

HELPING CHILDREN  
COPE WITH DIVORCE  
SEMINAR BOOKLET



  
Family &  
Children's  
SERVICES

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*Life Changing.*

## ABOUT THE SEMINAR

Helping Children Cope With Divorce is a national program based on the Atlanta curriculum from Families First, a non-profit Family Service America Agency. Family & Children's Services is a licensed provider of this program.

Helping Children Cope With Divorce was established in 1994 to teach parents effective parenting during times of transition; how to best lead their families to positive outcomes and how to shift their focus from the personal aspects of adult relationships ending to the needs of their children. The seminar emphasizes each parent's responsibility to form a co-parenting relationship that will further the best interest of their child, provide nurturing environments for children and stay focused on positive parenting. What you learn and how you use it may determine how well your children cope with a changing family structure.

In 1995, the 14th Judicial District of Oklahoma mandated attendance of this educational seminar for divorcing parents who have minor children and those involved in motions to modify visitation or custody. The ruling was further modified in 1999 to include parents who are involved in paternity suits.

In 2014, the Oklahoma State Legislature passed House Bill 2249 requiring that all counties provide a helping children cope with divorce program that addresses the effects of divorce and domestic violence on children. In addition, programs should discuss reconciliation as an optional outcome to having filed for divorce and give resources for exploring reconciliation, as well as help in domestic violence situations.

## ABOUT FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

For 90 years, Family & Children's Services has been the place to turn for help with problems that seem overwhelming and too difficult to handle alone. We help regardless of income or insurance.

Our caring, professional staff is highly qualified and trained in best practices. We offer life-changing services that restore children's well-being, heal victims of abuse, strengthen individuals and families, and provide hope and recovery for adults suffering from mental illness and addictions. Programs are offered through a network of convenient office locations.

Family & Children's Services is a member agency of the Tulsa Area United Way and Rogers County United Way. F&CS is a member of the following national organizations: The Alliance for Children and Families, Mental Health Corporations of America and the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. Family & Children's Services is certified as a community mental health center by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and is accredited by the COA.

# HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH DIVORCE SEMINAR OUTLINE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMINAR

### PART 1 - THE DIVORCE PROCESS

Emotional Reactions  
Involvement with the Legal System  
Changes in Your Economic Situation  
New Relationships with Family & Friends  
A Period of Adjustment

## BREAK

### PART 2 - HELPING YOUR CHILDREN

Establishing a Co-Parenting Relationship  
Talking to Your Children About Divorce  
Guidelines for Helping Children Adjust

## BREAK

### PART 3

Changes in the Living Situation  
Developmental Stages  
New Family Structure

## CLOSING

Making a Change  
Wrap Up and Evaluations

## DIVORCE FACTS

- » One out of two couples that marry this year divorce in 10 years.
- » More than 1,000,000 children are affected by divorce each year.
- » 75% of women remarry within five years.
- » 80% of men remarry within five years.
- » Second marriages are at greater risk for ending in divorce than first marriages.



## HOW CHILDREN REACT TO DIVORCE

Telling a child about divorce is a difficult process for most parents. Anxiety and the parent's own fears about the divorce can result in avoiding the issue.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF ABOUT TELLING YOUR CHILD ABOUT DIVORCE

- » What do your children need to hear about the divorce?
- » What will they be worried about?
- » What don't they need to hear?
- » General factors play a part in a child's reaction to their parent's decision to divorce.

### THESE CAN BE:

1. Age
2. Stage of development
3. Suddenness of divorce
4. Degree and history of marital conflict
5. How and what children are told
6. The number of adjustments that a child must make – schools, friends,
7. Standard of living, neighborhoods

### WHAT CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

1. Ability of the parents to move past anger and conflict to resume cooperative parenting.
2. Consistency and quality of contact from the non-custodial parent.
3. When the best interest of children is the first priority, children will develop and function without long-term damage from divorce. With healthy parenting, children are resilient.

As parents become more focused on the needs of their children, they become less adversarial and more cooperative. It is under this cooperative co-parenting atmosphere that children of divorce can thrive. They will always feel the loss and regret that comes with divorce, but they will be far less likely to hold themselves accountable for this adult decision.



## INVOLVEMENT WITH THE LEGAL SYSTEM

### TULSA COUNTY FAMILY COURT PROGRAM

- » Parenting Planning Conference – scheduled court time in which the judge will ask the parties to agree on a Temporary Order
- » Family Resource Coordinator - assists parents with resources and paperwork
- » Mediation if needed - process for reaching mutual agreement
- » Parenting Coordination if ordered - court appointed third party to work with both parents to resolve issues
- » Collaborative law - participants agree to work together respectfully, honestly and in good faith to reach settlement

### CHILD SUPPORT AND VISITATION

- » Child support and visitation are two separate issues
- » You cannot withhold visitation because child support is not being paid
- » You cannot withhold child support because you are not having visitation

### THE LEGAL SYSTEM IS USED FOR:

- » Division of Assets
- » Allocation of Debts
- » Time-sharing/Visitation Schedule
- » Joint Custody Details
- » Spousal Support

## NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Introducing new people in your child's life is a process that is best taken slowly. Introducing someone new too early can be confusing and cause renewed distress for the child especially if the new person is a casual relationship. Though children are usually stressed most by the divorce of their natural parents, they can certainly be affected negatively by the break up of later relationships and marriages. Most divorced parents will begin relationships and eventually remarry. Children involved in their parent's "revolving door" relationships are particularly vulnerable to serious emotional problems in childhood and future relationship problems as adults.

- » While it is essential for adults to move on after a divorce, dating is only one aspect of a new lifestyle.
- » Dating meets adult needs.
- » Try to remember that the stability and mental health of your children is more significant than the gratification dating can bring.
- » Try not to involve children younger than eight in dating relationships.
- » Arrange to meet your dates away from your home rather than having them come to your home.
- » When the parent has determined for himself or herself the importance of the person they are dating, the first point of contact with the children can be made.
- » For the non-custodial parent, the time your child is visiting you is for your child, not for someone you are casually dating.
- » Don't allow competition for your time and attention to occur.
- » New adults may try to bring new rules to a family structure- a sure recipe for conflict. Make sure that both adults are in agreement about which rules are in effect.

## WHAT TO TELL YOUR CHILD ABOUT YOUR DIVORCE

Telling your child or children about an impending divorce is likely to be one of the most difficult things that any parent will ever have to do. Anxiety about what to say and when to say it and fear of losing control of emotions can lead to trying to avoid the situation. If at all possible, it is better for both parents to talk to the children together. All children, no matter what their ages, will feel apprehensive. How the children are told and what they are told will set the stage for their reactions. When parents tell children about divorce together, it sets the stage for several positive things to happen.

1. Parents are already modeling their ability to act as co-parents.
2. Children move through denial of the situation more quickly.
3. There is less possibility of having one or the other parent appear as the bad guy.
4. There is less temptation to use children as allies or as confidantes.



## WHAT CHILDREN NEED TO HEAR

All children, regardless of their age, will be worried and distressed at the announcement of a divorce. Their concern will be, "What is going to happen to me?"

- » All children need to know that while the marriage has ended, the family will continue, including family ties with grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins.
- » Adult feelings can change in a marital relationship but the bond between parent and child is everlasting.
- » Parents will continue to take care of their children and provide for them emotionally, spiritually and financially.
- » The children are not the cause for the divorce.
- » The children may wish they had the power to change the decision of their parents but they do not.
- » The decision to divorce is not a whim, but a momentous decision made after trying hard to make the marriage work.
- » Parents have regret for the hurt that the decision has caused for their children.
- » Whatever parents can manage will remain the same. Share routines that will continue. This is especially important for younger children.
- » Parents understand that their children will have a lot of concerns and worries about the divorce, and that parents are available to listen and help.
- » At the time of telling the children about the divorce, invite them to share what they are most worried about and be willing to offer explanations about anything they do not understand.

### ADULT SIGNS

- » Increased forgetfulness
- » Difficulty moving or getting work done
- » Short tempered with children

### CHILD SIGNS

- » Drop in grades
- » Difficulty concentrating
- » Aggressive behavior

## EFFECT OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

**If children are in an unsafe environment that is:**

- » Physically, sexually or emotionally abusive;
- » Physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally abusive toward the other parent;

**Then the risks for children from with conflict are:**

- » Girls are more likely to become victims of dating violence.
- » Boys are more likely to be abusive to their mothers and future partners.

**Children learn from their parents arguing and getting potentially physical in an argument that:**

- » The way to solve problems is through yelling and hitting.
- » Name calling and pushing or shoving is okay.

Stop family violence and threats of violence. Learn anger management techniques.

## ANGER MANAGEMENT

Anger can range from annoyance at waiting in line at the grocery store to complete rage at a driver on the expressway. The expression of anger is something we usually learn from one or the other parent. Some of us may have learned to keep anger inside, some people just blow up and others handle it in a constructive way. Because we learn how to express anger, this means we can also learn how to manage anger. Learning this skill is important especially for those who handle anger inappropriately – by hurting themselves or others or who make poor decisions while angry. Think of how you manage anger. If someone or something makes you angry, how do you control yourself?

The next time you feel angry; try this four-step approach to managing your anger.

1. Recognize the fact that you are angry. Don't deny feeling angry or try to cover it up.
2. Question why you are angry. Try to get to the source of this emotion. If it is something someone has said to you or done (or not done), ask yourself why this made you angry.
3. Express your anger – but express it in an appropriate way. Use "I" messages instead of blaming. If you feel you cannot contain your anger and might erupt, find a way to calm yourself down. Take a few deep breaths or walk away briefly to regain perspective. Use this technique again if you feel your anger building while you are expressing yourself.
4. Drop it and let it go. The last step is the hardest and the most important. Once you have expressed yourself to the subject of your anger, you have done all you can by expressing it in a healthy way.



- » Take five deep breaths and slowly exhale.
- » Take a walk or do something else physical.
- » Think about how you got things to work out last time.
- » Sing loudly (it's really better if you are alone for this one!).
- » Take a time out from the situation.
- » Think about a peaceful place.
- » Stay focused on what you want the end result to be.
- » Talk to a friend.

### CHILDREN, ANGER AND DIVORCE

Most children experience and display increased anger and irritability during or after the divorce and change in family structure. Children are often fearful of expressing their anger directly to their parents – they sometimes feel that their parent will “divorce” them too. Children may also feel protective of a parent during this time of stress and will avoid expressing their own feelings in an attempt to protect the parent.

Children learn their anger management skills in the same way that their parents did – by modeling their own behavior after that of their same sex parent. A problem in learning in this way is that watching a parent model anger management is like looking at an iceberg. Two thirds of an iceberg is underwater and not visible – similarly, most of the ways we manage anger is in our heads and not visible to our kids.

In times of divorce or the stress of modifying custody or visitation, your and your child's anger management skills may be sorely tested. It is important to teach (model) additional anger management techniques for them now. This is especially crucial for fathers of male children since boys are more likely to act out in schools or communities in ways that can be very costly to them and to you.

#### THE FOUR-STEP PROCESS FOR MANAGING ANGER CAN WORK FOR KIDS TOO.

1. Recognize your anger.
2. Question the source of the anger.
3. Express your anger appropriately.
4. Drop it and let it go.

#### HELP YOUR CHILDREN INCREASE THEIR OWN ANGER MANAGEMENT SKILLS BY FOLLOWING THESE STEPS.

1. Think of how you manage anger. If someone or something makes you mad, when would it be a problem to display your anger (in church, with a traffic cop, etc.)? How do you control yourself? Make a list of two or more things that help you keep control in anger provoking situations.
2. When you are with your child, model your anger management skills by recognizing that you are angry, and identifying why you are angry. For example, “I really get angry when we are in a hurry and the car won't start” or “It makes me really mad when Aunt Lizzie calls on a Sunday afternoon and expects me to drop everything to mow her lawn.”
3. Once you have identified being angry and what is provoking the anger, choose and describe the anger management skill you will use. For example, “I really get angry when my boss tells me I have to work on Saturday, and when I get angry, I take five really deep breaths to help me calm down” or “It makes me mad when I can't balance my checkbook and when I call the bank, all I get is a recorded message and when I get angry, I take a time out or call a friend.”
4. Teach your child your own anger management skills. If you can't easily identify your own anger management skills, try one to the techniques listed earlier. Remember that you are molding habits for a lifetime.



## DEPRESSION & DIVORCE

### ADULT DEPRESSION FACTS

- » Depression is part of a typical response to loss or significant change.
- » Most adults experience several periods of depression in their lifetime, usually lasting two weeks or less. These periods of depression commonly center around situations or life events that are experienced by most people such as job performance, relationship difficulties, parenting problems, losses of family members. It is certainly normal for people to feel depressed when faced with these kinds of situations.
- » Depression becomes a greater concern when it becomes chronic (longer than 6 weeks in duration) or when it is severe or debilitating.
- » If chronic depression is not addressed, it tends to be more difficult to treat.
- » Severe or chronic depression diminishes the ability to parent effectively.
- » Depression makes it difficult to offer adequate emotional support to your child.
- » If you are depressed, the first step is often to talk to a supportive friend or relative.
- » It's OK to ask for help if you really need it.
- » Some people choose to speak to their minister or to seek help from a professional counselor.
- » Depression is commonly treated by the use of supportive counseling, therapy or anti-depressant medications or sometimes both.
- » New medications are now available that are quickly effective and relatively free of side effects.
- » The "new" medications are non-addicting and non-habit forming.
- » Most people take antidepressants for 6-8 months, not the rest of their lives.
- » If there is a family history of severe and chronic depression, you may be more vulnerable to experiencing depression or more lengthy treatment may be needed.
- » Children sometimes respond to your depression by misbehaving very badly. They discover, quite by accident, that if they can make their parent very angry, the parent no longer acts or looks depressed. Adrenaline, which is produced by your body when you are angry, acts as an effective short-term antidepressant. If your child falls in to this pattern, you can expect a child who often misbehaves.

## CHILDREN, DIVORCE AND DEPRESSION

These are general guidelines to help assess whether your child or children are experiencing depression.

- Age 0-5** Very young children often do not display the signs usually associated with depression in older children or adults. Infants may become unresponsive to stimuli such as touch. They may not smile and may cry persistently. Children toward the upper end of this age range may complain of headaches or stomach aches. Frequently, the only symptoms displayed are crankiness and irritability. They may whine more than usual. Changes in appetite and sleep disturbances may sometimes be seen in the older children of this age group.
- Age 5-7** Children in this age group often turn their emotions into physical activity. Though they may begin to display some more typical symptoms of depression, they rarely have the "low energy" commonly associated with adult depression. Instead, these children may mimic the behaviors of children with hyperactivity. If your child is already hyperactive, depression may tend to exacerbate the hyperactivity.
- Age 8-Adult** This age group may exhibit signs and symptoms that are more typically associated with depression. Depression symptoms include:
- » Depressed or irritable moods, including high temper and/or rage
  - » Rebelliousness and defiance
  - » Diminished interest in activities previously found pleasurable
  - » Changes in appetite
  - » Sleep disturbances (can't sleep or can't get fully awake)
  - » Fatigue and energy loss
  - » Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
  - » Difficulty concentrating
  - » Drop in grades
  - » Difficulty making decisions
  - » Persistent physical complaints
  - » Enuresis or encopresis
  - » Recurrent thoughts of death
  - » Pre-occupation with death themes, guns or knives

To be considered depressed, five or more of these symptoms must be present for at least two weeks. Allowing depression to persist in a child or teen can be dangerous. Depression can become chronic, so that it becomes more and more difficult to escape depression over time. Children may develop habitual depressed ways of thinking and looking at the world that may follow them in to adulthood. Just as you would for any other serious condition, it is important to take appropriate and timely action to provide assistance to your child if their depression has lasted longer than six weeks. If severe depression or suicidal signs are present, immediate parental intervention is required.

## TYPICAL REACTIONS TO DIVORCE BY AGE GROUP

### Birth-2 Years

- » The youngest stage is in some ways, the least and the most vulnerable.
- » Most vulnerable refers to the total dependency on parents that very young children have – with no skills to understand or cope with moods of their parents.
- » Least vulnerable refers to less time to witness marital conflict. Young children do not experience the loss of the family, although they may later mourn what they never had.
- » The initial goal is providing consistency in what the child is accustomed to – environment, food and toys – even the same brand of pacifier.
- » Families can differ in how they handle the caregiver role – from a shared role to almost exclusively one parent.
- » The parent who has been least involved in the day-to-day care of the child needs to work toward short but frequent visits. This allows the child to separate with less anxiety.

### 2-4 Years

- » Toddlers need routines. Consider which routines you can stick to in two households.
- » Pre-schoolers are subject to “magical thinking” – they believe they control what happens. They may ask what they did to cause the divorce.
- » If they believe they did something to cause the divorce, they may begin to act more aggressive or act out in order to live up to their “badness.”
- » Regression will serve to take them back to a “safer” time. You might see clinging, baby talk, bed wetting, thumb sucking, and/or bedtime problems.
- » Sleep disturbances may reflect their fear that they may wake to find both parents gone.
- » Fearfulness is heightened for a preschooler because they do not have the ability to understand that divorce is an adult decision that has nothing to do with their behavior.
- » A father’s role is important for little girls at this stage of development. Consider how a sudden absence might be interpreted.

### 5-8 Years

- » Children will long for the parent absent from the home, regardless of the quality of the parent child relationship.
- » There is great sadness due to their awareness of the extent of the loss.
- » Children are still caught up in “magical thinking” and may cling to fantasies of reuniting the family or rescuing the family.
- » They may feel they are being divorced or rejected.
- » Elementary age children tend to personalize divorce since they are unable to understand adult needs.
- » Children may feel that they caused one parent to leave; abandonment fears may increase due to what seems a real possibility that the other parent may leave.
- » If they feel unlovable or not good enough for the parent to stay, they may fear being replaced by other children in the absent parent’s life.

### 9-12 Years

- » Middle year children tend to see the world in absolutes – black and white, good or bad, right or wrong.
- » They may be angry about the parents’ inability to work it out.
- » They may be angry that parents did not value them enough to “work it out.”
- » Children need outlets for their anger and help in expressing this anger in appropriate ways.
- » They may be susceptible to engaging in alliances with one parent against the other. Whomever the child perceives as seeking the divorce or not trying to save the marriage may find this alliance directed toward that parent.
- » Children need permission and encouragement to continue loving both parents.
- » They may try to assume a care-taking role in the home or may try to become a companion to the custodial parent.



### 13-18 Years

- » Depending on the teen's knowledge and experience of marital conflict, they may experience feelings ranging from relief to failure.
- » An important developmental task of teens is to move toward separation from family. Divorce creates anxiety about their futures. Examples are:
  - Can I believe in love?
  - Can I trust anyone?
  - Will I fail in a relationship?
- » They may be anxious about money as it relates to future plans and worry about how much support they can count on from the other parent.
- » Perception of the teen as an adult may tempt the parent to relate to the child as a companion.
- » Normal separation from the family may be delayed if the teen assumes the burden of providing emotional or psychological support for the parent.
- » Development may be delayed or accelerated: they may avoid relationships or rush to intimacy.
- » Don't make teens responsible for initiating visitation or contact with the other parent.

### Young Adult to 18-30 Years

- » They may feel abandoned when financial support is not there.
- » Young adults may feel resentful when parents put their needs before their children's future.
- » They may have a sense of not being valued as a result of the divorce



### WHAT TO DO ABOUT DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN

It is critical to keep the lines of communication open. If your child is displaying depression symptoms:

- » Do start by trying to get them to talk about their feelings.
- » Do try to listen and understand.
- » Don't tell them they "shouldn't feel that way."
- » Don't try to fix their feelings or solve their problems.
- » Don't try to joke a child out of their bad feelings.
- » Don't demand they be happy.

No one can know your child better than you, but if your child can not seem to open up to you, invite him or her to talk to a favorite aunt, uncle, grandparent, family friend or minister. With some kids, you may have to gently manipulate the circumstances for this to occur. Make it OK for your child to talk with someone other than you. Remember to have patience – the lifting of depression takes time.

If depression persists, if symptoms are severe and /or if suicidal signs are present, it is essential that you seek professional help for your child. If you decide to take your child to a counselor or physician, expect them not to want to go. More than half of the older children in counseling for depression initially threaten the parent with "I won't go" or "If you make me go, I won't say a word." A majority of the time, a child can be engaged in the therapeutic process by a competent professional counselor.



## TALKING TO THE OTHER PARENT

### DEVELOPING A PARENTING PLAN THAT WORKS

The goal of a successful divorce is for your children to have two parents who act in a responsible way, who cooperate in decision-making, and who will share time with them.

Now is the time to work out a parenting plan that will be flexible enough to shift as the children grow and their needs change.

- » Decide what method of communication works best with both your co-parent and your children (phone, in person, letters, e-mail, notes).
- » Develop methods of resolving disagreements and emotional outbursts.
- » Set mutually agreeable routines and plans for how each parent will drop off and pick up the children.
- » Discuss sharing children's toys, comfort objects and possessions between Mom's house and Dad's house.
- » Make a game plan for each parent to attend school and recreational events.
- » Develop a strategy for handling a child's refusal to visit.

### SPECIFIC WAYS THAT CHILDREN ARE BETTER OFF WITH BOTH PARENTS IN THEIR LIVES

- » Better grades in school
- » Fewer behavioral problems in school
- » Fewer problems with the law
- » Higher self-esteem
- » Less likely to suffer from mental health problems, especially depression
- » Happier in friendships and relationships, including dating
- » Lower rates of teen pregnancy
- » Greater sense of security
- » More likely to maintain ties with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other extended family

## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED RECONCILIATION?

Many people find themselves saying, "If I had known I had to work this hard to co-parent, I would have stayed married!"

Research from the University of Minnesota found:

Almost 40 percent of couples already in the divorcing process reported that one or both spouses are interested in the possibility of reconciliation.

Another research program from the University of Minnesota asked divorcing couples their responses to these questions:

- » I'm done with this marriage; it's too late now even if my spouse were to make major changes.
- » I have mixed feelings about the divorce; sometimes I think it's a good idea and sometimes I'm not sure.
- » I would consider reconciling if my spouse got serious about making major changes.
- » I don't want this divorce, and I would work hard to get us back together.

They found if one or the other party is leaning into the relationship there is hope.

If both parties are leaning in toward restoring the relationship, with good counseling there is a growing chance of saving the marriage.

If outside parties will back away and allow couples time to work on the relationship without putting down either party, there is more support and hope.

Couples feelings about the divorce change as they go through the process, experience the problems it creates and see the effects on their children.

Some counselors are trained in a technique called discernment counseling that can assist in determining and working toward possible reconciliation before damage is done to both the relationship and children.



### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR TIME SHARING

Timesharing or visitation can be an uncomfortable, even painful experience for both the child and the non-custodial parent. Parents and children who were used to being together all the time must now compress all their feelings and activities in to a court ordered time span. First, understand that (especially for younger children) the time just before and just after changing households is a difficult time emotionally. The pain of separation is a re-occurring event until the child incorporates the shift of households. Divorced children who heal well are children who have two healthy responsible parents who live in two different households. Following are some general guidelines to help ease the transitions of timesharing and make the visit go more smoothly.

- » Each parent should demonstrate the common courtesy of having the child(ren) ready on time, transferred on time and calling each other as soon as possible when plans must be changed.
- » Avoid using pick up and drop off times to engage in any type of conflict or to discuss any form of business.
- » Deny the temptation to use your child as a messenger. If you have difficulty saying something to your co-parent, imagine how hard it might be for your child. There is no substitute for direct communication. If you cannot talk to the other parent, write it down.
- » Don't question your children about what is going on in your co-parent's life.

- » Don't ask your children questions about the other parent that might make them feel they are betraying the parent by answering.
- » Take care in how you speak to your children about their other parent. Negative talk or criticism of the other parent reflects on the child. Your negative words may come back to haunt you.
- » Don't allow family members (grandparents, other relatives, girlfriends or boyfriends) to engage in making negative comments about the child's other parent. People who love you may have difficulty restraining themselves. It is usually best if you talk to your biological relatives about negative comments and how destructive it can be for the children.
- » Conduct your life as business as usual. Don't pretend that you do not have responsibilities or obligations that must be upheld.
- » Invite your child to become part of your changed lifestyle and to become at ease with it. Promote your child feeling fully connected to your life.
- » Establish assignments of responsibilities in your household while your children are visiting. Routines that include chores may help establish a greater sense of family connectedness.
- » Occasionally remember to say something positive about the other parent. If you point out a positive behavioral or personality characteristic, your child is more likely to model that trait.
- » Help your child purchase birthday presents, Mother's or Father's Day presents just as you would if you were living under the same roof. Establish spending limits so that there are not great disparities in the costs of gifts.
- » Make it possible for your child to have a photograph of the other parent in their room at your house. Offer to make available to the other parent a photo so that your picture can be in your child's room at the home of the other parent.
- » Set aside some time to be alone with each child. You don't have to go anywhere, but make the opportunity for your child to talk to you without interruption.
- » Children can adjust to differences in discipline and rules. While it is better for the children to have some consistency in bedtimes, homework times, meals and other routines, accept that there are limits to your control when the child is with the other parent.
- » When your child is with the other parent, use the time well. Nurture yourself and get your adult needs met so that you can be a more effective parent.
- » The time your child is visiting you is for your child, not for someone you are casually dating.



## WHAT TO AVOID

- » The “Disneyland Dad” syndrome - compressing a batch of fun activities or buying the latest toys will leave little time for real closeness or any meaningful discussion with your child.
- » Letting everyone “do their own thing” - without structure or some kind of organization or plan, visitation is reduced to a meaningless ritualistic exercise.
- » Inconsistent habits - how often a child sees the non-custodial parent is a key factor in how long it takes to heal from the trauma of divorce.
- » Doing what the kids want without considering the needs or wants of the parent – if you give to your child out of guilt or fear, this can be very damaging and confusing to the child. Set boundaries out of love.
- » Doing what the parent wants without considering the needs or wants of the child – your time together is priceless and should not be squandered. Denying the needs of your child denies the worth of the child.

## GUIDELINES FOR TIME SHARING BY AGE GROUP

Each child is different. Be sure to take your child’s needs in to consideration.

### Age Birth-8 Months

- » Work hard with your co-parent to provide safe and nurturing environments for your young infant.
- » Try to duplicate the primary residence; use the same kind of pacifier, brand of diapers and serve the same foods. Keep duplicate toys on hand or be willing to send toys to the other parent’s home.
- » If the baby nurses exclusively, arrangements should be adjusted to accommodate nursing.
- » For those who are new to parenting, have limited experience, or have not been the primary caregiver, visits of very young children should take place under supervision, preferably in the infant’s primary residence.
- » Overnight or other extended separations from the primary caregiver might prove stressful for a young child in this age group.
- » As a basic guideline, two to three weekly visits for two to three hours each.
- » If your infant is used to overnight visits, continue. If not, short, frequent visits facilitate bonding and attachment.
- » Pay attention to your child’s behavior. If a plan isn’t working, be flexible enough to try another arrangement.

### Age 9-12 Months

- » Work hard with your co-parent to provide safe and nurturing environments for your young child.
- » Maintaining consistency is the primary goal for this age group.
- » Make sure that routines, foods, and parenting at mom’s house and at dad’s house are as similar as possible.
- » If the baby has a comfort object – a blanket or stuffed toy – send the object on visits.
- » Keep duplicates of favorite toys on hand or be willing to send the toys on visits
- » For children who handle it well, and are attached to both parents, two to three weekly visits for four to eight hours each and one weekly overnight weekend visit.
- » For those who are new to parenting, have limited experience, or have not been the primary caregiver, two to four weekly visits for three hours each are recommended.
- » If a plan isn’t working, be flexible enough to try another arrangement. There isn’t a set plan for any age group.

### 13 Months-3 Years

- » Work hard with your co-parent to create safe and nurturing environments for your toddler.
- » Children can handle one or two weekly visits for six to eight hours each and one weekly or every other week overnight weekend visit or more depending on their situation.
- » For those who are new to parenting, have limited experience, or have not been the primary caregiver, one or two weekly visits for four to six hours each and possibly one weekly overnight visit might work better.
- » If you don’t feel comfortable having your child stay overnight with you, it’s okay.
- » For making vacation plans, try several two to three day visits per year.

### 4-5 Years

- » Work hard with your co-parent to create nurturing and safe environments for your young child.
- » Your child should be encouraged by each parent to have regular phone contact with the other parent.
- » Many parenting plans for this age group include one or two weekly visits for six to eight hours each and one weekly 24-hour overnight visit.
- » If you feel very secure in your parenting skills, try two weekly 24-hour overnight visits that are not consecutive.



- » For those new to care giving or with limited experience, one or two weekly visits for four to six hours each and possibly one overnight visit from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- » If you don't feel comfortable having your child stay overnight with you, it's okay.
- » For vacations, start with four three-day visits per year before trying longer plans.

### 6-8 Years

- » A frequent plan for this age group is every other weekend from Friday after school until Sunday night or Monday morning and one other weeknight dinner and homework until 7:30 p.m.
- » Although visitation could be every other weekend from Thursday after school until Monday morning drop off at school, as parenting time is shared, more time can be shared.
- » For those new to parenting or with limited experience, try one weekly 24-hour overnight stay and one weeknight dinner and homework. For vacations, try several 3 day summer visits before making more extensive plans.
- » Parents should encourage their child to have regular phone contact with the other parent.
- » Children in this age group are more strongly affected by other's emotions- be aware of your actions and speech.
- » At this age, visitations of a week or more can be tolerated, especially if siblings are present.

### 9-12 Years

- » Flexibility is the key. If an arrangement isn't working, be flexible and reasonable enough to try another plan.
- » Parents should take into account the child's schedule and commitments; if the child plays sports every Wednesday night but Tuesday is the night a child sees the non residential parent, consider alternating days so that the non residential parent can attend the event.
- » If you are very comfortable with your level of skill as a caregiver, and your child handles a flexible schedule well, every other weekend from Thursday night until Monday morning (drop off at school) and one weeknight visit after school until 7:30 p.m.
- » Some children thrive with a one week/one week split – others like a mid-week split and weekend split find your own best plan for each child.
- » For those new to parenting or with limited experience, a beginning parenting time plan could be every other weekend from 10:00 a.m. Saturday to 7:30 p.m. Sunday and one weeknight visit for dinner and homework.

- » Suggestions for vacations are three consecutive weeks in summer with the non-residential parent (residential parent has visitation) and other school breaks split equally between parents. Make sure your child has contact with the residential parent.
- » At this stage, children can tolerate a summer long visitation with the non-custodial parent, but will need phone or letter contact with the other parent.

### 13-17 Years

- » Parents should be flexible, but remain firm. Even the busiest teenager can and should participate in regular family activities – family meals, chores or church attendance, for example.
- » Although your teen is performing his/her developmental task of separating from you, they may seem torn between wanting freedom and independence and needing guidance and protection.
- » Remember, what you say and how you live stays with your child.
- » Consideration for the teen's social and school commitments should be given.
- » Teenagers should not make the decisions, but they should be consulted.
- » A basic schedule for teens is every other weekend from Friday after school until Monday morning school drop off and one other weeknight dinner and homework after school until 7:30 p.m or overnight.
- » For those new to parenting or with limited experience, try every other weekend and one weeknight visit for dinner and homework.
- » For vacations, try three consecutive weeks in summer with the non-residential parent (residential parent has visitation) with other school vacations split equally between parents.
- » For some parents splitting half the summer vacation time works well, with other school breaks split equally between parents.
- » Visitation plans need to consider the natural desire to separate from parents and family and include peer groups.



With a majority of men and women remarrying within five years of divorce, the issues and concerns of blending families must be addressed. When a divorced parent remarries, a blended family is created. This means that two sets of parenting principles or styles are combined which may or may not fit together. How parents introduce and help their children adapt to the new family structure can influence how the step parenting relationship is formed. Remember that this is your choice, not your children's.

The most common areas of conflict for newly blended families that contribute to the breakup of second marriages revolve around children and issues of children's discipline. The new stepparent may attempt to impose new rules for the previously single parent family, leading to much conflict. Mutual respect is the goal that new stepparents should work toward.

The role that the new stepparent plays in regard to children's discipline is a major issue in stepfamilies. Most children will not accept the new stepparent in the role of disciplinarian; therefore, it is crucial that each biological parent handle the discipline for their own children. The older the child, the more important it is that the natural parent act as the disciplinarian. The new stepparent can enforce the rules the natural parent has set forth in the parent's absence. Children of any age should be given the understanding that the new adult (and new children) in the household should be shown consideration and respect.

### **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES TO REDUCE CONFLICT: TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CO-PARENTING**

- » Change the language of divorce – don't use words that blame, accuse or demand.
- » The term co-parent is similar to co-chair – it means you have equal accountability although you may have different areas of responsibility.
- » Remember your common purpose – you are dedicated to a common goal, the best interest of your children.
- » Removing emotions from communication does not mean denying them. Find another time and place to express your feelings.
- » Communicate with facts, not feelings.
- » Negotiate differences when you disagree or when new circumstances arise.
- » Limit the co-parent relationship to specific topics and goals.
- » Observe common courtesy.
- » Allow your child to love both families.

### **CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS**

Marriage is a contract between adults, and when it ends, the matter is between the adults also. Yet no parental action has a greater impact on children. Even in times of great stress, parents have a responsibility to conduct their legal affairs in a manner that will protect their children from adult conflicts.

At a minimum, children are entitled to the following Bill of Rights:

1. Neither parent shall deny the child reasonable use of the telephone to place and receive calls with the other parent and relatives.
2. Neither parent shall speak or write derogatory remarks about the other parent to the child, or engage in abusive, coarse or foul language, which can be overheard by the child whether or not the language involves the other parent.
3. Neither parent shall permit the children to overhear arguments, negotiations or other substantive discussions about legal or business dealings between the parents.
4. Neither parent shall physically or psychologically attempt to pressure, attempt to influence, pressure or influence the children concerning the personal opinion or position of the child concerning legal proceedings between the parents.
5. Each parent will permit the child to display photographs of the other parent or both parents in the child's room.
6. Neither parent shall communicate moral judgments about the other parent to the child concerning the other parent's choice of values, lifestyle, choice of friends, successes or failures in life (career, financial, relational) or residential choice.
7. The parents will acknowledge to the child that the child has two homes although the child may spend more time at one home than the other.
8. The parents shall cooperate to the greatest extent practicable in sharing time with the child.
9. Each parent will permit the child to retain, and allow easy access to, correspondence, greeting cards, and other written materials received from the other parent.
10. Each parent will respect the physical integrity of items possessed by the child, which depict the other parent or remind the child of the other parent.
11. Neither parent will trivialize, or deny the existence of the other parent to the child.
12. Neither parent will interrogate the child about the other parent nor will either parent discourage comments by the child about the other parent.
13. Neither parent will intercept, "lose", derail, "forget" or otherwise interfere with communications to the child from the other parent.
14. Neither parent will refuse to acknowledge that the child can have or should have good experiences with the other parent.



15. Neither parent will directly or indirectly attack or criticize to the child the extended family of the other parent, the other parent's career, the living and travel arrangements of the other parent, or lawful activities of the other parent or associates of the other parent.
16. Neither parent will use the child as a "middleman" by using the child to communicate with the other parent on inappropriate topics.
17. Neither parent will undermine the other parent in the eyes of the child by engaging in the "circumstantial syndrome" which is done by manipulating, changing, or rearranging facts.
18. Neither parent will create for, or exaggerate to, the child differences between the parents.
19. Neither parent will say and do things with an eye to gaining the child as an "ally" against the other parent.
20. Neither parent will encourage or instruct the child to be disobedient to the other parent, stepparents, or relatives.
21. Neither parent will reward the child to act negatively toward the other parent.
22. Neither parent will try to make the child believe he or she loves the child more than the other parent, by, for example, saying that he or she loves the child more than the other parent or over-informing the child on adult topics or overindulging the child.
23. Neither parent will discuss child support issues with the child.
24. Neither parent will engage in judgmental, opinionated or negative commentary, physical inspections or interrogations once the child arrives from his/her other home.
25. Neither parent will "rewrite" or "re-script" facts, which the child originally knows to be different.
26. Neither parent will punish the child physically or threaten such punishment in order to influence the child to adopt the parent's negative program, if any, against the other parent.
27. Neither parent will permit the child to be transported by a person who is intoxicated due to consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.
28. Neither parent will smoke tobacco materials inside structures or vehicles occupied at the time by the child.
29. Each parent will permit the child to carry gifts, toys, clothing, and other items belonging to the child with him or her to the residence of the other parent or relatives or permit the child to take gifts, toys, clothing, and other items belonging to the child back to the residence of the other parent, as the case may be, to facilitate the child having with him or her objects, important to the child. The gifts, toys, clothing and other items belonging to the child referred to here mean items which are reasonable transportable and does not include pets (which the parents agree are impractical to move about).

## WHAT THE DIVORCE IS NOT

- » Divorce is not a way to redress past transgressions.
- » Divorce is not a way to punish.
- » Divorce is not a way to get even for years of problems.
- » Divorce is not a way to show kids "who really loves them."
- » Divorce is not a way to provided total social and economic security for kids, self, and spouse.
- » Divorce is not a way to maintain control over the ex-spouse.
- » Divorce is not a way to resolve who is good, bad, right, or wrong.
- » Divorce is not a way to get from your ex-spouse what you did not get in the marriage.

## REMEMBER . . .

- » You cannot focus on who is to blame if you want your child to cope.
- » You cannot change the behavior of your children's other parent. All you can change is your own behavior.
- » You cannot expect things to go perfectly, so you will occasionally need to be forgiving.
- » You can make efforts to start and maintain a working relationship with your co-parent.
- » You can plan ahead and make decisions with your co-parent.
- » You can take in account your child's developmental stage when creating a time-sharing plan.
- » You can stop the pain games.



## READING RESOURCES

### FOR ADULTS

Helping Your Kids Cope With Divorce the Sandcastles Way by M. Gary Neumann \*

Divorce Book for Parents by Vicki Lansky

Parenting Teens With Love and Logic by Foster Cline and Jim Fay

Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen

Positive Discipline for Single Parents by Jane Nelsen

Step by Step Parenting by Jim Eckler

The Good Divorce by Constance E. Ahrons

Mom's House, Dad's House: Making Two Homes for Your Child by Isolina Ricci

Does Wednesday Mean Mom's House or Dad's House: Parenting Together While Living Apart by Marc Ackerman

The Grief Recovery Handbook by John James

Rebuilding When Your Relationship Ends by Bruce Fisher

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk by Faber & Mazlich\*

Sibling Rivalry by Faber & Mazlich

The Challenging Child by Stanley Greenspan \*

Living Through Personal Crisis by Judith Stearns

Second Chances by Judith Wallerstein & Sandra Blakeslee

The Divorce Handbook by James T. Friedman

Raising Confident Boys by Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer

Raising Confident Girls by Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer

The Challenging Child by Stanley Greenspan

We Are Still Family by Judith Wallerstein

Transforming the Difficult Child by Glasser & Easley

How to Keep Your Teenager Out of Trouble by Neil Bernstein

Divorce Casualties: Protecting Your Child from Parental Alienation by Douglas Darnall

Healthy Divorce by Craig Everett and Sandra Volgy Everett

Growing Up With Divorce by Neil Kalter

Divided Families by Frank Furstenberg and Andrew J. Cherlin

For Better or For Worse: Divorce Reconsidered

Joint Custody With a Jerk: Raising a Child With and Uncooperative Ex by Judy Corcoran and Julie A. Ross

Parenting After a Divorce: A Guide to Resolving Conflicts by Philip M. Stahl

The Co-Parenting Survival Guide: Letting Go of Conflict After a Difficult Divorce by Elizabeth Thayer and Jeff Zimmerman

Custody Chaos, Personal Peace: Sharing Custody With an Ex Who Drives You Crazy by Jeffrey P. Whittmann

### FOR KIDS

Dinosaurs Divorce; A Guide for Changing Families by Laurene Brown Krasny

Boys and Girls Book About Divorce by Gardner

Divorce Happens to the Nicest Kids by Michael S. Prokop

How It Feels When Parents Divorce by Jill Kremetz

The Kids' Book of Divorce, Eric Rofes, Editor

Mom & Dad Don't Live Together Anymore by Nancy Lou Reynolds

It's Not Your Fault, Koko Bear by Vicki Lansky;

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

Pocketful of Kisses by Audrey Penn

I Don't Want To Talk About It by Jeanie Franz Ransom

The Family Book by Todd Parr

The Way I Feel by Janan Caine

### WEB RESOURCES

[www.fcsok.org](http://www.fcsok.org)

[www.helplinetulsa.net](http://www.helplinetulsa.net)

[www.tulsaunitedway.org](http://www.tulsaunitedway.org)

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

[www.stepfamily.info](http://www.stepfamily.info)

[www.cooperativeparenting.com](http://www.cooperativeparenting.com)

[www.tnpc.com](http://www.tnpc.com)

[www.sheknows.com/parenting/family-fun](http://www.sheknows.com/parenting/family-fun)

[www.childdevelopmentinfo.com](http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com)

[www.parenting-ed.org](http://www.parenting-ed.org)

[www.tulsaakids.com/Tulsa-Kids/Parents-Place](http://www.tulsaakids.com/Tulsa-Kids/Parents-Place)

[www.parentingteens.com](http://www.parentingteens.com)

[www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com)

[www.fathers.com](http://www.fathers.com)

[www.fathersnetwork.org](http://www.fathersnetwork.org)

[www.singleparentsnetwork.com](http://www.singleparentsnetwork.com)

[www.familiesintransition.com](http://www.familiesintransition.com)

[www.oscn.net](http://www.oscn.net)

[www.morelaw.com](http://www.morelaw.com)

[www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com)

[www.findlaw.com](http://www.findlaw.com)

[www.divorcenet.com](http://www.divorcenet.com)

[www.divorcesource.com](http://www.divorcesource.com)

[www.kidsturn.org](http://www.kidsturn.org)

[www.childreninthemiddle.com](http://www.childreninthemiddle.com)





## GETTING HELP WHEN THERE ARE MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS

The workshop you are taking is an educational program to teach skills and principles that can help you build healthy relationships. It is not designed to address serious relationship and individual problems.

Since you are taking the time to think more about your life and relationships, it may also be a good time to think about other services that you or others you care about may need. We provide this sheet of information to everyone in these workshops so that you will be aware of other available services.

Difficulties in other areas could make it that much harder to make relationships work. The good news is that participating in this workshop could be a gateway to getting other services. It can provide you with awareness, motivation and tools to help you take other steps to improve your life. Here are some areas where seeking additional help could be really important for you and your family.

### FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

- » Serious money problems make everything else harder.
- » Unemployment/job loss can be a key source of conflict and stress.
- » You may need more help to learn to manage your finances or find a job.

### SERIOUS FAMILY PROBLEMS OR STRESSES

- » If you have serious adult relationship problems where more help is needed than can be provided in this educational workshop, you can seek counseling from someone who specializes in this area.
- » Coping with a serious life threatening or chronic illness or disability in a child or an adult can place a lot of stress on caregivers and their family relationships. Community resources exist to help families with these kinds of issues.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE, ADDICTIONS AND OTHER COMPULSIVE BEHAVIORS

- » No matter what else you have to deal with in life, it will be harder if you or another close family member has a substance abuse problem.
- » Drug or alcohol abuse and addiction robs a person of the ability to handle life well, have close relationships and be a good parent.
- » Alcohol abuse can also make it harder to control anger and violence.
- » Other problems families sometimes face include eating disorders, sexual addictions and gambling.

You need to decide to get help with these problems to make your life better and the lives of those you love. It will make it easier if your family supports this decision.

### MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- » Mental health problems come in many forms, from anxiety to depression to schizophrenia and place a great deal of stress on family relationships.
- » Depression is especially common when there are serious relationship problems.
- » Having thoughts of suicide is often a sign of depression. Seek help if you struggle with such thoughts.

The good news is that there are now many effective treatments for mental health problems with services available in all counties, including options for those with less means to pay.

### DOMESTIC AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

While domestic violence can take many forms, the key is doing whatever is needed to make sure you and your children are safe. While domestic aggression and violence is wrong and dangerous, experts now recognize different types.

- » Some couples have arguments that get out of control, with frustration spilling over into pushing, shoving or slapping.
- » This can be dangerous especially if you don't take strong measures to stop these patterns from continuing.
- » The type of domestic violence that is usually the most dangerous of all and is least likely to change is when a male uses aggression and force to scare and control a woman. Verbal abuse, threats of harm and/or forced sexual activity can be part of this pattern.
- » This workshop is not a treatment program for physical aggression. If you are dealing with aggression and violence in your relationship, you may need more help than what can be offered in this program. That might mean seeking relationship counseling or seeking the advice or domestic violence experts.
- » If you have questions about the safety of a relationship, you should contact a domestic violence program or hotline, especially if you feel you are in danger of being harmed.

The bottom line is doing what you need to do to assure that you and your children are safe. If you ever feel you are in immediate danger call 911 for help or contact your domestic violence hotline.

### WHERE CAN WE GET MORE HELP?

If you, your partner or your relationship experiences any of these special problems, we strongly recommend that you get more help.

Your workshop leaders may have attached some additional contact information for some resources in your area. You can also ask your leaders directly (in person or by phone) if you would like any other suggestions.

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Broken Arrow Police	(918) 259-8400	DVIS/ Call Rape	(918) 743-5763
Child Abuse Reports	(800) 522-3511	Family Safety Center	(918) 742-7480
COPEs (mobile crisis unit)	(918) 744-4800	Missing & Exploited Children	(800) 843-5678
Domestic Violence Intervention Services	(918) 585-3163	Poison Control Center	(800) 222-1222
Call Rape	(918) 585-3163	Sapulpa Police	(918) 224-3862
		Teen Hotline	(800) 522-8336

## TULSA AREA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Broken Arrow Police	(918) 259-8400
Child Abuse Reports	(800) 522-3511
COPEs (24/7 Crisis Line)	(918) 744-4800
Domestic Violence Intervention Services	(918) 585-3163
Call Rape	(918) 585-3163
Call Rape 24 Hour Crisis Line	(918) 743-5763
Family Safety Center	(918) 742-7480
Missing & Exploited Children	(800) 843-5678
Poison Control Center	(800) 222-1222
SafeLine	(800) 522-7233
Sapulpa Police	(800) 224-3862
Teen Hotline	(800) 522-8336
Tulsa Police, Fire, Ambulance	911
Tulsa Police (non-emergency)	(918) 596-9222

### ASSISTANCE WITH BASIC NEEDS

#### FOOD/UTILITIES

Boston Avenue Helping Hands	(918) 584-6923
Broken Arrow Neighbors	(918) 251-7781
Catholic Charities	(918) 585-5068
Emergency Infant Services	(918) 582-2469
Life Senior Services	(918) 664-9000
Loaves & Fishes	(918) 234-8577
Metropolitan Tulsa Urban League	(918) 584-0001
Neighbor for Neighbor	(918) 425-5578
Salvation Army Center of Hope	(918) 582-7201
Sand Springs Community Services	(918) 245-5183
Tulsa County Social Service	(918) 596-5560
Wagoner Area Neighbors	(918) 485-2309
WIC Program	(918) 746-3804

#### SHELTERS

Catholic Charities St. Elizabeth's Lodge	(918) 585-5068
Day Center for the Homeless	(918) 583-5588
Day Spring Villa	(918) 245-4075
Domestic Violence Intervention Services	(918) 585-3163
John 3:16 Men's Shelter	(918) 587-1187
Family and Youth	(918) 592-1186
Madonna House	(918) 585-5186
Pearl's Hope	(918) 583-9506
Salvation Army Social Services	(918) 582-7201
Tulsa County Social Services	(918) 596-5591
Youth Services	(918) 582-0061

#### HOUSING

Community Action Project (CAP)	(918) 382-3200
Neighbor for Neighbor (Circle Housing)	(918) 425-5578
Oklahoma Housing Authority	(800) 256-1489
Tulsa Housing Authority	(918) 582-0021

### RESIDENTIAL YOUTH HOMES: GIRLS

Sand Springs Home	(918) 245-3232
Circle of Care	(918) 583-9506

### RESIDENTIAL YOUTH HOMES: BOYS

Sand Springs Home	(918) 245-6900
Tulsa Boy's Home	(918) 245-0231

### INFORMATION & REFERRAL

2-1-1	211
Ability Resources (Disabilities Resource Center)	(918) 592-1235
BabyLine (Prenatal Care)	(918) 838-0694
Broken Arrow Family Resource Center	(918) 258-6545
Child Care Resource Center	(918) 834-2273
HelpLine	(918) 836-4357
Indian Health Care Resource Center	(918) 588-1900
KidsLine	(918) 583-5437
Mental Health Association	(918) 585-1213
OASIS – Oklahoma Area System Info	
Owasso Community Resources	(918) 272-4969
PlanLine	(918) 838-0697
Services (People with Disabilities)	(800) 426-2747

### DENTAL, HEARING, & VISION CARE

Community Action Project	(918) 382-3200
Indian Health Care Resource Center	(918) 588-1900
Neighbor for Neighbor (Dental & Vision)	(918) 425-5578
Tulsa City County Health Dept. (children)	(918) 582-9355
Tulsa Scottish Rite	(918) 622-7064
Tulsa Speech & Hearing Assoc.	(918) 832-8742
The University of Tulsa Chapman Center for Communicative Disorders	(918) 631-2504

### MEDICAL SERVICES

Ability Resources (Disabilities Resource Center)	(918) 592-1235
KidsLine	(918) 583-5437
Morton Health Clinic	(918) 587-2171
Neighbor for Neighbor	(918) 425-5595
Oklahoma Health Care Authority	(800) 987-7767
OSU Health Care Center	(918) 582-1980
OU Health Sciences Center	(918) 619-4400
Family Medicine	(918) 619-4600
Internal Medicine	(918) 619-4400
Pediatric Clinic	(918) 619-4400
Women's Clinic	(918) 619-4203
Surgical Specialists	(918) 634-7500
Planned Parenthood (Pediatric Clinic)	(918) 587-1101
Tulsa City County Health Department	(918) 582-9355
Child Guidance	(918) 594-4720
Tulsa County Social Services	(918) 596-5560
Visiting Nurse Association	(918) 743-9810

### PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE

Neighbor for Neighbor	(918) 425-5595
Recycle Meds	(918) 596-5560
Restore Hope Ministries	(918) 582-5766
Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health	(918) 293-2100

### FAMILY PLANNING

PlanLine	(918) 838-0697
Planned Parenthood	(918) 587-1101
Tulsa City County Health Dept.	
Family Planning Clinic	(918) 595-4529

### TULSA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Tulsa County Main Number	(918) 596-5000
Tulsa County Family Resource Coordinator	
Cheryl Conklin	(918) 596-5325
Tulsa County District Attorney's Office	(918) 596-4805
Victim Witness Center	(918) 596-4915

### LEGAL SERVICES

Broken Arrow Neighbors	(918) 251-7781
Disability Law Center	(800) 226-5883
Lawyer Referral Service	(918) 587-6014
Legal Aid	(918) 428-4357
Legal Alternatives	(918) 747-2323
Neighbor for Neighbor Legal Clinic	(918) 425-5571
Neighbors Along the Line	(918) 584-1111
Oklahoma Alternative Resources	(918) 742-8883
Tulsa County Bar Association	(918) 584-5243
Tulsa Dream Center	(918) 430-9984
Women's Resource Center (YWCA)	(918) 588-9393

### CHILD ADVOCACY SERVICES

CASA	(918) 584-2272
Child Abuse Network	(918) 624-0200
Children's Justice Center	(918) 587-8423
Juvenile Bureau of the District Court	(918) 596-5971
Tulsa County District Attorney's Office	(918) 596-4805
Victim Witness Center	(918) 596-4915

### MEDIATION/SUPERVISION

#### HOME STUDIES

Catholic Charities	(918) 585-5068
Department of Human Services (DHS)	(918) 581-2033

#### MEDIATION

Mediator list available at <a href="http://www.tulsacountyfamilycourt.org">www.tulsacountyfamilycourt.org</a> .	
Early Settlement	(918) 596-7786
Family & Children's Services	(918) 587-9471
Oklahoma Academy of Mediators & Arbitrators	(918) 378-3160
Parent Connections	(918) 560-1144
<i>(must have an open case with Child Support Enforcement)</i>	

### SUPERVISED EXCHANGE

Safenet	(918) 341-1424
Safe Visit and Exchange Services	(918) 293-9881

### SUPERVISED VISITATION

Safenet	(918) 341-1424
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### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/COUNSELING SERVICES

COPEs (24/7 crisis line)	(918) 744-4800
Counseling & Recovery Services	(918) 492-2554
CrisisCare Center	(918) 921-3200
Domestic Violence Intervention Services	(918) 585-3163
Call Rape	(918) 585-3163
Call Rape 24 Hour Crisis Line	(918) 743-5763
Family Safety Center	(918) 742-7480
Family & Children's Services Mental Health Care	(918) 587-9471 (918) 712-4301
Human Skills & Resources, Inc.	(918) 747-6377
Laureate Psychiatric Clinic	(918) 481-4000
OU Psychiatric Clinic	(918) 660-3130
Parent Child Center	(918) 599-7999
Parkside	(918) 582-2131
Resonance	(918) 587-3888
SafeLine	(800) 522-7233
Shadow Mountain	(918) 492-8200
The Tristesse Center (Grief Center)	(918) 587-1200
Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health	(918) 293-2100
Youth Services of Tulsa County	(918) 582-0061

### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)

Tulsa County	(918) 581-2689
Adult Protective Services	(800) 522-3511
Child Abuse Reports	(800) 522-3511
Child Care Licensing	(800) 347-2276
Child Support Enforcement - East	(918) 295-3500
Child Support Enforcement - West	(800) 522-2922
Child Welfare	(918) 933-4500
Day Care Assistance	(918) 521-3931
Food Stamps	(918) 521-3444
Home Studies	(918) 581-2033
Parent Connections	(918) 560-1144
<i>(must have an open case with Child Support Enforcement)</i>	
TANF Applications	(918) 521-4391
Vocational Rehabilitation	(918) 581-2327

### FINANCIAL PLANNING & ADDITIONAL NUMBERS

Credit Counseling Centers of Oklahoma	(918) 744-5611
Oklahoma Center for Equality	(918) 743-4297
State Dept. of Health – Vital Records	(405) 271-4040
Tulsa City-County Library	(918) 549-7323
Voter Registration	(918) 596-5787



## NORTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA AREA COUNTIES COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

211 Hotline	211
Abuse Hotline	(800) 722-4996
Child Welfare Hotline	(800) 522-3511
Children's Mobile Crisis Line	(800) 722-3611
Child Support Enforcement	(800) 522-2922
Drug & Alcohol Helpline	(800) 821-4357
Domestic Violence Hotline	(800) 799-SAFE
Legal Aid	(888) 534-5243
National Runaway Hotline	(800) 621-4000
Oklahoma Safe Line	(800) 522-SAFE
Sexual Assault Hotline	(800) 400-0883
Sooner Care	(800) 998-7767
Suicide Prevention Hotline	(800) 273-TALK
WIC	(888) OKLA-WIC

### CRAIG COUNTY

Adult Protective Services	(918) 253-4512
Cherokee Nation Tribal Gov't	(918) 256-8595
Child Support Enforcement	(918) 253-3570
Community Action	(918) 256-7387
Community Action Agency, Inc.	(918) 253-4683
DHS	(918) 713-5000
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405
Health Department	(918) 253-4511
Northeast Oklahoma	
Salvation Army Utilities Authority Assist.	(918) 713-5000

### CREEK COUNTY

Bristow Social Services	(918) 367-5400
Church Food Pantry Sapulpa Indian Health	1125 E. Cleveland
CREOKS Mental Health	(877) 327-3657
Community Resource Center	(918) 224-8412
Community Care Inc. of Sapulpa	(918) 224-6464

(for residents of Kellyville, Kiefer, Mannford, Mounds & Sapulpa)

Caring Community Friends	(918) 224-6464
DHS	(918) 746-3300
Good Shepherd Episcopal	(918) 224-5144
United Community Action	(918) 762-2561

### DELAWARE COUNTY

Cherokee Nation Housing Authority	(918) 253-8315
Community Action	(918) 253-4683
DHS	(918) 253-4213
Food Pantry	(918) 253-7447
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405
Jay TANF	(918) 253-2867
Legal Aid of Tulsa: Jay	(918) 253-4980
WIC Services: Jay	(918) 253-4219

### MAYES COUNTY

Community Action Resource and Development, Inc.	(918) 341-5000
DHS	(918) 824-4900
Free Medical Clinic	(918) 273-8131
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405
Pushmataha Counseling Services	(918) 825-4872

### NOWATA COUNTY

Community Action Resource and Development, Inc.	(918) 341-5000
DHS	(918) 273-2327
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405

### OSAGE COUNTY

DHS	(918) 287-5800
Edwin Fair Mental Health	(580) 366-5200
Native American Housing Services	(405) 964-4663
Osage Nation Social Services	(918) 287-5335

### PAWNEE COUNTY

Area Health Center	(918) 762-3041
Children & Adult Food Care Program	(866) 634-5412
Community Alcoholism Services	(918) 762-3686
DHS	(918) 762-3606
Edwin Fair Mental Health	(580) 366-5200
United Community Action Emergency Services ext 169	(580) 762-3041

### ROGERS COUNTY

Cherokee Nation	(800) 256-0671
Community Action	(918) 341-5000
Consumer Credit Counseling	(918) 343-3313
CREOKS Behavioral Health	(918) 342-2080
DHS	(918) 283-8300
Food Share Program	(800) 712-5000
Food Stamps	(918) 283-8300
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405
Health Department	(918) 341-3166

OASIS (special needs)	(800) 426-2747
Rogers County DHS	(918) 283-8300
SafeNet Services	(918) 341-1424
Youth Services	(918) 341-7580

### WAGONER COUNTY

CARD (Rent assistance)	(918) 486-2471
CREOKS	(918) 485-0242
DHS	(918) 614-5000
Wagoner Area Neighbors Utility Assistance	(918) 485-6830
Wagoner Community Outreach Free Medical & Dental Clinic	(918) 485-6830

### WASHINGTON COUNTY

Ability Resources (Disabilities Resource Center)	(918) 592-1235
Community Action Resource and Development, Inc.	(918) 341-5000
DHS	(918) 338-5700
Grand Lake Mental Health Center	(918) 825-1405
KidsLine	(918) 583-5437
Morton Health Clinic	(918) 587-2171
Neighbor for Neighbor	(918) 425-5595
Oklahoma Health Care	(800) 987-7767
OSU Health Care Center	(918) 582-1980



**NATIONAL RESOURCES**

**SAFELINE 1-800-799-7233**

*A national domestic violence hotline.*

**1-800-662-HELP (4357)**

*A national hotline for referrals to substance abuse treatment.*

**1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)**

*A national hotline for suicide prevention.*

**www.samsha.gov/public**

*A national website with links for help with substance abuse and mental health issues.*

**LOCAL RESOURCES**

There are community mental health centers in all areas of the U.S. Other counseling centers and mental health professionals are often available as well (both non-religious and religious). Also both clergy and family physicians are usually well aware of resources for various needs in their communities, so consider asking them for suggestions.

See the Tulsa Area Community Resources pages in this handout for local resources.

**HELPFUL WEBSITES**

www.211tulsaorg.com

www.captc.org

www.discernmentcounseling.com

www.divorcenet.com

www.divorcesource.com

www.drbilldoherty.org/pdf/takebackyourmarriage\_chpt7.pdf

www.fcsok.org

www.findlaw.com

www.helpinetulsa.net

www.kidsturn.org

www.morelaw.com

www.nolo.com

www.okcollaborativelaw.org

www.OKDHS.org

www.oklaw.org

www.oscn.net

www.proudtoparent.org

www.tauw.org

www.TulsaMediation.com

www.uptoparents.org

This Please visit TULSA COUNTY FAMILY COURT website for information regarding the Tulsa county Courthouse and for additional resources for parents: [www.tulsaountyfamilycourt.org](http://www.tulsaountyfamilycourt.org)

**NOTES**

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

# CHANGING LIVES FOR 1 IN 6 TULSANS

Family & Children's Services is a recognized behavioral health care leader in Tulsa, Oklahoma and surrounding communities. We provide an array of specialized programs in mental health, substance abuse and family services. Our dedicated staff heal traumatized and hurting children, strengthen individuals and families, and provide hope and recovery for those battling mental illness and addiction. We give clients hope and set them on the path to recovery and, in the process, make our community a better place for all. Programs are offered through a network of convenient office locations.

## OUR LIFE-CHANGING PROGRAMS

Child Abuse & Trauma Treatment  
Family Preservation, Visitation & Reunification  
Children's Counseling & Mental Health Services  
Counseling for Adults & Families  
Mental Health & Addiction Treatment for Adults  
Psychiatry & Pharmacy  
Women in Recovery  
Family Life Education & Parenting Programs  
Marriage Enrichment Programs  
Divorce Adjustment Services  
Crisis Intervention

Family & Children's Services  
650 South Peoria Avenue  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74120

**918.587.9471**

[www.fcsok.org](http://www.fcsok.org)



*Life Changing.*