

12 Commandments for Divorcing/Divorced Parents

1. Never make visitation arrangements directly with children under 12 (at a minimum).
2. Never suggest visitation arrangements you have not previously discussed with the other parent. Always confirm with the other parent any visitation arrangements made with children 12 and under (suggest doing everything in writing until a good relationship has been established.)
3. Send and return children who are clean, well-rested and fed. Do not send or return a sack or suitcase full of soiled clothes
4. Do not use a telephone answering device to screen calls from the other parent or limit telephone access between your children and the other parent – except after your child's actual bedtime, not the bedtime you would like them to have.
5. Do not discuss divorce disputes with your children or allow them to hear you discussing your differences with the other parent regarding them.
6. Do not send message or money with your children.
7. Do not speak ill of the other parent or of his/her relatives, friends or loved ones.
8. Do not ask your children for information about the other parent's household, friends, income or activities.
9. Do not believe everything you hear your children say about their other parent, his relatives and friends, or anyone else.
10. Do not second-guess the other parent regarding discipline, rewards or anything else. (I recommend writing down agreed upon reward/disciplinary measure.)
11. Give a sympathetic ear to your children, but affirm and reaffirm as often as necessary that you are not a referee or a mediator between your children and the other parent.
12. Be courteous. Do not honk your horn for your child to come out. Walk to the other parent's door, but don't go inside unless invited. Have the children ready to go. Always be on time. Smile and be pleasant. (These recommendations apply unless there is a legal reason not to do so.)