

DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON KIDS

A Guide to Dealing With Feelings of Sadness

SAD: affected by unhappiness or grief; sorrowful or mournful. (from dictionary.com)

THERE'LL BE SAD SONGS....TO MAKE YOU CRY!!! As parents, one of the things we hate the most is to see our kids sad. We will do all that we can to make keep our kids from being sad and to cheer them up when they are sad. Unfortunately, when it comes to divorce, sadness is a fact of life. As the child losses the life they have become accustomed to (often the only life they have ever known) they are frequently overcome with a deep and lasting sense of sadness. Indeed, sadness is generally one of the very first emotions you will encounter when a child is told his/her parents are separating or divorcing. Children are often left wanting to blame someone for the sadness they are feeling, and parents and siblings frequently become the targets of that blame. Many times sadness will lead a child to blame themselves leading to feelings of guilt. Many children will feel like they should be sad and feel additional guilt when they do experience those momentary periods of happiness. Many children will also seek to mask their sadness, particularly from parents, so as not to further burden the adults in their lives.

A FAMILY NO MORE

The following poem was written by an 11 year old boy in a Divorce Care 4 Kids program expressing some of the sadness kids feel when their parents divorce:

It was very sad when my
dad said divorce
My voice started to
get coarse
I was only six
It hit me like bricks
My sister was four
When he walked out
the door

I did not understand
He said goodbye
I started to cry
After the talk

He gave us the walk
My mom gave me a hug
I felt like a squashed bug
I felt like nothing

Not even something
It had to be a joke
I felt like I broke
I burst into tears

I had so many fears
Then it came to a halt
For it was not my fault
We are one less family to say

"So let us pray"

Originally included in an article
by Linda Ranson Jacobs at
<http://www.hlp4.com/node/69>

SYMPTOMS OF SADNESS

- Crying/Tears
- Loneliness
- Ignoring past hobbies
- Periods of longing
- Attempting to hold in emotions
- Fatigue
- Poor decision making
- Withdrawal
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in eating habits
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Passivity
- Hopelessness
- More demanding

HELPING A SAD CHILD

- ✓ Provide safe havens and places for the child to retreat.
- ✓ Address the sadness. This emotion will not fade on its own. It must be dealt with.
- ✓ Let children know that it is ok to be sad.
- ✓ Comment on a child's sadness and help them put words to their feelings.
- ✓ Encourage them not to be embarrassed about being sad.
- ✓ Explain to children that their sadness won't fix their family.
- ✓ Let children know that they will feel happy again in the future.
- ✓ Let them cry if they need to.

Scripture References About Sadness

Ps 9:9	Is 25:8
Ps 22:24	Is 54:10
Ps 27:4-5	Lm 3:31-33
Ps 30:5	Nah 1:7
Ps 34:18	Mt 5:4
Ps 37:39	Mt 11:25-30
Ps 46:1-2	Jn 14:27
Ps 55:22	2 Cor 1:3-5
Ps 71:20-21	Ph 4:6
Ps 73:26	Hb 4:14-16
Ps 138:7	1 Pt 5:6-7
Pr 14:32	Rev 21:4



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