

Divorce Advice and Parents' Council Support Groups: Help for Divorced Parents to Create Co-Parenting after Divorce

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Abstract : At family with children, divorce is a risk for a child to lose the relationship to the parent with whom the child doesn't live. A child has the right to the get care from both parents after the divorce. Even though your ex-spouse isn't longer your companion, to the child he or she is still unique as a parent and parents must cooperate and support their child in the new family situation. To divorcee, it's necessary to understand the difference between the intimate relationship that ends and parenthood that continues. Cooperative parenting takes a lot of effort and flexibility for the parents to make joint custody work well. It is vital that parents get help to understand the situation from child points of view. When parent is facing divorce, and all the emotions that it brings along, can the child easily be forgotten. To help children, we must help parents to understand, that a relationship can end, parenthood cannot. As professionals, we should help the parents to see the significance and value of both parents to the child and try to support and protect parenthood-relationship between parents. The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters have developed group models to work with parents during or after divorce. These support groups are led by professionals, but peer support is also used. These support groups have been held over 10 years and there are found from 20 different cities in Finland. Eroneuvo event (divorce advice) service is intended for parents who are considering or have already divorced. The Vanhemman neuvo (parents' council) is a peer support group that helps parents with post-divorce parenting issues. From these groups, parents receive information and peer support for matters related to divorcing and how to support the child and do co-parenting. At the groups and in given information for divorced parents, is used a method called the 'Irreversible triangle'. It's a way to picture the intimate relationship and parenthood after the divorce and what is the difference between these two things. 'Irreversible triangle' is used to help parents and professionals to understand, what happens if a child loses the relationship to the other parent or if parents co-parenting doesn't work well. From the largely collected feedback, group members tell that they feel themselves relieved after taking part of the group. Parents also experience that talking with other parents helps to survive. Group members learn to co-operate with the other parent, and they'll also learn to see the best interest of the child after the divorce. Parents would highly recommend these groups to other parents.

Keywords : child's right, co-parenting, parenthood after the divorce, peer support

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