**Rights of Children of Divorce:**

*Children have the right to*

1. Continue to love both parents without guilt or disapproval (subtle or overt) by either parent or other relatives.
2. Be repeatedly reassured that the divorce is not their fault.
3. Be reassured they are safe and their needs will be provided for.
4. Have a special place for their own belongings at both parent’s residences.
5. Visit both parents regardless of what the adults in the situation feel and regardless of convenience or money situations.
6. Express anger and sadness in their own way, according to age and personality (not have to give justification for their feelings or have to cope with trying to be talked out of their feelings by adults).
7. Not be messengers between parents, not to carry notes, legal papers, money or requests between parents.
8. Not make adult decisions, including where they will live, where and when they will be picked up or dropped off, or who is to blame.
9. Love as many people as they choose without being made to feel guilty or disloyal. (Loving and being loved by many people is good for children, there is not a limit on the number of people a child can love.)
10. Continue to be kids, i.e., not take on adult duties and responsibilities or become a parent’s special confidant, companion or comforter (i.e., not to hear repeatedly about financial problems or relationship difficulties).
11. Stay in contact with relatives, including grandparents and special family friends.
12. Not be on an airplane, train or bus on major holidays for the convenience of adults.
13. Have teachers and school informed about the new status of their family.
14. Have time with each parent doing activities that create a sense of closeness and special memories.
15. Have a daily and weekly routine that is predictable and can be verified by looking at a schedule on a calendar in a system understandable to the child. (For example: a green line represents the time with dad and a purple line represents the scheduled time with mom, etc.)
16. Participate in sports, special classes or clubs that support their unique interests and have adults that will get them to these events, on time without guilt or shame.
17. Contact the other parent and have phone conversations without eavesdropping or tape-recording.
18. Ask questions and have them answered respectfully with age-appropriate answers that do not include blaming or belittlement of anyone.
19. Be exposed to parents’ religious ideas (without shame), hobbies, interests, and tastes in food.
20. Have consistent and predictable boundaries in each home. (Although the rules in each home may differ significantly, each parent’s set of rules needs to be predictable within their household.)
21. Be protected from hearing adult arguments and disputes.
22. Have parents communicate (even if only in writing) about their medical treatment, psychological treatment, educational issues, accidents and illnesses.
23. Not be interrogated upon return from the other parent’s home or asked to spy in the other parent’s home.
24. Own pictures of both parents.
25. Choose to talk with a special adult about their concerns and issues (counselor, therapist, or special friend).