively.

- Always keep the best interests of the child first and foremost
- Never put the other parent down in the presence of the children
- Get an outlet for your feelings. Join a gym, see a therapist, or take up a consuming hobby — whatever it takes so you don't take out anger on others.
- Respect your children's time with the other parent. Unless it's an absolute emergency, don't call, text, or show up at their home when the children are there — co-parenting and setting boundaries go hand in hand.
- Enjoy your time to yourself — watch movies, take a class, or read those books you've been meaning to get to. Even if your divorce has been relatively non-acrimonious, you'll still benefit from an emotional time out

Children often pick up on the most subtle of signals, so when in doubt, leave it unsaid. Children of high conflict divorce cases definitely suffer more than their counterparts whose parents were calmer and more focused on resolving things as peacefully as possible. At some point in the future, you may be co-parenting with stepparents, so learning these skills now will help everyone transition in the future.

## The Benefits of Co-Parenting for Children

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Children benefit from co-parenting in a number of ways, including the following:

- More stability even though everyone's not living under the same roof anymore.
- Better role models for adult relationships.
- Better relationships with both parents.

Remember that children sometimes feel responsible for their parents' divorce, but effective co-parenting helps reduce their feelings of guilt.

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If you're on board with the idea but aren't sure of how to effectively co-parent, consider seeking the services of a high conflict divorce attorney to help you navigate the choppy waters ahead. Please feel free to [reach out to us](#) at your convenience for a free case review.

