

Recommendations

1. When dealing with your child(ren)'s reactions to your dating it might be useful to distinguish between their needs and wants (e.g. they might want you not to date at all or get back together with your ex, and they might need quality time with you). You can help your children distinguish between and clarify their own needs and wants, as well as their fears and hopes related to your dating.
2. We recommend that you talk with your child(ren) about the idea of you dating before you actually date. Realize their reactions will most likely be ambivalent or mixed, but will provide an indicator of their openness and readiness for you to date that you can discuss with your coach.
3. General wisdom is to not introduce your children to your dates until you are both dating each other exclusively and becoming pre-committed as a final area for "testing."
4. We recommend that your dates do not sleep over while your children are home at least until you're in an exclusive relationship and your child is comfortable with your new partner.
5. We recommend that you impartially observe how your pre-committed partner interacts with his/her own children and your children, regarding:
 - a. possible negative/ harmful or neglectful treatment of own children.
 - b. preferential treatment of own children over your children when all are together
 - c. discipline; when rules are broken; use of authority with your children
 - d. values inconsistent with yours
6. We recommend that you carefully observe how your pre-committed partner interacts with his/her EX.
7. We recommend that you and your pre-committed partner become knowledgeable about blended families and step-parenting by reading books, taking classes, talking with other couples, and working with your coach to address the challenges ahead. FACT: Relationship failure and divorce is far higher for blended family situations.
8. General wisdom recommends the biological parent retain primary parenting responsibility and the step-parent start out being a friend and positive adult in your child's life, support the primary parent (even when disagreeing), and gradually share some parenting roles as your child adjusts and accepts your new partner.
9. When behavioral issues arise we recommend the new step-parent set limits and speak firmly to your child as any adult might, and make requests of you for intervention and correction.