

5 Tips for Managing Parenting Time During the Holidays

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By David Pedrazas

Through the holidays, the emotional pain of [divorce](#) can become stronger and more difficult to cope with. As time passes, families are usually able to move beyond the negative feelings and look forward to celebrating the holidays and making new memories. But, while the [divorce process](#) is in progress, animosity can cause tensions to intensify to the point that plans for peaceful, pleasant holidays can become derailed for children. ***The following are some helpful tips for divorcing parents to manage co-parenting activities in ways that can make the holiday season happier for the kids and adults in both homes.***



1. Encourage Your Children to Enjoy Their Time with the Other Parent.

Help your children feel confident that they do not need to choose between spending time with mom and dad. Children and parents are all usually happier when divorcing parents are able to set aside the very real and serious controversy between them in order to help their children build the foundations for their holiday traditions by having them share time with both parents. Naturally, depending upon your kid's ages and the seasonal logistics of transporting them between two homes, their holiday time should be split between parents according to what is most reasonable for all involved.

Help your kids avoid feeling emotional pressure to protect you. Let them know that you want them to enjoy their opportunity to celebrate the holidays with their other parent. ***To avoid excessive loneliness while the kids are visiting your ex, plan some activities with friends or family members or relaxing alone-time activities that you can look forward to enjoying.***

2. Coordinate Holiday Schedules and Logistics Well in Advance with Your Ex.

Start early on planning with your ex-spouse and extended family members in order to ***efficiently manage transfers and kids' schedules*** to ensure that your children's holiday itinerary makes sense for them to enjoy their time with both parents and other family members. Exchange checklists, as necessary, to make sure that pick-up and drop-off times and locations are clearly agreed, and that the children bring everything with them that they need to be comfortable and happy during their time at the home of their other parent.

3. Maintain Existing Family Traditions as Possible.

To the extent reasonable, maintain traditions and activities that allow your children to feel the strongest possible sense of family stability throughout the holidays. Of course, some variations are unavoidable during this time, under the circumstances. But, although some activities that the children may have already come to recognize as traditions may have to be altered or eliminated, keep those that you can—including those involving

celebrations with grandparents, siblings, and other extended family members. You will likely find this approach to the holidays more rewarding for yourself too, and can affirm for yourself that you can make the holidays work well and sustain traditions for your family.

4. Encourage Your Children to Express Themselves.

Invite your children to talk to you and to their other parent about their own experience during the divorce. Ask them about their feelings, concerns, and hopes during this important time. Make sure that they understand that you are aware that [they are dealing with the divorce too](#). Work to arrange schedules of holiday activities so that they are able to have some input into how some of their time can be spent. Their sense of their own lives being out of their control during a divorce can cause anxiety for children. ***So, granting them some autonomy in choosing some of their activities can enhance their sense of eagerness for the holidays and possibly relieve some concerns about facing unwanted changes in holiday expectations.***

5. Take it Easy on Yourself.

In the final analysis, accept the reality that holidays can be stressful under the best of circumstances, and that they are typically not absolutely perfect for any family, whether they're going through a divorce or not. Remember that it's common to forget a couple of important things. Embrace the fact that it really is enough that you have given it your best effort. ***What's important for your kids and family is celebrating the holidays together.***

Keep in Mind

Though it can be especially difficult to do during the holidays, ***work to maintain perspective what is most important for children and parents going through a divorce during the holidays.*** Even though you are in a very difficult period, allow yourself to turn your focus and energies on enjoying this important family time with your children and on being grateful for the opportunities that the holidays present for making new special memories your family.

Contact Utah Divorce Attorney David Pedrazas in Salt Lake City, Utah for a Free Consultation

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We're here to protect your legal rights and ensure that you fully understand what to expect during the process, and to guide you throughout the divorce process, and do all that is possible to ensure that you and your family receive the best possible outcome to help you move beyond divorce, to make many years of happy family holiday memories.

If you are beginning the process of separation and divorce and need information about your legal rights and obligations under Utah state law, contact the Law Office of David Pedrazas in Salt Lake City, Utah for a no-obligation review of your legal case. [We provide a free 30-minute consultation.](#) David Pedrazas has been helping Utah families through the divorce process for over 15 years. Give us a call today at **801-263-7078**.