

Dealing with... Your Parents' Divorce

My parents got divorced when I was 8. They were worried that this would screw me up forever so they brought me to a child psychologist who had me play with dolls and constantly reassured me that the divorce was not my fault. I was relieved when my parents stopped taking me there because I never did think it was my fault and he had really smelly breath!

I was sad and angry about my parents' divorce. It was unfair to me that my friends' parents were still together. I only saw my dad on the weekends and that was really hard. Unfortunately, divorce isn't fair and it does change things, some for the better, and some for the worst. Here are some ways to help you cope:

The child psychologist was right - IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT. In fact, it has nothing to do with you. Grownups have problems too. Even though they may never admit it, they don't have all the answers and they are not perfect. But they are your parents and you will go on loving them and they will go on loving you. That's a guarantee.

Talk to your parents. Be open about your anger and sadness. It is a confusing and upsetting time and it may sometimes feel like you're being ignored or being asked to pick sides! But it's okay for you to feel what you're feeling and sharing those feelings with your parents just may bring some relief.

Talk to another family member. Maybe you have a sibling who can relate to what you are going through. Maybe you have a favourite aunt, uncle or cousin who you trust? Maybe you are close with a grandparent? Lean on these people, they are your family too and want to support and help you.

Talk to your friends. Maybe you even have a friend who is going through something similar. There are many other kids who have divorced parents. You are not alone.

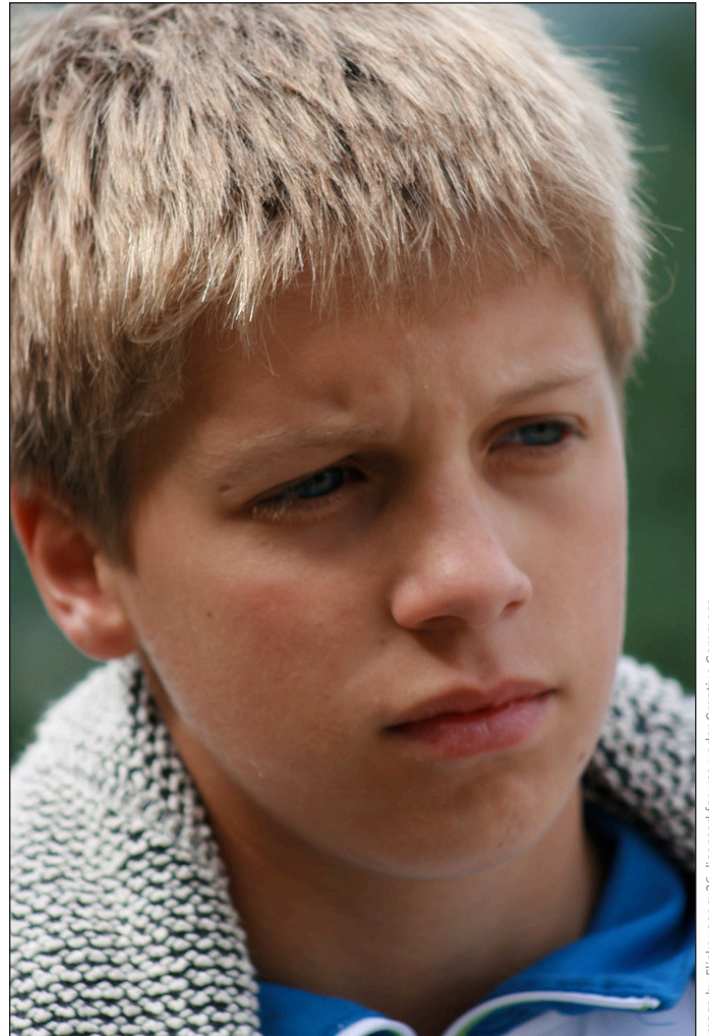


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Families are not always made up of a mom and a dad. Some kids are raised by a grandparent or another relative. Some live in homes away from their parents. Others might have same-sex parents or only one parent in their life. The point is, families are not all the same.

This Resilience Research Centre Youth Factsheet was written by Nicole Landry, MA, a project manager with the Resilience Research Centre. Her book, *The Mean Girl Motive: Negotiating Power and Femininity* is published by Fernwood Publishing Ltd.

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