

Coparenting Rules

Dear Coparent:

The decision to divorce or separate was a grown-up decision. Let's do everything in our power to minimize stress for our children by honoring these coparenting rules.

1. Let's keep our children out of the details of our relationship and divorce.
2. Let's separate how we view each other as parents from how we feel about each other as partners.
3. When we are in the presence of our child, let's treat each other with respect by saying *hello* and *good-bye*.
4. Let's remember our children benefit from a relationship with both of us.
5. Let's include each other in all important parenting decisions. We should each be the first person we contact to discuss our children.
6. Likewise, if something is important to you then assume it would also be important to me. Pass along any information about our children.
7. Let's be flexible when important opportunities or special occasions arise for our children.
8. Let's not make plans with the children over the other parent's time. We need to work these details out between us before we involve our children.
9. Remember we don't have to do everything the same to be valuable to our children.
10. Let's support each other's discipline and consequences.
11. Let's always give each other the benefit of the doubt when our children tell us things that may or may not have happened. Let's check with each other before reacting or making assumptions.
12. Let's share our household expectations and rules with each other so we can attempt to match each other's whenever possible.
13. Let's inform each other when we are ready to introduce someone special to our children so we can be positive and encouraging.
14. Let's respect each other even when we have a difference of opinion.
15. Let's remember that our children have two homes, not just one.
16. If we bring a stepparent into our children's lives, let's make sure they are respectful of the two biological parents as the primary parents.
17. No matter how complicated things may get between us, let's always seek to resolve conflict between us or with a mediator and do all we can to avoid litigation or other adversarial actions.
18. When either of us registers our children for school or an activity, let's make sure to enter both parents' name on the registration card.
19. Let's avoid referring to the children as *mine* and remember to say *our* children no matter how much time they live in each home.
20. Let's give our children the best chance at success by putting our hurt to the side and focusing on developing the best coparenting relationship we can. Our children deserve this!

