

PROTECTING KIDS

Adapted from the work of Dr. Joan Kelly and the Honourable Harvey Brownstone

Talk to your children about your separation

Studies show only 5% of parents actually sit down and explain to their children when a marriage is breaking up and encourage the children to ask questions. Tell your children in simple terms what the separation means to them and their lives it will help them feel less anxious, upset and lonely.

Be Child Focused

Ask yourself what your child needs and how decisions will affect them. If you need guidance, reach out for help.

Never speak negatively to the child about the other parent.

Children love both their parents and they have a right to a loving relationship with each parent. They need and deserve emotional permission from you to enjoy their relationship with the other parent. Make sure that your friends and family also protect the kids from adult conflicts.

Never argue or fight in front of your children.

There are ways to communicate information when the kids are not present. When the kids are present, pretend to get along if you have to, but be polite to the other parent.

Do not use children as messengers.

Keep questions about what happens in the other house neutral and do not ask the children to relay information to the other parent.

Manage your own mental health

Even a few sessions with a counsellor can help you manage your emotions so that you can better support the children.

