

Co-Parenting :

Help for Divorced Adults Doing Business As Co-Parents*

STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR CHILDREN. – This is the reason for your continued relationship and communication with each other. Avoid personal issues and past conflicts/resentments.

BE CORDIAL, EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT. – Your children will appreciate that their parents are at least civil with each other. And it is good modeling for your children on how to respect others even when you may totally disagree with them.

HAVE AN AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ... AND STICK TO IT! – A specific list of issues relating to the children is helpful in avoiding getting sidetracked into extraneous and possibly conflicted subjects.

HAVE A CO-OPERATIVE ATTITUDE! – consider the other parent's feelings and opinions. Your children benefit from input from both parents. Proving who is right and wrong is not helpful to the business at hand, and is most likely based upon past personal issues.

BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE. – Even if you think that you are 100% “right,” there are always other valid points of view. Shutting the other parent out of decisions regarding the children IS NOT in the children's best interest!

UTILIZE A PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH. – Avoid getting into power struggles. If a particular suggestion will appear to solve the problem, then go with it, even if the other parent suggested it. Remember that it is more important to reach a solution than to have your own way.

ALWAYS PLACE THE CHILDREN'S BEST INTERESTS AND NEEDS FIRST. - If both parents can do this, better decisions will be made and with less difficulty.



MOM'S HOUSE & DAD'S HOUSE

Source: Ron Neff, Conciliation Service of the Superior Court of Arizona.
See www.divorcekids.com

* Contact the Center for ideas, classes, and family consultations about effective co-parenting.

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