

Why Did My Dad (or Mom) Remarry?

It's tough for kids to understand why parents get divorced, and even harder to understand why they remarry. Here are some talking points for you to discuss this difficult topic with your kids. You may need to revise some of the answers, based on your child's age, but this article will give you a starting point for the discussion.

You (the kids) are not responsible for the divorce:

Mom and Dad getting a divorce has nothing to do with you. There is nothing you can do to change the divorce. You did nothing to cause it-nothing. It's not your fault.

Mom and Dad love you the same and this will never change. You will always be our child and we will always love you.

Parents need adult companionship

Children are wonderful to have, but do not replace adult companionship. You enjoy being with someone your own age, and doing things with them. Adults are the same. Dad doesn't want you to stay home with him, and keep him company, when you can be out with your friends. It's just not the same kind of relationship- and that's why Dad wants to remarry.

Spending time with this new mate does not take away time from you, there is time enough for both of you. There is also an additional person in your life to love you. You may not like this, and you may even resent the new stepparent, at first- but when they decided to marry your Dad (or Mom), they agreed to marry an adult with children, and to love those children (you!)

Believe it or not, it's tough for them too. They aren't used to living with you, and really don't know you. Try to tell your new parent about yourself, your likes/dislikes, favorite things to do, activities, etc.- so that you can get to know each other better.

If I like my new stepmom, then I'm not being faithful to my mom

Your new stepmom is not in competition with your biological mom. You will always have only one biological mom and dad. Stepmoms and stepdads are extra-but not in a bad way. They have married your mom and dad, and this helps your mom and dad be a better parent, and a happier adult.

Your mom or dad should want you to be taken care of when you are visiting the other parent. Your stepparents will be part of this. So, it's O.K. to have fun with your new stepmom or stepdad, and even like them- it doesn't hurt your

relationship with your biological mom and dad, or mean that you love them any less.

Who does my Dad love more- my new stepmom or me?

You are not in competition with your new stepmom. The love your Dad has for you is different from the love he has for his new wife. He can love you both without choosing between the two.

A parent's love is different from the kind of love he has for your new stepparent. You will grow into an adult, one day, and have a family of your own. Do you want your Dad moving in, and living with you for companionship? Do you want your Dad to move off to college with you, and hang out with you on the weekends? No- that's silly. Adults want to be with people their own age, and most adults really like have a special someone to be with.

Will I ever feel better?

That's a hard question. Divorce causes a hole in your heart. It will take a while for that hole to heal. It's embarrassing, at first, to let your friends know that your parents got divorced. You're not the "odd" one, though, half of your friends' parents are already divorced. It may help to talk to them about their experiences.

It's hard to understand why Mom and Dad don't want to live together anymore, but it is their decision. You may never know all the details, and that's O.K.- you just need to trust your Mom and Dad to take care of you and your needs, while they continue to make the adult decisions.

Conclusion

Communication is very important, especially when kids are going through so many changes. Keep the adult decisions and the adult conversations among the adults- but also remember to keep the kids informed about the new "realities" of their life, changes coming, and your expectations.

Good luck- be yourself. Love your kids!

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