

HOW TO TELL YOUR CHILD ABOUT A FAMILY SEPARATION OR DIVORCE



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU SHARE

- Will you tell your child together as parents or separately?
- What is the best timing for your child?
- How can you provide your child time to process their emotions afterwards in a way they need?

BOUNDARIES IN COMMUNICATION

- Provide your child with age-appropriate information.
- Your child should be protected from information that is loaded with adult content.
- When your child asks questions, answering “honestly” **does not** mean sharing the details of adult issues.
- It is healthy to make a distinction for your child between adult issues and children’s issues.
- Answer your child’s questions in a child-focused manner that addresses the child’s concerns and needs.

EXPLAINING SEPARATION AND DIVORCE TO KIDS

- Parents have two kinds of relationships.
- The first relationship began before children came around; that’s the adult relationship.
- The second relationship began when children came around; that’s the parenting relationship.
- Our adult relationship has become tricky. In order to ensure that we have the best parenting relationship possible, we are ending our adult relationship so that we can focus on our parenting relationship.
- The parenting relationship is really important to us, and we will always remain your parenting team even though we will have two homes.

LIFE MESSAGES FOR YOUR CHILD

- I believe in you.
- I have confidence in you.
- I know you can handle this.
- You are listened to.
- You are cared for.
- You are very important to me.
- Your relationship with both parents is important.
- You are not responsible for the decisions we have made as parents.
- You can get through whatever comes up, we’re here to support you.

YOUR UNIQUE SITUATION

You may find yourself wondering how to apply these principles to your own situation. We have been supporting parents and children through all stages of this journey for more than 20 years. For more information, please reach out.