

On the same page: Parenting as a team

Mary C. Lysinger, MA/EdS, LPC, LCADC
COPE Center
Montclair, NJ 07042

Co-parenting

Successful (Ideal version)

- All parties share similar priorities
- All parties have good communication skills
- All parties are able to exhibit ability to manage emotions like anger and resentment
- Consistent and proactive

Difficult

- Conflicting priorities
- Use of child as go-between
- Acting out other relationship problems through the parenting relationship
- Emotional and reactive
- Inconsistent physical or emotional presence

What do you value?





How to deal with conflicting values

- COMMUNICATION

- Active listening
- Checking in on what you have understood
- I-messages

- RESPECT

- Keeping emotions in check
- Emotional Bank Account concept

The Emotional Bank Account

<https://nayabimtiaaz.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/habit4b.jpg>

DEPOSITS

- *Keep promises.*
- *Be kind and courteous.*
- *Be loyal.*
- *Listen.*
- *Apologize.*
- *Set clear expectations.*

WITHDRAWALS

- *Break promises.*
- *Be unkind and discourteous.*
- *Be disloyal; bad-mouth.*
- *Don't listen.*
- *Be arrogant.*
- *Create false expectations.*



When a child witnesses anger

- “Children learn what they live”
- Behavioral and emotional problems
- Academic concerns
- Stress reactions (bed-wetting, isolation, acting out, substance use)
- Modeling of what a relationship is like
- Negative effects in home, school and workplace



Conflict resolution

- Ability to regulate emotions
- Ability to listen and respond
- Ability to speak one's mind with respectful tone
- Ability to see another side to an issue
- Positive effects in home, school, workplace



WDEP: A problem-solving method

- WANT: What do you want?
 - Is it reasonable/attainable?
 - Does it focus on adult or child relationship?
 - Pick your spot
- DOING: What am I currently doing to address this?
- EVALUATE: How are my current actions helping or hurting what I want?
- PLAN: What can I do moving forward?
 - Brainstorming, feedback, information, third party help
 - Pick your spot

Additional resources

- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/family-divorce/co-parenting-tips-for-divorced-parents.htm>
- <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Parenting/raising-kids-talk-grandparents-parenting-style-values/story?id=11317574>
- <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/family-divorce/step-parenting-blended-families.htm>

- COPE Center

104 Bloomfield Avenue

Montclair, NJ 07042