

# Five Tips for Grandparents During Divorce

Going through a divorce is a trying experience for any family it touches. It's no surprise for grandparents to feel emotional ups and downs as they watch their adult child and grandchildren all work through this transition.

Grandparents will want to be there for their adult child while also offering support to the grandkids. As everyone is likely to be feeling various amounts of stress, you should navigate this role as caregiver and supporter for your family with care during this challenging time.

## Tips for Grandparents During Divorce

If you are a grandparent whose family is experiencing a divorce, here are five tips for how you can be there for your family during this challenging time.

### Maintain Your Relationship With Your Grandchildren

Grandparents are a source of comfort, fun, and plenty of love for many grandchildren. As such, your steady presence could be a source of reassurance during this difficult transition.

When around your grandchildren, keep things as normal as possible. If you have regular visits with them, stay on this schedule as best you can. If you won't be able to spend much time together, connect over the phone or video calls.

If you didn't have a very close relationship with your grandchildren before now, you might find it challenging to build up that connection right now. In this situation, you can still be there for them, but try not to pressure them into anything they aren't comfortable with right now.

## Stay Neutral

As a grandparent, you probably feel a stronger alliance to your adult child, who is one of the parents of your grandchildren. Even if you cannot stand the other parent, you must stay neutral on the subject when you're around the kids.

Don't interfere with your grandchildren's love for either of their parents. When speaking about the divorce or their other parent, keep the conversation positive or, at the very least, neutral.

Don't pry your grandchildren to give you information about what they're observing concerning the divorce. Let them share what they want to with you. However, do take care to ensure that they are healthy and safe in both of their homes.

If you notice something concerning, bring it to one or both of their parents first. Only consider escalating your concern if you feel your grandchildren are in immediate danger. The laws concerning grandparents' rights in a divorce vary from state-to-state, so be sure to do your research. This will help to guide you as you look to support your grandchildren.

## Be Smart About Your Relationship With The Other Parent

The other parent of your grandchildren will remain a part of your life on some level. This is especially true if they share parenting time with your adult child or are the sole physical caretakers of your grandchildren. You may see them only periodically at events for the children, or you may have to interact with them frequently if they're dropping the kids off to see you. Therefore, it may be better to find a way to maintain a relationship with this person sooner than later rather than cut them entirely out of your life.

Keep your relationship cordial. This will make it easier to be together in moments that truly matter like school graduations or even a grandchild's future wedding. If you were once close to the other parent, consider taking a few steps back. Doing so will help protect your adult child and their feelings, as well as your own. Navigate this relationship with caution and respect.

## Be Understanding When It Comes To Special Occasions

Moving forward, traditions with your grandchildren for things like birthdays and holidays might not be quite the same. While you may have always spent birthdays with your grandchildren on their actual birthdays, their parents' divorce might impact that arrangement from now on.

It's a sad realization to know that these special occasions won't necessarily be the same anymore, but it's okay. What's most important is that you keep making the times when you can celebrate together very special.

Accept the fact that they might be with their other family over specific dates that they were often with you. But also, know that you'll have your time with them, too. Now is the time to focus on building new traditions that you can carry on as you all move forward.

## Emanate Peace and Calm

Divorce is especially hard on children. You may not be able to take away their pain, but you can do your best to lighten their spirits when you spend time together.

Keep your time with your grandkids fun and light. Have a positive attitude, and keep things low-stress. Have ideas for fun things to do that you know they will enjoy and will take their mind off any stress they might be feeling at home. Demonstrate how to stay peaceful and calm even in the face of challenges. Be a positive role model for your grandkids.

As a grandparent who cares for their grandchildren, it's always easy to offer your love during any difficult time. The challenge for here may come more with having to acclimate to the family's new sense of normal, which might include a new parenting time schedule, new houses, and other new routines. Continue to be a constant source of support for your grandchildren, and communicate with your adult child to always ensure you're on the same page.