
READING LIST FOR FAMILIES GOING THROUGH SEPARATION / DIVORCE

For Adults

Too Good To Leave, Too Bad To Stay: A Step by Step Guide To Deciding Whether To Get Out or Stay In Your Relationship. By Mira Kirshenbaum

Desperate Marriages: Moving Toward Hope and Healing In Your Relationship. By Gary Chapman

The Seven Principle For Making Your Marriage Work. By John Gottman

How to Survive the Loss of a Love. By Melba Colgrove

Crazy Time: Surviving Divorce and Rebuilding A New Life. By Abigail Trafford

After The Affair: Healing The Pain and Rebuilding Trust When A Partner Has Been Unfaithful. By Janis Abrahms Spring

Healthy Divorce: For Parents and Children – An Original, Clinically Proven Program for Working Through The Fourteen Stages of Separation, Divorce and Remarriage. By Craig Everett and Sandra Volgy Everette

Moving Forward After Divorce: Practical Steps to Healing Your “Hurts”, Finding Fresh Perspective, Managing Your New Life. By David and Lisa Frisbie.

He’s History, You’re Not: Surviving Divorce after 40. By Erica Manfred.

Leaving Him Behind: Cutting the Cord and Breaking Free After the Marriage Ends. By Sandra Kahn.

Rebuilding: When Your Relationship Ends, 3rd edition. By Bruce Fisher.

Children's Books/Games on Divorce

The Upside Down Divorce Game. By ChildsWork/Childs Play

Books for 5-6 year olds

Charlie Anderson. by Barbara Abercrombie

Two girls who live with their mother adopt a cat who comes to their house every night. When he doesn't appear one night, they go looking for him and discover that he has two homes where he is loved and cared for, just like they do.

Taxi Taxi. Little Brown. by Cari Best.

This story features a young Latina girl whose parents don't live together. Every Sunday, her father comes to visit in his bright yellow taxi.

Dinosaur's Divorce. By Laurene Krasney Brown and Marc Brown. Little, Brown, 1986.

A family of dinosaurs provides the vehicle for helping children understand divorce, life with a single parent, visitation, living in two homes, relating to friends, and parents' dating and remarriage. The book has a section to help children identify their own feelings about divorce, and emphasizes what children can do to help themselves.

Boundless Grace. By Mary Hoffman. Dial Books.

Grace, a young African-American girl, lives with her mother and grandmother. But one day, she gets to go to Africa to visit her father.

It's Not Your Fault, Koko Bear. By Vicki Lansky. Book Peddlers, 1998.

Koko Bear learns what divorce means, how to deal with changes, how to recognize and deal with feelings, and that divorce is not Kokos fault. Each page includes tips for parents.

Tots Are Non-Divorceable. By Sara Bonkowski. ACTA Publications, 1998.

A Workbook for Parents and Their Children (Birth to 5 years)

Let's Talk About It: Divorce. Fred Rogers. G.P. Putnam Sons, N.Y. 1996.

This book uses simple direct language in addressing the worries and questions of young children. Beautiful photographs depict culturally diverse families.

Daddy's Roommate. By Michael Willhoite. Horn Book, Inc. 1991.

This story's narrator begins with his parents' divorce and continues with the arrival of 'someone new at Daddy's house.' The young boy discusses his father's new living situation, in which the father and his gay roommate share eating, doing chores, playing, loving and living.

Good-Bye Daddy! By Brigette Weninger. North-South Books, 1995.

Tom hates it when Daddy leaves, until one night when his teddy bear whispers to him a story about a

little bear who has problems just like his. Ages 4-8.

I Don't Want to Talk About It, by Jeanie Franz Ransom. Magination Press, 2000.

A story comparing the child's feelings to those of various animals; beautifully illustrated. Afterword for parents suggests how to help their children adjustment.

Mom and Dad Break Up. By Joan Singleton Prestine. Fearon Teacher Aids, 1996.

This book is better for kids who remember their parents breaking up. Has descriptions of how kids feel about separation and divorce.

Always My Dad. By Sharon Dennis Wyeth & Alfred H. Knopf.

A father whose visits are unpredictable but treasured reminds his African-American family that, no matter where he is, he's always dad. Ages 4-8.

Mom and Dad Don't Live Together Anymore. By Kathy Stinson. Firefly Books, 1984.

A simple text with effective illustrations portraying the feelings of a young girl.

When Daddy Comes to Visit. By Maggie Burke. Winston-Derek Pub., 1997.

A story in rhyme about the imaginary games a child plays when his father visits on Sundays.

Daddy. By Jeannette Caines. Harper and Row, 1977.

This is a warmly told story about the joys of a child's visits with father and stepmother each Saturday. Although this book is not specifically about divorce, the loving and caring relationships portrayed in this African-American stepfamily offer the child reader a sense that he or she continues to be loved by his or her father after divorce and remarriage.

Books for 7-9 year olds

Priscilla Twice. By Judith Caseley. Greenwillow Books, 1995.

This book tells the story of a girl who feels split in half. It helps her understand in reassuring and even humorous ways that there is more than one kind of family.

Dear Mr. Henshaw. By Beverly Cleary. Avon Co., 1994.

An award winning book about a 10-year old boy who writes letters to an unmet hero describing how he misses his father. Ages 8-12.

Changing Families: A Guide for Kids and Grown-Ups. By David Fassler, Michele Lash, & Sally Blakeslee Ives. VT: Waterfront Books, 1988.

This workbook is designed to be used by children and parents together. Through such activities as writing, drawing, and circling appropriate responses, children are able to express common thoughts and feelings about separation, divorce and stepfamilies.

My Life Turned Upside Down, But I Turned It Rightside Up. By Mary Blitzer Field & Hennie Share. Child

Works Child Play, 1994.

This novel book tells the story of a young girl whose parents are divorced and how she handles the challenges of living in two places. On every other page she tells about a problem she had and when the reader flips the page, the next page tells how she solved it. Told with humor and sensitivity, this child's feelings and concerns echo those of most children of divorce.

At Daddy's on Saturday. Linda Walvord Girard. IL: Albert Whitman & Co., 1987.

This book is especially appropriate for children who have been told about separation plans in which they will live primarily with their mother and visit their father regularly. The book reassures children that they will have an ongoing relationship with the father after he moves out of the family home.

When Mom and Dad Separate. Marge Hiegaard. MN: Woodland Press, 1991.

In this book, children are encouraged to understand and express their feelings about separation and divorce through drawings. Space is reserved on each page for your child's drawings.

Through the Eyes of Children: Healing Stories for Children of Divorce. Janet Johnston, Karen Breunig, Carla Garrity, & Mitchell Baris. Free Press, 1997.

This text contains 15 stories for school-age children dealing with various aspects of families being reorganized through the process of divorce. These stories help children cope through the use of allegory and the magical life of animals endowed with human emotions. Children find in these stories some answers to the issues they face in ways they can process and understand.

Megan's Two Houses. By Erica Jong. Dove Kids, 1999.

Struggling with the many problems faced by children of divorced families, eight-year-old Megan tries to adjust to having two rooms, two pets, two sets of possessions, and two potential stepparents.

What Can I do? A Book for Children of Divorce. Danielle Lowry. Magination Press, 2001.

A short chapter book which follows Rosie from her parents' announcement of their intent to divorce through her attempts to reunify them, and eventually to her finding help from her teacher and school counsellor.

Why are We Getting a Divorce? By Peter Mayle. NY: Harmony Books, 1988.

In short, this book is packed with information that may be helpful for children. It puts divorce in perspective by addressing why people get married and have children, and how some parents come to the decision to divorce. It offers some ideas about the reorganizing family that are positive for children, such as having special time with each parent separately. It also encourages children to have some empathy for their parents, and to take responsibility for helping with household chores and caring for themselves. This book is an updated version of the author's previous book, *Divorce Can Happen to the Nicest People*.

My Parents Still Love Me Even Though They're Getting Divorced. By Lois V. Nightingale, Ph.D. Nightingale Rose Publications, 1997.

This book presents the struggles of four children facing their own parents' divorce and how they cope with the feelings and conflicts that inevitably arise. The enchanting fantasy story/workbook format helps children feel more comfortable dealing with a topic that many children find difficult to face, even when it is happening in their own family.

Don't Make Me Smile. By Barbara Park. Bullseye, 1990.

An eleven-year-old boy feels his life will never be the same again after his parents' divorce; people try to cheer him up to no avail. He goes for professional counselling. Ages 8-12.

The Case of the Scary Divorce. By C.E. Pickhardt. Magination Press, 1997.

A ten-year old boy meets the mysterious 'Professor Jackson Skye: Helping Investigator' who enlists his aid in solving eight cases, each dealing with a problem he himself is experiencing during his parents' divorce. Ages 9-12.

Mom's House, Dad's House for Kids: How to feel at home in one home or two. By Ricci Isolina, Ph.D. Fireside Books, 2006.

This is an upbeat, comprehensive and wise roadmap on divorce, stepfamilies, and self-care alive with tips, examples, exercises, stories, ways to solve problems, confidence builders, and 'words to try'. It also sensitively addresses issues like violence, absent parents, some legal aspects, dating, and parent conflict.

Divorced But Still My Parents. Shirley Thomas, Ph.D. & Dorothy Rankin. Springboard Publications, 1998.

This book is designed to be read by children and their parents together. Alternates between the stories of Kristin the kitten whose parents decide to divorce and lessons for children. The interactive workbook is perfect for children because it keeps their attention while they learn more about divorce and themselves. This book educates children about the divorce process, identifies and validates their feelings, and leads them through the grief process in an organized and compassionate way.

Families. Meredith Tax. Little, Brown, 1981.

This book is short, sweet and to the point. There are all kinds of families, and 'the main thing isn't where they live or how big they are... it's how much they love each other.' This book normalizes differences between many types of families, and is recommended for children who feel stigmatized by coming from a divorced family. It is culturally sensitive and the illustrations are great.

Books for 10-14 year olds

It's Not the End of the World. By Judy Blume. Bradbury Press, 1972.

This excellent book is the story of how a girl and her siblings react to their parents' separation. Karen is concerned about how the family will manage financially and who will take care of them. She tries to get her parents to reconcile. Her 6-year-old sister develops fears of the dark and of being left alone. Her 14-year-old brother runs away for a few days. Karen meets another girl whose parents are divorced, and learns some new ways of coping from her.

Teens Are Not Divorceable: A Workbook for Divorced Parents and Their Teens. Sara Bonkowski. ACTA Publications, 1990.

An inviting format for teens. The author uses a non-judgmental attitude which helps her to tackle difficult topics such as adult dating and abuse. Ages 12-18.

The Divorce Express. Paula Danziger. Paper Star, 1998.

A 14-year-old girl lives in a joint parenting situation. Problems arise when her mom plans to marry. After Phoebe's parents' divorce she has to travel every Sunday to see her dad. Just when she thinks she has a handle on it all, her mom makes a decision that will change everything again. Ages 12-14.

This is Me and My Two Families. Marla D. Evans. Magination Press, 2000.

An awareness scrapbook/journal for kids living in two separate families.

The Kids' Book of Divorce: By, For and About Kids. By Fayerweather Street School. Edited by E. Rofes, Random House, 1982.

Twenty children, aged 11-14, discuss various aspects of divorce including custody arrangements, parents' boyfriends and girlfriends, how they were first told about their parents' divorce and how divorce has changed them.

Billie's World. By Kim Grossman Finkel. My Journey Books, 2005.

A young girl's journey through her parent's surprising divorce and the challenges of being a preteen. This novel is based on the author's experiences as a child of divorce.

My Parents Are Divorced, Too. By Melanie, Annie and Steven Ford. Magination Press, 1997.

Three stepsiblings in a blended family discuss their experiences, and those of friends, with divorce and remarriage. These young authors write about their own experiences frankly and clearly, in a way that can be understood by young readers. Ages 8-12.

Will Dad Ever Move Back Home? By Paula z. Hogen. Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1995.

This book presents many of the emotions experienced by children in divorcing families. It also includes realistic life changes. The child learns how to share his or her feelings and the parents learn how to respond in helpful ways. Ages 9-12.

Bad, Badder, Baddest. Cynthia Voigt. Kirkus Associates, 1997.

Bad Girls Mikey and Margalo are now in the sixth grade. The plot centers on Mikey's parents impending divorce and her plotting, with Margalo's help, to prevent it - mainly so their own lives will not be disrupted by a move. Ages 9-12.

The Hatchet. Gary Paulsen. Noguera y Caralt Editores, S.A., 1996.

After a plane crash, thirteen-year old Brian spends fifty-four days in the wilderness, learning to survive with only the aid of a hatchet given him by his mother, and learning also to survive his parents' divorce.

Books for Adolescents

How it Feels When Parents Divorce. By Jill Krementz. Knopf, 1988.

A sensitive view of the experiences of children, mostly adolescents, who were interviewed and photographed.

How to Get It Together When Your Parents Are Coming Apart. Arlene Richards & Irene Willis. Willard Press, 1976.

A comprehensive 'coping' book that addresses those needing help with the stresses and confusion of parental divorce; includes an excellent section on legal aspects of divorce.

Solitary Blue. Cynthia Voigt. Athenium, 1983.

A sophisticated sensitive story about a high school boy (Jeff) who resolves his feelings about his custodial father and absent mother. Jeff's mother, who deserted the family years before, re-enters his life and challenges Jeff to overcome his pain about his family.

How to Survive Your Parents' Divorce. Gayle Kimball, Ph.D. Equality Press, 1994.

268 young people share how they coped with their parents' divorce. Includes comments from 20 counsellors who work with youth whose parents are divorcing.

* Reading List Compiled by Jacqueline Milner-Clerk, M.Sc., Registered Clinical Psychologist.