# Co-Parenting: Your Marriage May Be Over, But Your Family Is Not

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**Introduction**

Life after divorce is hard, especially when there are children in the mix. The following are tips and impacts of Co-parenting.

## Co-Parenting Survival Guide

**Be consistent:**

When it comes to schedules and rules, both houses should “develop some routines which remain consistent” (Wolf, 2010), so that the children are in a stable environment.

**Have consequences:**

Not only should the rules be the same but punishment for bad behavior should also be on the same page. Some questions that you should ask your ex-spouse include:

- Are you committed to giving warnings?
- Will you use time-out?
- Will you revoke privileges when necessary? If so, which ones? (Wolf, 2010)

**Handle transitions well:**

Since this can be a hard time on the kids, you can make this time easier on the children by creating standards of how the transition will take place. Some suggestions are:

- Make drop off and pick up times the same each time.
- Have a consistent way to say bye to the children.
- Be civil during this time and communicate well in front of the children. (Wolf, 2010).

**Show some respect:**

“Simple manners are often neglected between co-parents, even though they should be the foundation for team parenting” (Block, M.A., & Smith, M.A., 2010).

**Figure out the big stuff:**

Going ahead and getting the major decisions out of the way will lift a huge burden off you and your ex’s backs such as medical needs, education, and financial needs.

**Look inward:**

As responsible parents, you must evaluate how your divorce and embarking on single parenthood is affecting your behavior.

**Don’t fear the big “T” word, also known as therapy:**

- Structural family therapy
  
  Stresses the importance of flexible boundaries between family members. (Ramisch., McVicker., & Sahin, 2009)

- Solution based therapy
  
  “Solution-focused therapy is a therapeutic approach in which the building of solutions takes priority over the solving of problems.” (Ramisch., McVicker., & Sahin, 2009)

## Theoretical Link

**Attachment Theory Applied to Co Parenting**

“The attachment relationship between parent and child reflects a system promoting survival and competent functioning in children.” (McDermott, 2008). Arguments are inevitable in any relationship. When arguments happen around children, they can hear it even if they are not in the room. Children that do not have a secure attachment will feel guilty and unloved by their parents if they are caught in the middle of arguments (Douglless, 2006). To create a secure attachment, you need to make sure that you encourage children and spend quality time with them.