

# Opinion: Single parenting – its pitfalls and rewards

*Marriage is not a “’till death do us part” contract as half end in divorce.*

We live in an area where the traditional household is composed of single parents or mixed families. This shouldn't come as a shock for you to hear that the odds are against two people who only have shared children together to live happily ever after.

It's a sad reality that many relationships do not last and even if children are involved they do not act as a staple to keep two people together. Marriage is not a “’till death do us part” contract as half end in divorce. Around 70% end in divorce when it's the third or fourth marriage.

When we take those numbers and weigh them against a long term committed relationship that mimics marriage we know that it's a pretty comparable failure rate. Regardless as to how the break-up happened, children in most cases become a casualty of a broken home.

A single parent has an uphill climb in the world. Whether they share in the responsibility of custodianship or have full custody. Children add to household expenses, take away from free time and make it more difficult to move on into a new relationship. The dynamics of being a single parent is much more complicated than being a single adult – even if your child does not live with you.



We all should have love in our lives and it would be a beautiful thing if it was so simple.

There is heartache in being a loving parent who is treated as a visitor in their child's life. This is to those who can only see their child every so often and in many cases it's the father. Although there are cases where a mother does not have full custody, I'm speaking of the real fathers who are attentive and loving. Those who are providers and truly desire to be a part of their child's world and influence onto how they are brought up.

We know there is an opposite male out there as there is an opposite female who are merely DNA contributors that brought their children into existence and who could never move beyond a selfish nature to devote themselves into parenthood. We could all give many cases of those people who single-handedly devastate those who love them.

To the real parents who are unable to be a constant in their child's world, there is not only heartache but anger. To distance yourself from an anger where as someone personally hurt you. They broke your heart and now uses something that is just as much yours as it is theirs, against you. But this isn't something, it's a child.

If you are in this situation my heart breaks for you. We all should have love in our lives and it would be a beautiful

thing if it was so simple. When a relationship ends we'd rather not witness our former love moving on. When you share a child with someone you will see this. You have to teach yourself to separate your feelings towards your child's other parent and the feelings you have for your child. They don't want a complicated life.

Your goal is to make it as less complicated as you can. Single parents tend to move on. Everyone wants love and the burden is too difficult for many in living alone for the rest of their lives. Both emotionally and financially.



*Teach your children to be happy, show them how.*

There is a balance that can be found and has been found over and over again for single parents. Ideally children should have the love and support of their parents. Do not visit your own pain or anger onto them. As simple as it is to agree that you shouldn't do that, every time you use that child as a tie that binds you to their other parent or a pawn in game of hate and anger... You chip away at their chance for happiness and at their essence of childhood. They shouldn't have to grow up too soon and know that the world isn't such a happy place. History is doomed to repeat itself. Teach your children to be happy, show them how. They are not your allies in war, your friend whose shoulder you cry on or who to share your negative thoughts with. Protect them from the drama, that if you think clearly enough about, you wouldn't want them to deal with.

Eighteen years our children are dependent upon us. This is a blink of time in their overall life. Maybe for ten of those years you will be their world, but they'll start spreading their wings and wanting to be more away from you than near you as they grow up. Time is precious. We have an obligation to society to bring up a caring and responsible adult. But we have the honor of parents to be a part of something absolutely wonderful, raising a child.

Our children don't have to live with us, they don't even have to be part of genetic material. If we're a mom or dad, then we are accountable for who they are and what they feel as they grow up. Give your child the gift of feeling secure in your love. It is more important to be surrounded by people who love you growing up than you can ever imagine. It's hard to give them this security if it's clouded with so much animosity with THEIR mom or dad.

No matter how you feel, you can't make the other loving and stable parent just disappear from their lives.

---