

Be Polite to the Ex – Cut it Out!

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One of the most important aspects to parenting is role modeling healthy relationships for your children. This applies to all your relationships including the one you have with your ex-partner. If you are putting kids in the middle of your conflict, you really need to CUT IT OUT!

Children not only hear your words but they see your body language and more than that, they can feel your tension and stress. If your relationship is strained with your ex, managing your emotions will be difficult, but remember that there is a lot at stake – your child's emotional and mental health!

Never Do's:

- Do not put your ex down, grunt or make negative comments in front of your children.
- Don't put your child in an adult position and expect him to be your confidante regarding any adult issues, especially your gripes about your ex. If you are angry, talk to a friend.
- Don't grill them about what they did when they were at the other parent's house. Give them time to decompress and when they do talk, stay neutral.
- Remember the walls have ears. If you have a heated discussion with your ex, take it outside to the patio. These ears can also hear you when you are visiting a friend or talking to someone on the phone. Always assume your child can hear you.
- If your child complains about the other parent, listen to what he is saying but unless there is abuse, it isn't your place to make judgmental comments.
- Remember transition times are often difficult for kids. Don't assume the difficult behaviour is due to bad parenting from the ex.



Of course this is complicated and there is much more to it. Being polite, making careful use of email, agreeing on the amount of contact and sticking to facts rather than assumptions are just some of the skills this relationship requires. Your children need the emotional peace and mental space to grow, so do this for them. Being a mature adult is wonderful role modeling for your kids.

