

## Ten Tips For Single Dads

1. Find ways to stay in contact even when distant or unable to see your kids regularly. Such as: sending cards, jokes, silly stories or riddles, e-mail, phone calls, audio tapes, photos, or putting a scrapbook together to share next time you are together.
2. Never let kids overhear you saying anything negative about the kids' mother, her friends or her family.
3. Be predictable. Follow through on your commitments. Kids need to be able to count on your promises.
4. Remember holidays and birthdays. You are creating memories that will last a lifetime.
5. Help kids express their feelings. Listen to what they say and then model for them how to state feelings directly and appropriately (boundaries on how kids act out feelings are ok.), but try to let your children know you always accept them regardless of how they are feeling at the moment. For instance, "I can see that you are angry. It is ok to be upset, but it is not all right to hit. Use your words." For more ideas you can read *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*, by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish
6. Spend time with each child individually without any other adults or kids doing a child-centered activity together. Bonding and special moments, happen one on one.
7. Surround yourself with support, and take care of yourself so you have the physical and emotional energy to deal with kid issues. If you are exhausted and overwhelmed it is harder to deal with kids with a sense of humor.
8. Give 5 compliments to every directive (a directive is a request or criticism). This will create a sense of lightness and positiveness in your home. Your kids will listen to you because they will learn that they can expect to hear something positive.
9. Spend quiet time together. Walking in nature, bicycling, rollerblading, fishing, reading to your child (TV. off) etc.
10. Read together during a quiet time before they go to bed or in-between activities during the day. Reading children's books about feelings or how other children have coped with the upheaval of divorce will help them find words to ask you the questions they need to have answered.

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