

## **Helping Your Children During the Divorce Process Commonly Asked Question**

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**1. What should we tell the children about litigation, if anything?**

Resist the temptation to involve your children in any aspect of the divorce. If the children are naturally curious or have heard statements about the litigation from your spouse or extended family, do not discount their feelings or questions. Calmly explain that these are adult issues that do not concern them.

**2. I need to get on with my life and want to start dating. What should I do to protect my children?**

Put your children first! Remember that they are already upset, confused and perhaps angry. Adding a new person to this dynamic in the middle of a divorce could have traumatic affects on your children's lives.

You have a lot to deal with going through the process of a divorce with children and property issues; don't add to an already complicated situation. Focus your energies on your children and on helping them through the process rather than satisfying your socialization needs by going out on dates. There will be plenty of time to begin new relationships after you have closed the chapter on the one with your spouse.

**3. Now that we've separated how do I handle the fact that our child spends time in two different households?**

This is not a turf war. It's your job to help make your children comfortable in both your home and the home of the other parent. Recognize and understand that the children are going through great changes and they need reassurance from both parents that it's okay to enjoy time in both households. Make sure you provide photos of your spouse in their bedroom at your home. Offer to provide a family picture or picture of yourself for their bedroom in your spouse's home. All of your efforts to help transition the children from a one household to a two household family will payoff in the resulting adjustment of your children and, after all, what more could a parent want.

4. **I'm having trouble getting my children's school and medical records from my spouse. What is the best way to deal with this situation?**

Be pro-active. Take the responsibility of getting the school and medical records yourself.

5. **My child doesn't want to visit with my spouse. What should I do?**

Unless you believe your child is being harmed, you should support frequent and ongoing contact with the other parent. Be enthusiastic when you talk about possession periods by the other parent. Talk about all of the activities your children and the other parent will enjoy. The more supportive you are of the visit, the more likely your children will want to go and really enjoy their time.

6. **Our children want to attend their regular sporting practices and games, but some of those events take place during my spouse's visitation days. Doesn't my spouse have to take our children to these activities?**

This question illustrates the importance of co-parenting. Talk to the other parent about the problem – try to work out an informal solution if you can. If necessary, talk to your attorney, but keep in mind that this type of issue will come up repeatedly as you and the other parent work together to raise the children. Work on give-and-take. Offer compromises.

If you have to go to the Judge, you should talk to your attorney about the realistic outcome of such action before you file a motion.

As a general rule, do not schedule any activities during the other parent's time with the children unless you and the other parent have agreed to such activities. Do not involve your children in the problem.

7. **How do I stop my spouse from fighting with me in front of the children?**

Ask the other spouse to please refrain from discussing any adult issues within the hearing of the children. Make yourself available to discuss your spouse's complaints, frustrations and/or concerns as soon as possible.

As it is an issue that your spouse believes to be important, don't put it off. Instead, give an alternative setting in which to air complaints, frustrations or concerns. Consider sitting down with the spouse before the first visitation period and asking to formulate some ground rules by which the two of you will discuss issues pertaining to the children and issues pertaining to property. Your lawyer can help guide you with an agenda of items to consider and present.

**8. My children take medication regularly but my spouse refuses to send it with them during my periods of visitation. What should I do?**

Bring the issue to your spouse's attention and find out what the problem is. Is it the cost of medication that causes the other parent to avoid giving it to you? Does the other parent think it is your responsibility to go out and get your own medicine? Once you know the underlying reason for the refusal, you are better able to come up with a solution.

Talk to your children's doctor to see if you can get a prescription filled to have the medicine in your home. If you are not able to get a second prescription from the doctor, consider scheduling a meeting with the doctor and the other parent so that the doctor may tell both of you how important it is that the children receive their medication.

**9. My children keep asking when we're going to be a family again. What should I do?**

Respect that your children are feeling insecure and want their ideal family back. Seek professional guidance from a child psychologist or therapist to learn how to respond to your children's inquires. Reassure your children that they have two parents that love them very much, and that nothing about having two households diminishes how important they are to both you and your spouse.

Even if you hope for reconciliation, do not get your children's hopes up by letting them know this. Your children are quite fragile during the divorce process and do not benefit from having unfulfilled high hopes or being disappointed.

*The above does not constitute specific legal advice.  
Please call to schedule an appointment with one of our lawyers.*