



A conference for youth workers by Mind & Soul and Soul Survivor


Divorce & separation - how it affects the young people caught in the middle

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Soul Survivor Watford
5 Greyhame Rd
Watford WD24 7DP

MINDSET The Conference 2011

Logos: Premier, YOUTHWORX, SOUL SURVIVOR, Mind & Soul



“They get over it!”

“Divorce comprises a series of transitions or stages for both adults and children. These stages are similar to the stages Elisabeth Kubler-Ross described for patients with terminal illnesses: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance”.


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“Get out of my life!.....

but first give me a lift into town.”



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Changing times....

- Physical
- Academic
- Social
- Emotional
- Sexual



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What’s the problem?

70% of children rate their experience of parental separation as ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ .

72% of children said they needed someone to talk to about their feelings.

Kids in the Middle Report 2008

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“Children from divorced families are exposed to more stressors.”



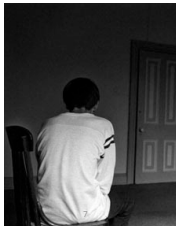
“Coping with Divorce, Single Parenting, and Remarriage - a risk and resiliency perspective” E. Travis Hetherington Mahwah, N.J. : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999


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10% of 5 - 16 year olds have clinically significant mental health difficulties.




A Good Childhood Layard 2009



Key factors that affected mental health were:





- Living apart from your father
- Family conflict
- ‘More than two adverse life events’

“I live with my dad and my sister during the week and with my mum and her partner at the weekends.”




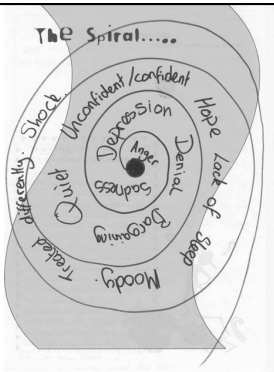



Raz (15)

• ‘Parent Problems’ p8 Neale & Wade 2000

What are the ‘range of emotions’ ?

In what ways may they not be able to participate fully in full-time education?



Emotions of divorce/ separation


“it didn’ t make sense” male 17 p50

“The family is a lot happier now” female 11 p51



“What gets me down most about having two homes is the fact that there are different standards.” female 16 p29

“I have the best relationship ever with my dad.” male 18 p12










Fear - in relation to reaction of adults
 Anger - that life is out of control
 Guilt - that it may be 'my fault'
 Confusion about identity - 'man of the house now'




PEOPLE ALWAYS LEAVE



family portrait
pink





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and in school...

- Difficulty concentrating
- Hard to do homework
- High anxiety levels
- Low tolerance threshold






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“Those children who did well were well parented by at least one parent.”



Wallerstein & Kelly 5 year study 'Surviving the Break-Up (1990)



How can I help?

Just listen

- Don't take sides
- Be aware of normal teenage angst and development
- There may be more transitions to come
- Don't offer to be there 24 hours
- Recognise that you are not the only person who can help






It's all about resilience...




I can...

I have...

I am ...





“The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue to know the word “in season” (amplified) that sustains the weary.” Isaiah 50:4




Lost & Found training

- 2 days - 1st day theory & 2nd day practice
- next dates - 7th/8th June, 8th/9th Sept
- info@twup.org.uk



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