

Client-Therapist Relationship with Children of Separation or Divorce

This statement is to assist parents in navigating support for their child, as well as, to delineate my role as therapist.

- My role is to support your child as he/she moves through his parents' process of divorce. The separation was sudden and unexpected leaving a great deal of surprise and grief over his parents no longer living together. As a therapist, I can offer support in terms of giving children a place for the expression of feelings, an understanding and labeling of feelings, a non-judgmental avenue for exploring feelings, and a place to work through anxiety, distress, and grief over the loss. I can offer parents an explanation of developmentally appropriate responses for children your child's age and guidance on how to address emotional challenges.
- **I am not to be consulted on issues related to custody or visitation. This is something that I believe parents should come to some agreement on, but often this is a contentious aspect of divorce. When I am pulled in the middle it skews my role and I am likely to feel the same way your child feels being pulled between his parents. This triangulation is uncomfortable and damaging.**
- I am not to meet individually with one parent without the other parent present, after the initial intake session. This is to prevent an air of collusion. I am here for the child's benefit and suggest that both parents seek their own mental health during this time of tremendous stress.
- I suggest that both parents get advice on co-parenting from the following books:
Helping your Kids Cope with Divorce by Gary Neuman, LCMHC
Cooperative Parenting and Divorce by Susan Boyan and Ann Termini/Active Parenting Pub.
Crossroads of Parenting and Divorce by Susan Boyan and Ann Termini/Active Parenting Pub.
- I also suggest the following therapists to help work out problems with coming to agreements over visitation and custody and other parenting concerns. I suggest the following people to work out co-parenting issues:
 1. Stacy Stoddard, LMFT The Counseling Center 410-583-7443
 2. Paul Bello, LCPC The Counseling Center 410-583-7443
 3. Christa Marvenko-Athas , LCSW-C 410-367-1029

Please sign and date below and bring this to your next session. By signing this you agree to pursue the above suggestions.

_____ Date: _____