



Family Law

CALL US - BEFORE
YOUR EX DOES!



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LAWYER

Q

My wife and I are separating, and we don't want to put our kids through the stress we saw with my brother. What can we do to lessen the effects of the divorce?

A

First, you and your wife should complete a Separation Agreement with the assistance of family lawyers, which sets a roadmap for good parenting. However, the best Separation Agreement cannot address every possible contingency, otherwise it would be the size of a phonebook.

A very helpful guide is contained in the book written by the Honourable Justice Harvey Brownstone, entitled Tug-of-War. In his prologue, he talks about the necessity to be mature in how you handle your ex partner, and to always put your children first. In practical terms, what does this mean? Justice Brownstone provides 10 tips for success in resolving parenting disputes; Today, we will address the first 5 points, and cover the remaining 5 points in our next article.

1. Be child focused. Any discussion with your partner should be about your child's needs, not your needs or your partner's needs.
2. Distinguish between a bad partner and a bad parent. Just because your

ex was a bad partner does not mean that he/she is a bad parent. Your children are entitled to have a safe and beneficial relationship with the other parent that is independent from your own.

3. Never speak negatively to the child about the other parent. Your child has the right to a loving relationship with each parent, and to have emotional permission to enjoy their relationship with the other parent.
4. Never argue or fight in front of your children. No exceptions. Pretend to get along at exchanges and don't bring the new partner.
5. Listen to the other parents' point of view even if you don't agree with it. Listen, then repeat back to them what their position is and their reasons why. This is hard work but will pay real dividends.

When you focus on child centred parenting your children will lead happier and more successful lives.

Your friends at Shank Law.



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