How parents, family, friends & others can help children

"What I need from you"

When the children and young adults are clear about what they need from their parents and others it's easier for people to help them. **Here are 10 things that children with separated parents have said they needed**.

1. UNDERSTAND MY POINT OF VIEW

"My parents separation will impact my life now and in the future. My view is important. Please make sure you know that I think."

2. DON'T USE ME AS A MESSENGER

"Don't ask me to send messages to my other parent. It makes me feel caught in the middle, even if it's about small stuff."

3. JUST LISTENING TO ME HELPS

"It needs to feel safe for me to talk about how I am feeling, even if you don't have the answers. Help me open up to you and create opportunities for me to talk to other safe adults who won't take sides or be defensive."

4. HELP ME ADJUST TO NEW LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

"Help me to settle into new living arrangements. Be flexible, open to compromise and don't be possessive about my things. Let me take what I like and make it easy for me to have things when I need them regardless which parent I am with."

5. KEEP IN TOUCH

"Even if we can't see each other as much, I still want to speak to you and exchange messages. Make it easy for me to have this with both parents, if it is safe for me, as well as with my extended family. Don't leave me out of key family events. This doesn't change my love for you."

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6. KEEP ME OUT OF ARGUMENTS	If you disagree about something talk about it when I'm not there. Agree who will be responsible extra for things I need (e.g. school trips) without me being involved.
7. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF	When I see you are upset, I feel responsible. Please prioritise getting the help and support you need from friends and professionals so I don't have to worry about you.
8. DON'T SAY BAD THINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER	I'm half Mum and half Dad. When you say negative things about my other parent I feel like you don't like part of me.
9. INCLUDE ME	You are making big choices for my life too. Listen to what I want and consider it when you make choices that affect me. I may want something different to my brother/sister.
10. I HAVE A RIGHT TO SEE BOTH PARENTS AS LONG AS ITS SAFE	Try to make handovers as easy as possible. Make it ok for me to enjoy time with my other parent and try to make the atmosphere friendly. Don't ask me to lie or cover things up.

Share this with your parents & talk to them about what you need