
NEW RELATIONSHIPS FOR SINGLE PARENTS

Eventually, most single parents will begin to see new people and this may turn into a new romantic relationship. Here are some things which parents in a new relationship may not have thought about:

1. Keep your parenting relationship with the children separate from your dating life. You do not want the children to keep experiencing a loss every time you stop dating someone. Wait until you are in a serious relationship before you involve the children with the new person.

2. Be sure to spend good quality time alone with your children and the person in your new relationship so they do not have to compete for your attention and become jealous of each other.

3. Introduce a serious new relationship to your children slowly. If the children feel that you are shoving a new person into their lives too quickly, they often will rebel and refuse to spend time with you and your new love interest.

4. Be sure to maintain the children as your highest priority. Moving on with your life can mean new relationships and new activities, all of which naturally will take up some of your time and attention, but that should not mean that the children's needs get overlooked.

5. When you begin to think seriously about a dating partner only get serious if the person is supportive, rather than overbearing when it comes to your relationship with your children. Consider whether the person lets you be the parent. Even if a partner disagrees with the parenting choice you have made, your partner should respect your parenting abilities and let you deal with parenting decisions your way.

6. Choose partners who remain neutral regarding the children's other parent. Your new mate can be supportive of you regarding problems between you and the children's mother/father, but if the partner feels hatred, resentment, or jealousy toward the other parent, your new partner may cause problems for you and be resented by your children.

7. Be sure to check out how well a living situation will work before you and your new mate decide to join households. The house you all live in, whether yours or the new partner's residence originally, is the children's home as well as yours (even if you are the non-custodial parent). If the new person does not respect the children or your parenting, the home will tend to have frequent conflicts, which is very damaging for children.

If a new love interest wants to participate in your life, this person should accept the whole package: you and your children. If introduced slowly, a new person can be a positive addition to you and your children's lives.