



## How to help your child and make your co-parenting relationship successful

This list of do's and don'ts are simple ideas which will help your child(ren), and make your co-parenting relationship better.

### Do

- Communicate directly with your ex rather than sending messages through the children
- Be polite and friendly at handover and in your communications especially in front of the children
- Have a trustworthy friend that you can talk to who has no outside agenda. Don't choose someone who dislikes your ex but choose someone who loves you and wants the best for you and your children and is willing to challenge you on how best to help the children.
- Remember your child's important events and activities. Stay in touch with the children even though you may not be seeing them regularly and, depending on their age, send them messages and keep in touch around their important events.
- Try to agree on similar rules across two households and discuss what is allowed or not. Acknowledge that there will be differences in parenting styles that you will need to accept
- Live close to where your ex lives so that easier, flexible arrangements can be agreed
- Tell your school about the situation as, in most situations, they can be a great support.
- Attend school events together as much as you can rather than individually and separately.
- Update your ex on your children's activities, events or issues
- Plan something to do when the children leave you to see the other parent. Arrange something so that you are ok and so that the children know that you will be ok.
- Do keep the children involved in family events even if the events are not on "your side" of the family





## Don't

- Don't criticize your ex in front of your child. Because your child is genetically made up of half of your ex, the criticism you give, aimed at your ex, becomes criticism of them in the ears of your child. This can be very detrimental, so try as much as you can to have an alternative outlet for these emotions.
- Don't argue in front of the children.
- Don't raise difficult or contentious issues at sensitive times such as when dropping off the kids. Find other times to discuss these issues.
- Don't use the children as messengers or mine them for information about your ex
- Don't ring them when they are with your ex but allow them to be able to contact you if they need or want to. Don't make them feel guilty spending time with their other parent.
- Don't be hurt if your child also wants to spend time with their friends during "your weekend"
- Don't be possessive over items when your child needs or wants to take them to their other parent



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