

For Immediate Release

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## Holiday Tips for Separated or Divorced Parents

TORONTO, ON (December 19, 2014) — Co-parenting after divorce can be stressful and awkward, and rarely more so than during the Hanukkah and Christmas holidays. That’s when tension or conflict between you and your ex-spouse threatens to undo your children’s expectations of fun and a loving environment. *Divorce Magazine* and [www.DivorceMagazine.com](http://www.DivorceMagazine.com), which have provided divorce information and resources for more than 18 years, understand this – and have suggestions on how to make things easier for divorced parents and their children.

“No divorcing person needs to be told how important their children are,” says Dan Couvrette, the publisher and CEO of *Divorce Magazine* and [DivorceMagazine.com](http://DivorceMagazine.com). “But every divorcing person needs to be reminded of how their words and actions can negatively or positively affect their children.”



The holidays will be different than they were when you were all still living together in the same home – not better or worse, just different.

You and your children may be worried about how this holiday season will “work”. You probably have a lot of questions right now, including:

- Which parent will have access to the children, and when?
- Are the children afraid you'll see them as “disloyal” if they have fun at your ex’s home?
- Will you or your spouse allow your bitterness or competition to infect the holiday spirit?
- Will the children miss the other parent when they are with you?

The holidays will be different than they were when you were all still living together in the same home – not better or worse, simply different – but here are a few tips to make the best of your new situation:

- **Plan ahead.** Having a secure schedule in place for when the children will be with each parent will ease their anxiety and help any transitions between households go more smoothly.
- **Be flexible.** If your agreement calls for your children to be with your ex on December 25, celebrate with them on the 24th or 26th. Few children will be unhappy about having two days to open presents instead of one.
- **Resolve to have the best holiday possible.** Invite family and friends over, play games, watch holiday-themed movies, eat, drink, and be merry. Show your children that whatever has happened to the family, you still love them and want to share holiday cheer with them. Create a conflict-free zone around your kids and stick to it – no matter what.
- **Don’t bad-mouth your ex-spouse.** Parental alienation is always bad, and you don’t want your chil-

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dren to feel guilty or conflicted about spending holiday time at your ex's house. The best gift you can give your children this holiday season is the gift of peace between their parents.

- **Be civil – even kind if possible – to your ex.** Let your ex have their quality time with the children, and don't argue about it or interfere. Unless he/she is actually dangerous or abusive, your ex has as much right to spend time with the children as you do. Also, a little generosity on your part can pay big dividends the next time you need to ask for a favor.
- **Give your children permission to express their true feelings.** Your children may be very sad that their parents can't both be there to celebrate with them. Let them know it's okay to feel that way, and reassure them that they won't feel sad forever. Don't pressure them to act happy if they don't honestly feel it.
- **Eat, drink (in moderation), and be merry!** Especially if the divorce is recent, or if there has been a lot of conflict, watch your alcohol consumption. You do not want to get into a drunken screaming match in front of your kids, or say something that will permanently damage your ability to co-parent with your ex.
- **Take care of yourself.** Make sure to eat healthy foods as well as holiday treats, get enough rest, and exercise every day. Following a healthy self-care regimen will help to elevate your mood, give you more patience with your kids (and your ex!), and can help to make the holidays enjoyable rather than something to be endured. Reach out to close friends or family members if you're having a rough time. Asking for help is a sign of intelligence and strength – not weakness.

If you are recently separated or divorced, *Divorce Magazine* wants to know how you plan to cope with the holidays this year. Please take a minute to vote in our Online Poll:  
[www.DivorceMag.com/online-poll](http://www.DivorceMag.com/online-poll)

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Published since 1996, *Divorce Magazine* is North America's only magazine devoted entirely to divorce-related issues. The magazine helps divorcing individuals and families through the process in the most economical and least traumatic way possible. It offers practical help and information about divorce-related issues – from child support to visitation, mediation to litigation, divorce recovery to dating after divorce. For more articles about parenting during and after divorce, go to [www.DivorceMag.com/articles/children-and-divorce](http://www.DivorceMag.com/articles/children-and-divorce).

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