

DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON KIDS

A Guide to Dealing With Feelings of Shock

SHOCK: a sudden or violent disturbance of the mind, emotions, or sensibilities. (from dictionary.com)



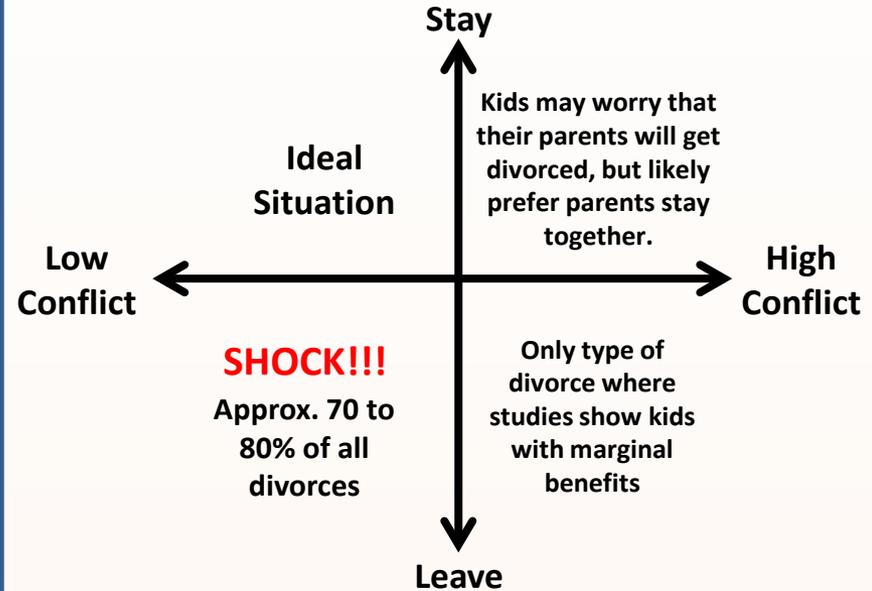
SHOCKED AND CONFUSED... Many children of divorce live in a constant state of shock and confusion. Somewhere around ¾ of all divorces are classified as coming from low-conflict marriages. The children in these homes do not see the divorce coming. They are largely unaware that one or both of their parents are unhappy, and the news of the divorce comes as a total surprise. Many of these children will show signs of anger and denial as they wrestle through the shock of the news.

Even those children who do process their parents' divorce and seem to be adjusting fairly well will be shocked as their parents begin to date and see other people. It is not natural to the child to see Mom or Dad with anyone other than their other parent, and this can take a lot of getting used to. Furthermore, remarriages, Step-families, and half-siblings can all leave the child of divorced feeling dazed and confused. The emotional aftershocks of divorce carry on well later in life for these kids.

Scripture References About Shock

Js 1:9 Is 40:31
Ps 30:5 Is 41:10
Ps 34:4 Jn 16:33
Ps 34:19 Lk 1:37
Ps 46:1 Rm 5:3-4
Ps 143:8 Phil 4:13
Pr 3:5-6 1 Pt 5:7

THE DIVORCE/CONFLICT MATRIX



This matrix reflects the impact on kids of divorce vs. staying together based upon the type of relationship between the parents prior to the divorce. A high conflict marriage includes loud and consistent fighting and/or abuse. In the majority of divorces, the parents are defined as low conflict. As a result, the kids don't see the divorce coming and are shocked by the news of the split.

"The third category, Cochrane points out, is the one most parents overlook because they want to believe that their kids are coping just fine with the divorce. 'Shannon is a good example of the kind of child who doesn't ask a lot of questions, get upset, or act up during and immediately after the divorce,' says Cochrane. 'However, children like Shannon are probably in shock or denial: they don't know what to say, so they don't say anything. These kids have a longer, slower-burning fuse than kids who act up, and eventually -- whether it's a year or five years -- their fuse will blow.'" Teri Morrison in Are Your Kids At Risk?

