



**The Courtless Divorce**  
A Smarter Way to End a Marriage

## Children's List

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1. Do not recruit children to your side.
2. Don't give long-winded explanations about the divorce that may be confusing to kids.
3. Contain your hostility in front of the children. It affects them when you fight, and it may make them feel that the divorce is their fault.
4. Negotiate a healthy parenting relationship with your spouse. Being civil with your ex is so much better than exposing your children to ongoing anger.
5. Stay involved in your children's life.
6. Keep handover times free of arguments and hostility.
7. Get on the same page with when it comes to rules: bedtime, homework, video games, curfew, etc.
8. Don't bad mouth your ex in front of the children. It is your divorce, not theirs.
9. Consider family counseling with your ex and/or children.
10. Don't bad mouth your ex's family. That is your children's family, and they will likely love them and need that connection.
11. Be nice to your ex in front of the children. Your children will like it, and you may even get some positive feedback from your ex.
12. Refrain from using your children as pawns, hostages or weapons.
13. Periodically discuss with your children their wishes for residence and visitation.
14. Facilitate private communication with each parent by phone, postal mail or e-mail.
15. Refrain from asking your children to keep secrets from the other parent.
16. Offer access to a neutral adult (therapist, teacher, counselor or clergy) who has the child's interest as their primary concern.
17. Do not expose your child to transient romantic relationships.
18. Do not use your children as messengers. It is not their job to communicate for you.
19. Reassure the children that the divorce is *not* their fault.
20. Never substitute gifts for love and attention.
21. Do tell your kids that both parents will love them.
22. Do tell your kids that you do expect them to continue to be happy.
23. Do not abandon contact with your children under any circumstances.
24. If your children continue to appear overwhelmed, get them professional counseling.
25. Always tell the truth.