

"Divorce and Children: Things To Consider When You're Staying Married Only For Your Children"

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**"Divorce and Children: Things To Consider When You're Staying Married Only For Your Children"**

**By Karl Augustine**

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All children are different and respond differently to divorce. Depending on the characteristics of the children – age, emotional maturity, happiness, resiliency to trauma – the easier or more difficult it will be for children to weather a divorce.

As a parent, you should know your children better than anyone...use your best judgment with your children during considering divorce. This "divorce and children" article is for parents who are certain that they would get a divorce if they didn't have children and want to decide what to think about regarding the effects a divorce would have on their children.

In \*Dr. Robert Emery's book, "The Truth About Children And Divorce", he explains that children of divorced parents can actually live wonderful lives as long as the parents use proper judgment and create the right types of interactions between themselves and with each other.

\*Dr. Emery is a divorce mediation expert and is a Professor of Psychology. Dr. Emery serves as the Director of the Center for Children, Families, and The Law for the Department of Psychology at the University of Virginia.

This article on this web page does not suggest that divorce is the correct course of action for you and it in no way should be taken as a form of counseling to you. This article is merely to spark you to think logically and then make your own decision about divorce and your children.

As previously stated, every child is different and subsequently, every child responds to divorce in a different way.

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If you think there's a definitive answer about how divorce affects children, you are mistaken. There's been hundreds of books written about this subject and a plethora of studies done regarding divorce and children, all citing differing opinions and using different statistical constraints and inputs. But, statistics can only go so far...if you know your children better than anyone else, you will know best how they'll be affected by a divorce.

How divorce affects children and what you should do if you're staying married solely because you have children is a complicated issue.

Here's some things you may want to consider if you're a parent who is staying married just because you have children:

Children and divorce consideration 1: Make sure that you are, in fact, only staying married just because you have children.

Often times people use the children as an excuse not to get a divorce because they aren't really sure that they want a divorce or have some other fear regarding divorce. Those fears can be present due to finance, self-confidence, living arrangements, or other personal issues.

Before you really take the next steps in deciding whether or not to get a divorce because of your children, rank your reasons for divorce and make sure that you're really certain you'd get a divorce if you didn't have children.

Children and divorce consideration 2: Make sure 'guilt' isn't the real reason that you aren't getting a divorce.

The 'guilt' referenced above is the guilt brought on by thinking that your divorce will hurt your children. In and of itself, this feeling of guilt is a selfish one if you haven't really examined carefully if a divorce will have an adverse effect on your children. If you aren't getting divorced because of guilt in this regard, but you still have an unhappy marriage that is affecting your children, then you aren't really staying married for them, you're staying married for you because you feel guilty...this is selfish.

Children and divorce consideration 3: Once you've clearly defined that you are in fact, not getting a divorce solely because you have children, examine why you think divorce will adversely affect your children.

Remember, divorce can have a negative effect on children initially, but that doesn't necessarily mean that a divorce will be a negative influence on your children forever.

Decide whether or not your children have the resiliency, the intelligence, the emotional health, and the support they'd need to mitigate the adverse effects that a divorce would have on them. Will they be happy after the initial shock of the divorce is worked through?

Children and divorce consideration 4: Once you've really defined what you believe to be negative effects on your children due to divorce, think about what your children's life will be like in the immediate

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and distant future if you do actually go through with the divorce.

Ask yourself, "Can I create and maintain a healthy environment for my children if I do get a divorce?"

One thing that is a critical factor in this decision is the feasibility of you and your spouse getting a divorce amicably. If you and your spouse can go through a divorce amicably, and you both can agree to always put your children's welfare above your own, you will be one step ahead.

Again, make sure you are certain a divorce is necessary to create the right type of environment for your children. Assure that there is absolutely no way you can rekindle your marriage.

Usually, divorce represents the first real trauma of a child's life. Keep this in mind when your making your divorce decision. Divorce is a serious step and nothing should be done until your're certain that divorce is the best course of action. Getting a divorce without making sure that divorce is the right thing is selfish on your part and is the wrong thing to do to your children...after all, they deserve your best effort!

One thing should remain constant...that you and your spouse will always be there for your children, no matter what.

Author of "A Practical Guide ToDeciding Whether Or Not To Get ADivorce", the eBook recommended bycounselors to thier clients.Proven "Actions Items" to help you decide!

## **Children And Divorce**

**By Stephen Kreutzer**

A recent statistic shows that almost half of all marriages end in divorce. Divorce is difficult for everyone involved, but maybe the hardest on children. Most often they experience many feelings that they do not understand. They go through a range of emotions and need their parents to understand. If you are going through a divorce getting to understand how your children are dealing with it is important.

When parents divorce they often put their children in the center of arguments and a game of emotional tug of war. To avoid this sort of thing parents need to work together. Even though their marriage is over they are still parents together. The child needs to understand many things about the divorce. Parents need to keep in touch with their children and understand the many feelings they may be having. Older children, especially, can go through periods where they act out as a way to cope with the divorce. Many times children feel the divorce is their fault. They may worry about the future and how to deal with other events, like parent's day at school. Both parents need to show the children that they can work together and not fight. At the same time it is important to let the children know that you are not getting back together. Establishing some sort of family structure is a necessity to help children get back to "normal".

Children will react different depending on their age. The following list explains a little about each age

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group and how they react to divorce.

Age 3–5: Regression to a more infantile state, problems sleeping, fear of separation

Age 6–8: Fantasies of parents getting back together, open emotions

Age 8–11: Anger, treat one parent as good the other as bad, take a caregiver role

Age 12–18: Depression, violent actions, judgmental of parents, develop anxiety about own relationships

Learning to help your children cope through divorce is possible the most important step in the divorce process. Children have no choice in the matter and may feel completely left out if their feelings are not recognized.

Stephen Kreutzer is a freelance publisher based in Cupertino, California. He publishes articles and reports in various ezines and provides divorce resources at



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