

Making Single Parenting A Breeze



*"The Everything You Need to Know Guide" - Tips &
Advice for Moms and Dads...*

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Characteristics All Single Parents Should Posses

Assuming the responsibilities of the father and the mother in raising your children can be very difficult. The pressure of providing the needs of the kids is enormous. The pressure of the society for you to be better and stronger further increases the already difficult situation. All these should be your motivation to be the best single-parent you can be. This article will discuss 4 important characteristics you as a single parent should posses:

Recognizing weaknesses. Single parents are not perfect. In many situations, you commit mistakes and get weakened by the challenges of life. It is okay. What is not okay is when you remain in denial amidst your obvious weaknesses. Understand that assuming everything is your fault does not help solve these weaknesses. What you should do is to accept these as your weak spots and try to do things that would make them work for you positively. During this process, it is advised to have a support group that will give an impartial perspective of your life.

Ability to balance work, family, and personal needs. Because you assume the responsibility of providing for your

family financially, you are forced to work for extended hours or take on another job just to get by. Sometimes two or three jobs are not enough. Still, you have to make sure that you do not sacrifice the emotional needs of your family just to fulfill your financial responsibility. Make sure that you have time to be with your children. Accept help from family and friends. Be with them after school, after work, or weekend activities set up by your local community. Schedule family time at least once a week. Take time to rest.

Role model. Charity begins at home, so does other virtues and proper conduct. Ideally, these things are learned from both parents, but since you are the only parent in the house, they will learn everything from you. This makes it more important for you to be as positive in life as you can, regardless of what situation you are in or what problems you have.

Problem solver. Single parenting is hard and everyday seems to be a struggle to survive another day. A good single parent, however, accepts this reality and has the ability to find solutions to these problems.

You are not expected to carry all these characteristics. If you feel overwhelmed, feel angry and frustrated, or feel that you cannot do it alone, find help.

4 Ways to Help Your Kids Adjust to a Single-Parent Home

The most challenging part of being a single parent is helping your kids cope with the changes around the house. It may not be the most comfortable thing to do as you are adjusting on the new home setup, but you have to be there during this time. Here are some helpful advices when facing this kind of situation:

Start living normally right away

While you may be grieving inside, it would be best for you and your kids to start living a normal life again. Keeping the state of sorrow and sadness is like adding wood to the fire. Extinguish bad emotions and memories by doing things you and your kids enjoy. The sooner you realize that regrets will not help, the better you will see the life ahead.

Take the pressure off of your children

How to keep your kids happy and optimistic despite what has happened is not the easiest thing to do. They keep the pain and in most cases, they blame themselves for what has happened. Instead of asking them for emotional support, be the one who will stand up and embrace them with love and care. Reassure them that it is not their fault. The world certainly does not end when you become a single parent. Keep your head up, be strong in front of your kids, and take care of them in the best way you can.

Let your kids see hope in you

Your kids will always turn to when they feel weak and need to find strength. Be the model that they are looking for.

Let your kids know that there is a bright future ahead for them by being their hope. Wear positive attitude even if it is hard. Remember that they don't have anyone to turn to but you.

Help your kids to process what they feel

One of the effects to children of shifting from a two-parent home to a single-parent home is grief. Expect your kids to grieve for the loss of their other parent as well as for the loss of everyday interaction with both parents at the same time. Recognize their need to experience various stages of grief. This may mean giving them time to process their feeling alone and times when they want to talk with you about what they are going through.

5 Financial Tips for Single Parents

A two-parent home is already a challenge; but handling all the family responsibilities singlehandedly is even tougher. Single parenting is a host of several trying moments, especially when it comes to finances. Here are financial tips that will help ease the burden of being a single parent:

Know how much you can afford - As all working parents, single parents need to understand the value of budgeting. Money may be hard to come when you are working alone, so make sure that every dime is spent wisely. You have a responsibility to take care of and you have a child (or children) to raise.

Spend only the amount you can afford, even if it is too little. Debt adds stress, avoid this whenever possible.

Get additional income - The income of most single parents working full time may not be enough. If this basically sums up your situation, consider finding part-time job or other sources of income. Some require basic computer skills like typing, writing, proofreading, editing, transcribing, and telecommuting. You can also become a virtual assistant. Some sources of extra income involve selling differing products or offering different services on- and offline.

Never apply for a salary loan - Salary loan is a slow killer. The system is designed to make you dependent on loans rather than staying within your financial limit. If you are short of cash but the paycheck will arrive soon, go for other alternatives. Borrow money from your friends or relatives.

Do not rely on credit cards - Credit cards are not plastic cash; credit cards are your easy access to bigger financial problems. Remember that every time you use these cards, you are spending money you don't have. And the worst part is, if you are not able to pay the bills on time, your credit will pile up very soon. Everyone knows this very well, but it seems that all still need to be reminded about the evils of the card. Use cash instead of card. Spend what is in your wallet and not what is left out of your credit limit.

Ask help from the government - If you are really in dire need of emergency money, the government offers financial assistance on certain criteria and qualifications. There

are Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, and child support programs to help you get by. There are also several community and religious organizations that are especially formed to give help to single parents.

5 Things Single Parents can do Earn Extra Income at Home

Many single parents find themselves in need for additional income, but do not have enough time to take second, or even third job. To guarantee that all the bills are properly covered, they tap to whatever time they have and whatever talent they possess to create an opportunity to earn. Here are some options to help you create financial opportunities even when you are at home:

1. Get a freelance job. Instead of writing updating your personal blog, put your writing skills into good use and you can look for different freelance writing jobs. There are also part-time typing, proofreading, editorial, web designing, and content development jobs wherein you can earn extra money instantly. Look for several local postings or your local Craig's list. You can find lots of opportunities to get better pay.

2. Become a telecommuter or a transcriptionist. If you don't have the right skills to develop web content or design, you can always find extra money by becoming a virtual assistant of different companies, big or small, or transcribing audio records. These jobs require basic

computer skills so virtually any single parent can apply for this job.

3. Clean houses. Each cleaning job can take about 3 hours of time. If you do it for at least once a week, you can have between \$160 and \$300 of extra income. Post your service online or at local grocery stores.

4. Use whatever skills you have. Can you cook? Can you make cupcakes and pastries? Can you wrap gifts beautifully? Do you have the skill to create wedding invitation, postcards or greeting cards? It is not a secret that many people become rich by doing what they love to do. If you think you have what it takes to convert your skills into something that will give you better financial opportunities, do not deprive yourself in doing so.

5. Pet sit, babysit, or tutoring. Your friends, neighbors and relatives are surely your first clients when it comes to these services. Know what you can do best then offer the service for instant income.

6. Sell items. Holding a garage sale can be a good way to earn extra cash, but you cannot do this regularly. Instead, you can sell items online or sell items around your neighborhood on consignment.

While part time jobs are merely for income's sake, remember that the job you need to pick is the one you really enjoy. After all, you have to do this after regular working hours,

when you are tired and responsibilities at home become the priority.

Advices On Single Parenting

Single parents handle their kids and themselves very differently from those parents who live with their partners. Below are tidbits of advices on many issues surrounding single parenting.

On Handling The Kid's

The wife or husband is gone and all you're left with are yourself and your kid's. Your first priority of course is to attend to your son's or daughter's needs and best interests. You will have your own time once everything is settled down.

Remember to always have fun with your kids, even on those days when you have long hours at work. You only get to have them as kids once, enjoy the process and let them enjoy it as well. While it is a top priority to provide them with their material needs, to ensure that you always have a roof over your heads, to always have food on your table, it is the simplest of things, playing with them for a few minutes every day, that matter most to them.

On Managing Your Home

Every single parent has specific problems he or she will have to resolve. Parent visitation and co-parenting, for example, could pose problems when it comes to raising the kids. Child support can also be a difficult issue. No matter what problem you are facing, it is important to minimize the effects of it on your child and to make the transition from two parent family into a single parent family as smooth as possible.

It is very important to work on restructuring your home such that your kids will be comfortable with your new setting as a single parent family.

On Taking Care Of Yourself

Despite how insane your hours get, it is very important to set aside a few minutes of your day for your personal use. Never forget to take care of yourself or to pause for a while to attend to your needs. It could be in the form of taking a new hobby, in going to a place where you can recharge or in taking your alone time at home for thinking and relaxing.

On Your Social Life And Dating

Dating and social life should be at the bottom of your list of priorities. These come only after every single thing around the household, every issue within the family and your ex-spouse, and everything in between have been resolved. Although of course, you can always squeeze in your social life earlier than going back to the dating circle.

Child Support and Single Parents

Single parents face several challenges, just so they can effectively raise their kid in the best way possible. Child support cases are not always easy, but parents can get ahead by knowing some of the laws and regulations surrounding the issues. Child support can be successfully obtained provided that you already have sufficient evidence and assistance from the right agencies. Make sure you know where to go and what to ask for.

On the Court Order

Getting the child support payment via court order is not very simple. The non-custodial parent will most likely get rid of the things that can lead to deductions, such as quitting a job or not submitting the needed documents with the new employer so that the deductions cannot be made straight from the pay check. The documents can also get lost within the agency. It is important that you know the policies and contact your local child support enforcement agency.

Available Agencies

The OCSE or Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement states that state child support programs need to find non-custodial parents, create and enforce support orders, create paternity and modify the orders as needed. They also have to distribute and collect the child support payments

well. The system, unfortunately, is not working as efficiently as expected. About 50% to 70% of custodial parents do not get the child support ordered by the court in full. There are a number of manuals and books that can guide you through the process to get the child support payments successfully.

Getting Help

There are a number of private companies that can assist the lone parent in finding and tracking down the other partner to create current and future payments. These services are usually tagged with a huge cost. Some of the available agencies that can help you include Support the Kids, National Child Support and Support Collectors. The good thing about these agencies is that you do not have to pay for very big upfront fees. As soon as you locate your ex, you can immediately establish payment and get to pay the enforcement agency about 30% to 50% of the total that your ex provides.

About Fees

You have to be cautious about the private collection company since it can charge attorney fees and an intake fee. Search for the right and reliable company that will not charge fees until the support is fully provided. Some agencies claim not charge any upfront expenses, even though the lawyers used in court come from the agency itself. The agency may only need to be paid once you get the child support you need. You have to screen other potential private agencies to

assist your kids in getting the support needed.

More on Child Support

Not having child support should not be very limiting, but most of lone parents, especially women, find that the condition can have very harsh and troubling effects for the long term. 85% of all custodial parents are women. During the first year after the child is born, single mothers can observe that their income tends to go down at least 20%, while ex-husband's income tends to go up by at least 10%. Based on some studies, women only make 80 cents for every dollar that men make. The hardest times for single lone mothers are during the first year of caring for the child independently.

Aside from the significant reduction in income, single parents actually do not get any or a lower cost of child support than what they asked for originally. The child support system can have its flaws. The role of the agencies is to require the non-custodial parent to provide the right amount and take responsibility in raising the child, at least financially.

Meeting Children's Needs

The amount provided by the non-custodial parent should not only cover the basic needs like food, rent, clothing and education. Later on, the non-custodial parent will also need to take responsibility for other endeavors and

programs that the child embarks on, such as anti-drug campaigns, rehabilitation programs for troubled teens and other events that will ensure that the kid grows up to be a responsible and independent citizen. The needs of children will differ as they grow older, so parents need to take responsibility through the years.

College, Work and Single Parenting: How to Manage Them Properly

A strong college education is the key to a successful future. If you are studying, working, and assuming the role of a single parent simultaneously, concentrating on all may not be as easy as anyone would hope. Here are tips to help you become effective in these aspects:

Get financial aids. There are lots of organizations that provide financial aids to single parents who want to go back to college. These will certainly make college education more possible to the less advantaged single parents like you. Search for different scholarship programs online or in different colleges and universities. You can apply for single parent student loan programs. This is different from scholarships since you will have to pay for your college education once you finish your studies. Either way, you can benefit from these programs as you will no longer have to worry about working extra hours to pay for college tuition.

Seek help from others. Time management is the most difficult

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