

DOs & DON'Ts FOR CHILDREN

DON'T:

- speak about the other parent's faults to them or in their presence;
- allow others to talk about the other parent to or in the presence of the children;
- complain to your children about how much child support you are paying or how little child support you are receiving;
- use the children to send messages between you and the other parent;
- question the children about what is going on at the other parent's house or about what they see or hear when they are with the other parent;
- try to discourage the children from visiting with the other parent;
- discuss the court case with the children or allow them to read the court papers;
- ask your children to ***choose*** which parent they want to live with;
- listen to the phone calls between your children and the other parent;
- tape record your children's telephone conversations with anyone;
- allow your children to call your significant other (or new spouse) "mom" or "dad";
- bring your boy/girl friend around the children (unless you and your spouse have been living separate and apart for several years already);
- allow your boy/girl friend to sleep overnight when the children are in your care;
- scream, yell or curse at the other parent in the presence of the children;
- don't threaten to call the cops on the other parent in the presence of the children;

DO:

- encourage your children to have a healthy relationship with the other parent;
- encourage your children to visit with and speak to the other parent;
- let your children know that BOTH parents love them;
- let your children know that the problems between you and the other parent is not their fault and not their problem, that it's an adult problem;
- let your children feel that they are free to love both parents and all extended family members;
- treat the other parent with civility and respect when the children are present – it may be difficult, but you will be teaching your children a valuable lesson.