

Children First Parent Education

Introduction
Session 2

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As of January 1st, 2016 some aspects of The Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act underwent changes. The current version of the Parenting Education Curriculum remains to be the most comprehensive program to assist parents and caregivers in adapting to the many issues related to divorce; however, some language within the curriculum has undergone revision due to the changes in the law.

Do you still love me?

- Provide reassurance
- Both parents will love and care for them.
- Value your relationship with your child.



- Handouts provided will indicate when language is not consistent with current terms

- Instances where this notation is present represents a change in the language that is presented in the video

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Common Problems and How to Avoid Them

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Meet the family

- Before the divorce
 - Vacations spent together
 - Family activities
 - Sibling relationship

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Meet the family

- After the divorce
 - Regular fights in front of the children
 - Change in living situation
 - Effects on the children

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Badmouthing other parent

- What you should not do
- What's bad about badmouthing

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Badmouthing other parent

- What you can do instead

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Badmouthing Example

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Badmouthing Quiz

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Using children to get information on the other parent

- What you should not do
- What's bad about using children to get information on the other parent

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Using children to get information on the other parent

- What you can do instead

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Using Children to Get Information Quiz

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Sending or Receiving Messages through Children

- What you should not do
- What's bad about sending or receiving messages through children

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Sending or Receiving Messages through Children

- What you can do instead

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Sending or Receiving Messages through Children Example

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Sending or Receiving Messages through Children Quiz

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Discussing Financial Matters with Your Children

- What you should not do
- What's bad about discussing financial matters with your children

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Discussing Financial Matters with Your Children

- What you can do instead

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Discussing Financial Matters with Your Children Quiz

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Talking about personal information with children

- What you should not do
- What's bad about talking about personal information with your children

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Talking about personal information with children

- What you can do instead

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Talking about personal information with children examples

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Talking about Personal Information with Children Quiz

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Fighting in front of children

- What you should not do
- What's bad about fighting in front of your children



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Fighting in front of children

- What you can do instead

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Fighting in Front of Children Quiz

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Competing for loyalty

- What you should not do
- What's bad about competing with the other parent for your children's loyalty

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Competing for loyalty

- What you can do instead

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Competing for loyalty

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Competing for loyalty quiz

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Moving Forward After Divorce

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Preparing for quality visits:

A

- Plan ahead
- Find a routine
- Do not give a gift at every visit
- Stock up on favorite foods
- Provide favorite games and movies
- Make sure your children have their own space



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Preparing for quality visits:

A

- Encourage comfortable visits
- Send along comfort items if needed
- Teenagers may have full calendars



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Preparing for quality visits:

B



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Talking about difficult visits or broken promises with your child

- Dealing with a broken promise is difficult
 - Do not make excuses to ease the hurt
 - Stick to the facts
- Do not direct frustration at your child
- Discuss the problem with your ex-spouse

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Introducing new romantic partners to your children

- Your children may resist a new partner
- Different views on making an introduction
- Plan ahead of time
- Keep your children as the top priority

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The Introduction

- Talk about it before the meeting
- Consider common interests
- Activities should be child-friendly
- Gradually spend more time together

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Blended families

- Prepare your children
- Make a plan for practical issues
- The new spouse should support your rules
- You should remain the primary disciplinarian
- The new spouse should not take the role of your children's other parent

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Blended families

- Children from different families may not be instant siblings (or even friends)
- It can be a strain on your children
- Give your children time to adjust

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Parenting Plans

- Why have a parenting plan?
- What is in a parenting plan?
 - Decision-making
 - Information sharing

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Parenting Plans

- What is in a parenting plan?
 - Visitation
 - Future mediation
- What if we need to change something?



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Moving forward

- You are entering a new phase of your life
- Look for opportunities for yourself
- Confront negative thoughts and challenge them
- Be optimistic in your thinking

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Moving forward

- How do you see yourself in 5 years?

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Moving Forward Quiz



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Conclusion

- Thank you for participating in the Children First program.

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