



How Can I be a Better Co-Parent?

10 helpful tips for working with your co-parent

- 1. Think of the co-parenting relationship as a new relationship.** This means that this is not about your relationship with your ex-spouse but rather an important relationship with the parent of your children.
- 2. Stay child focused.** There will be times when you want to speak badly about your ex-partner in front of your children, but don't do it. Speaking badly makes your child feel like they need to pick sides.
- 3. Vent to an adult.** There will be times when you need to express your frustrations. Use a friend and not a child to vent your frustrations.
- 4. Call your co-parent Mom or Dad in front of your children.** When parents refer to the other parent by their first name it shows the children they don't respect them as a parent.
- 5. When you communicate with your co-parent keep the conversation child focused.** This means everything you say is focused on what is best for the children.
- 6. Do everything possible to keep appointments and to be on time.** Being on time minimizes potential conflict with your co-parent and helps your child to feel safe and secure during transitions.
- 7. Encourage your child to have a relationship with their other parent.** Remind them of birthdays and other special occasions to celebrate. Allow them to have a picture of the other parent in their room.
- 8. Don't ask your child to keep secrets from their other parent.** This creates tension in your child's sense of loyalty.
- 9. Don't enlist your child to "spy" on your co-parent.** Interrogating your child can make them feel like they are in trouble if they had a good time with their other parent.
- 10. Aim for consistency.** Children will do best when there are similar rules in each household. If possible, work with your co-parent to create shared rules.