

Here's how you can make things easier for your children:

Encourage your child to talk to you about his/her feelings and make sure they know that the breakup is not their fault. Show them that you love them and that they're important to you no matter how much time you're able to spend together.

Never badmouth your child's mother and never use your children to deliver messages or spy on her. The better you get along with your ex, the better your kids will be able to cope.

Come up with a parenting plan that makes you and your ex happy. But don't give in too easily. Your kids need you as much as they need their mother. If you don't get to spend much time with them they'll think it's because you don't love them anymore. If you can't agree on a plan, try mediation.

Pay your child support. Not paying will hurt your children, not your ex. If she's preventing you from seeing your children or if you're having trouble making payments, contact your lawyer or the local child support agency right away.

You're not alone. It's not always easy balancing work and family—especially if you're a single dad. And it's not always easy to ask for help, but if the pressure and stress get to be too much, that's what you have to do. Call up a friend, a relative, or check out one of the following resources:



www.MrDad.com

Mr. Dad™ is Armin Brott: Hailed by *Time Magazine* as "the superdad's superdad," he has written or co-written eight critically acclaimed, groundbreaking books on fatherhood.



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PARENTING TIPS FOR FATHERS

ATTENTION DADS:
STAY INVOLVED!

YOU MAKE A
DIFFERENCE IN
YOUR CHILD'S LIFE.



BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES ONE MAN AT A TIME™

JUST FOR DADS

Sure, moms are the ones who breastfeed and they probably change more than their fair share of diapers. But dads play a unique — and very important role in their kids' lives from the very start.

Children who grow up with involved fathers do better in school and are much less likely to become teen parents or get involved with drugs, alcohol, or crime. They also manage their emotions better and are less likely to resort to violence.



So what can you do to be the best possible dad for your kids?

Jump in! Most experts agree that men are just as capable as women of loving and caring for their children. But a lot of dads stay on the sidelines because they think they don't know how to be a good parent or they're worried they might do something wrong. Don't worry about making a few mistakes. The truth is that being a good dad—just like being good at anything else—comes with practice.

Stay involved. “Quality time” is wonderful, but it's not enough. The more time you spend with your kids, the better you'll get to know each other—and that's how good, close relationships are formed. You don't have to entertain your kids every minute of the day. Fun and games are, well, fun. But what children want and need most of all is to feel loved and to know they're important to you. So make them part of your life and share with them the things you value most.

Be a partner not a helper. After money, couples argue most about who does what around the house. The more responsibility you take on, the happier your child's mother will be. The happier she is, the happier you'll be. And when both of you are happy, you'll be better parents and your relationship will be stronger and last longer.

Plan for the future. Start saving now for your child's college education, even if it's only a few dollars a month. With interest, by the time she's 18 she'll have a lot more money than you started with.

DIVORCE OR SEPARATION

Your relationship with your child's mother may end, but your relationship with your child never will. Not being able to see your kids as often as you'd like can make you angry, sad, and frustrated. **But no matter how bad you feel, don't fade away.** Divorce is very hard on kids and the impact can last for years.