Recommendations for Parents

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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