

Children's Services and Resource pack on Divorce and Separation



The information contained within this pack was correct at the time of sharing. We update this on a regular basis. If you notice any links are broken or information has changed please contact ShropshireFIS@shropshire.gov.uk and we will update the information. Further Family Information Services and Resource Packs are available through the Early Help website www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help

Activities

Partnership for Children

This website gives a drawing activity to express and explore feelings

<http://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/resources/activities/activities-feelings.html>

Activity 1

Personal history time line

One common feeling children experience after the divorce is worry about the future. They may be concerned about what is going to happen to them and if their lives will ever be normal again. Creating a time line can help children put the current events of their lives in perspective. It can help them see that they have experienced many good things in the past, and that they have many years ahead of them to have fun and happy times with their families. Younger children will need help with this activity but will enjoy thinking of events for their parent to put on their time line. Discuss your child's time line with him when he is finished. Point out that he has experienced many different events throughout life, some good and some bad. Help him to understand that he can get through the difficult time of divorce and that there are happiness and good times ahead.

Directions for a personal history time line

- Draw a long horizontal line on a sheet of paper.
- Label your birth at one end with a star.
- Label the present time somewhere in the middle.
- Mark significant events that have occurred in your life between the "birth" star and the "present" mark. Possible ideas include births of siblings, getting pets, starting school, moving, learning to read, learning to ride a bike, divorce, remarriage, joining a team or club, death of relatives and special holidays and vacations.
- Mark events that you hope will happen in the future.

Activity 2

Time capsule

Making a time capsule is another way of helping children recognize that the troublesome feelings surrounding the divorce won't last forever and that there are many things to look forward to in the future. Have your child put things in the capsule that represent his life: stories, drawings, photographs, and other special treasures and reminders. Encourage your child to answer the following questions and include them in the time capsule:

Time capsule questions

- Who are your friends?

- Who is part of your family now?
- Who will be part of your family in the future?
- Where will you be living in one year? Five years?
- What kinds of things do you like to do?
- What would you like to learn how to do in the future?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?

There are many different kinds of containers that make good time capsules — large glass jars with tight lids, large manila envelopes, shoe boxes, or drawstring bags. After your child has finished making the time capsule, help her seal it. Let her decide when she will open it. For example, it might be opened in one year, on a certain birthday, or five years from the divorce. When the time comes to open the capsule, your child will undoubtedly have fun looking at the things she put in it, noticing how her handwriting has changed, and reading the things she wrote.

Activity 3

Let's exercise!

Engaging in physical activities together helps parents and children spend time with one another and reap the health benefits of exercise!

Exercising is a good way to get rid of tension or angry feelings in a positive way.

Good activities for parents and children to enjoy together

- Swimming
- Biking
- Hiking
- Walking
- Camping
- Flying kites
- Roller blading

Activity 4

Creating two comfortable homes

You should feel comfortable in your home and in the new home of either your mum or dad. Making sure that each home contains some familiar items will help you feel secure and at home in both places.

Books around divorce and separation

Little Parachutes

<http://www.littleparachutes.com/subcategory.php?sid=15>

This website has some brilliant books for children that are going through divorce and separation. I've looked at some and they are available at the library.

Mum and Dad Glue Book by Kes Gray

Available from Waterstones this picture book looks at divorce from a child's eye view. A little boy tries to find a pot of parent glue to stick his mum and dad back together. His parents have come undone and he wants to mend their marriage, stick their smiles back on and make them better. Even though his parents may be broken, their love for him is not.

When I miss you

This picture book looks at divorce from a child's eye view. A little boy tries to find a pot of parent glue to stick his mum and dad back together. His parents have come undone and he wants to mend their marriage, stick their smiles back on and make them better. Even though his parents may be broken, their love for him is not.

When my parents forgot how to be friends

Young children can become confused and hurt when their parents constantly argue or decide to divorce. This sensitively written book assures young readers that children they are not responsible for their parents' inability to get along.

I Don't Want to Talk About It: A Story of Divorce for Young Children

When a child's parents tell her they have decided to divorce, the last thing she wants to do is talk about it. Instead, she wants to roar as loud as a lion so she can't hear their painful words, or turn into a fish and hide her tears in the sea, or even become a bird and fly away. But with her mother and father's help, she starts to consider what life will be like after divorce and learns that although some things will change, many other things will remain the same.

What in the World Do You Do When Your Parents' Divorce?: A Survival Guide for Kids (Laugh & Learn (Free Spirit Publishing))

A simple question-and-answer format, this book is a valuable tool for helping children cope with divorce. It gently explains what divorce is, why parents' divorce, how to adjust to new living arrangements, how to handle feelings, and other basics to help children understand what's happening in their lives. With honesty and simplicity, the authors help children realize that divorce isn't their fault, strong emotions are okay, and families can survive difficult

changes. Written to and for kids, this book is also recommended for parents, educators, counsellors, and youth workers.

It's not the end of the world

Karen's parents have always argued, and lately they've been getting worse. But when her father announces that they're going to get divorced, it seems as if Karen's whole world will fall apart. Her brother, Jeff, blames their mum. Her kid sister, Amy, asks impossible questions and is scared that everyone she loves is going to leave. Karen just wants her parents to get back together. Gradually, she learns that this isn't going to happen - and realizes that divorce is not the end of the world.

Useful websites for children

ChildLine

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can contact a ChildLine counsellor about anything - no problem is too big or too small. You can talk to us about anything including, stress, anxiety or loneliness.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/HomeFamilies/Pages/DivorceSeparation.aspx>

<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/shropshire/fid/service.page?id=V9-heTHqRN0&familychannel=0>

Sesame Street website

Toolkits for young children - This multimedia outreach initiative provides much-needed resources for families with young children (ages 2–8) as they encounter the tough transitions that come with divorce

<http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/divorce#>

PBS Kids

This is a site for children that talks through the difficulties of Divorce and separation..

“It would be a lie to tell you that things are going to be easy. But if you talk to kids who have gone through divorce, almost all of them will tell you that things seem terrible at the beginning, but they do get better!”

<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/family/divorce/>

I am a Child of Divorce

This website has a chat room for children going through Divorce or separation.

“At I Am A Child of Divorce, we take the steps we can to keep our support group chat room confidential. All activities related to these groups are available to any member of I Am A Child of Divorce. However, in order to gain access to the chat room you will need to request access by filling out this form...”

<http://iamachildofdivorce.com>

K&D

A fun and engaging App that helps parents support their children through the challenges of family separation and divorce. Available on I-store or Android (Google). At K&D our mission is to help and support a family's emotional health and well-being through some unexpected life hurdles. Family steps' first app is called Kids and Divorce.

<http://www.kidsanddivorce.co.uk/>