



PARENTAL ALIENATION AFTER DIVORCE: NEVER TAKE IT OUT ON THE KIDS!!!

Page 1 of 2

By Rosalind Sedacca

February 4, 2013



Divorce conflicts between parents can get ugly. And too often parents tend to vent or share this anger about the other parent with one or more of the children involved. The results can be devastating – not only for the “target” parent, but for the children, as well. This is just one form of parental alienation which is a serious and very complex set of behaviors which often feel justified by the alienating parent.

The problem is that children get caught in the middle, are often confused about being told disrespectful things about their other parent and can learn to manipulate both parents in ways that are destructive for the child’s socialization and ultimate well-being.

When any parental disagreements reach into your children’s lives, you are treading in dangerous territory with long-lasting consequences. How you handle the situation could play a crucial role in determining the ultimate outcome in your family conflict.

Here are some important strategies to consider, suggested by divorce therapists, to open the door to healing your relationship with the children you love:

- ❖ Strive to maintain contact with the children in every possible way. Take the initiative when an opportunity presents itself.
- ❖ Remember, your children are innocent. Don’t take your frustrations out on them by losing your temper, acting aggressively, shaming or criticizing them.
- ❖ Never reject your children in retaliation. Threatening that you don’t want to see them if they don’t want to see you only adds fuel to the fire.
- ❖ Stay empowered by not allowing the kids and your ex to determine the parameters of your contact with them. Avoid waiting until the kids “feel” like seeing you. That time may never come. Step up and schedule your time together.
- ❖ Don’t waste precious time with the children discussing or trying to change their negative attitudes toward you. Instead, create enjoyable experiences that speak for themselves.
- ❖ Avoid impressing or “buying” the kids’ affection with over-the-top gifts and promises. Spoiled children create a life-time of parenting problems for everyone down the road.





PARENTAL ALIENATION AFTER DIVORCE: NEVER TAKE IT OUT ON THE KIDS!!!

Page 2 of 2

By Rosalind Sedacca

February 4, 2013

- ❖ Never dismiss your children's feelings or counter what they say – even if they admit they are angry at or afraid of you. While you may be right, the children will more likely feel you're just not listening or don't understand them.
- ❖ Tempting as it may be, refrain from accusing the children of being brain-washed by their other parent or just repeating what they were told. Even if this is true, chances are the children will adamantly deny it and come away feeling attacked by you.
- ❖ Don't ever bad-mouth your ex in front of the kids. This only creates more alienation, along with confusion and further justification of your negative portrayal to the children. Be the parental role model they deserve and you will be giving them valuable lessons in integrity, responsibility and respect.

Parental alienation behaviors are not turned around overnight. But by following these suggestions you are moving in the most positive direction you can on behalf of your children and laying the foundation for keeping your relationship as positive as possible.

Rosalind Sedacca, CCT, is a Divorce & Parenting Coach and author of How Do I Tell the Kids about the Divorce? A Create-a-Storybook Guide to Preparing Your Children -- with Love! For her free book on Post-Divorce Parenting, her free weekly ezine, coaching services and other valuable resources about divorce and parenting issues visit <http://www.childcentereddivorce.com>. To learn more about her internationally acclaimed. ebook, visit <http://www.howdoitellthekids.com>.

