

## **Lesson # 7: 12 Listen to the Children**

**Divorced Fathers Network  
Advocates Of Shared Parenting  
'Because Children Love Both Their Parents'**

### **Listen to the Children**

#### **DO:**

- Tell the children about the separation together, if possible
- Answer the children's questions honestly while avoiding unnecessary details
- Reassure the children that they are not to blame for the separation
- Tell the children that they are loved and that they will be taken care of
- Include the other parent in school and other activities
- Encourage the relationship between the children and the other parent
- Be consistent and be on time to pick up and return the children.
- Develop a workable parenting plan that gives the children access to both parents
- Guard against canceling plans with the children
- Establish two homes for the children with two fully involved parents
- Give the children permission to have a loving, satisfying relationship with the other parent

#### **DON'T**

- Pump the children for information about the other parent
- Try to control the other parent
- Use the children to carry messages back and forth
- Argue in front of the children
- Discuss child support issues with the children
- Speak negatively about the other parent
- Put the children in the position of having to take sides
- Use the children as pawns to hurt the other parent

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