

Child wish list

A child's wish list concerning a divorce is quite simple and the following points should be considered:

- ❖ Both parents should jointly tell their child what is going on and that they are getting divorced.
- ❖ Explain why you and your partner are getting divorced and emphasize that this has nothing to do with your child and that you will both always remain his/her parents.
- ❖ Talk to your child about the possible consequences of the divorce and prepare your child for them.
- ❖ Make sure that your child feels free to express his/her own feelings, emotions and insecurities, now and in the future. Listen carefully to what your child has to say. Your child's voice is key to its future.
- ❖ Indicate that your child's wishes are taken into account and respect all the agreements you make with respect to them. Don't make any promises you can't keep! If you disagree on certain matters as parents, first discuss this amongst yourselves and then talk about it with your child. Make sure that your disagreements as (ex-)partners do not influence your child.
- ❖ Try to slowly work through the divorce taking it step by step, this way your child can get used to the new situation.
- ❖ Keep the communication lines open and honest towards your child and keep emphasizing that the divorce is not their fault.
- ❖ Do not draw your child in to any conflicts between the two of you as (ex-)partners, however difficult this may be.
- ❖ Do not speak ill of each other to your child and make sure that your child never gets the feeling that he or she has to choose between either of you.
- ❖ Even though you are no longer a couple after your divorce, you will always continue to be your child's parents. Keep this in mind and make sure you act accordingly. Continue to respect one another as your child's other parent.

These wishes can help a child to continue to feel safe and confident after a divorce.