

4. Your children will need more support from you if their other parent doesn't keep in touch

- You can't force the other parent to have contact, but you can invite them to counselling (This is free through the Family Court).
- Your children's feelings will be affected by not seeing their other parent.
- You are more likely to need help for yourself as well (see point 6).

5. Your children need as much stability and security as possible

- Separation can cause lots of changes and disruptions in your children's relationships, especially if they move house and schools.
- You can help by doing what you can to keep your children's routines and activities going, and by spreading out changes over time.
- Tell your children what the practical plans are for them, and reassure them that they will be looked after.
- Delay introducing new partners and step-families as long as you can.

6. Your children sometimes need you to talk to other adults to get help

- If you are worried about your children, then talk to a health professional, counsellor or school counsellor.¹
- You may need other adults' help to be strong for your children, especially when there is violence, extreme bitterness, or addiction.
- Remember not to place your burdens on your children. Talk to reliable adults instead.
- Read the booklet *Putting Your Children First – Parents' Guide to Caring for Children after Separation*, pages 14-17, for helpful ideas for coping.

¹ See *Putting Your Children First – Parents' Guide to Caring for Children after Separation*, page 2, for more ideas.

