TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR DIVORCED PARENTS

1. Thou shalt not speak ill of or criticize one’s former spouse or in-laws to the child or around the child so the child may overhear it.

2. Thou shalt not in any way create situations where the child feels he or she must choose one parent over the other.

3. Thou shall not communicate anything about completed or pending court proceedings to the children. Such issues as child support are adult matters not intended for children.

4. Thou shalt not in any way directly or indirectly interfere with legal visitation with the other parent.

5. Thou shalt not argue with the former spouse in front of the children, or in circumstances where they may overhear the argument.

6. Thou shalt not interrogate the children after a visit to learn of the ex’s negligence or poor judgment. If a child is reluctant to answer questions, respect this reluctance. The child should not be used as a spy to collect information on the ex’s living habits.

7. Thou shalt respect the fact that all children instinctively desire to love their parents, regardless of their faults and shortcomings. The child’s love of a flawed parent does not mean he or she loves you any less. Thus, thou shalt try not to artificially limit, restrict, or interfere with the child’s relationship and love for his or her other parent.

8. Thou shalt not use the children as messengers. If you feel you cannot talk directly to your ex-spouse, send him or her a letter.

9. Thou shalt not use your children as substitute friends or confidants.

10. Thou shalt not use the children as pawns in a power struggle with one’s ex-spouse, or to punish one’s former mate.

Compiled by
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