

## Marriage Breakups and Kids

Some points to Remember when Dealing with Children:

- Provide loving reassurance to your child about:
  - ⇒ their relationship with you and where possible with your ex partner
  - ⇒ responsibility for the break up. You may need to directly tell your child they can not be responsible for the decisions of adults.
- Provide structure, stability and routine in their lives. Avoid unnecessary changes where possible maintain family traditions, friends, schools and other everyday events.
- Explore issues about the break up in a developmentally appropriate way:
  - ⇒ Very young children will require assurances they will be cared for.
  - ⇒ Older children will require assurances about their new family situation.

*\* Your child is not an adult and adult concepts and difficulties will need to be explored with another adult.*
- Examine your own feelings and actions:
  - ⇒ Avoid negatives about your ex partner to your child.
  - ⇒ Remember you and your ex marital partner are still **joint parents**. Focus on cooperating for parent issues.
- Monitor children's feelings and actions seek help if children's feelings or behaviours continue to significantly interfere with their everyday life.
- Understand children will have different feelings and express them in different ways. Encourage children to express their feelings in safe ways.
- Understand children's development/academic progress may be interrupted and emotional disturbance is common around special family times during the year.
- Understand you can not have all the answers but you can work towards a better future.

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