

Children & Family Break-Up

Helping Children at Every Age

What to Say...

- **The separation is not their fault.** Assure them that separation is a grown up problem & they are not to blame.
- **You will always be their parents.** Children need to know that they are not losing the love & care of either parent.
- **You will continue to look after them.** Talk openly about the new living arrangements. If you are the one living apart, make sure they understand that you will still spend time with them, they will still be part of your life, & you will still be a part of theirs.



Parenting After Separation & Divorce

What You Can Do...

- **Children need to know they are loved.** Show affection in words & actions.
- **Create spaces where children are protected from conflict.** Don't argue in front of them or involve them in adult problems.
- **Allow children to have a relationship with both parents.** Don't criticize or disagree in front of your children. You need to cooperate to meet your children's needs.
- **Share needed information with your children.** Talk about custody & other decisions that affect your children. Remember... what they need to know will depend on their age.
- **Keep your children's routines in place.** Do your best to maintain a regular schedule (ex: hockey practice, ballet lessons).
- **Let your children express feelings.** Recognize they experience all the emotions you do. Listen without interrupting.
- **Give children a say in their lives.** Listen & give appropriate choices. Young children can choose their clothes or toys. Older children can choose which sports to play & set visiting times.
- **Keep your promises.** Your children will need to know they can rely on you.
- **Give children time to visit with relatives & spend time with friends.**
- **Take care of yourself.** Your children are depending on you.



For more information, contact your local



Mental Health & Addiction Services Office.

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-888-737-4668

NL Health Line 1-888-709-2929

Western Health

