

CHALLENGES FACED BY BLENDED FAMILY

Currently, blended families have become popular mostly in the United States. More than a quarter of marriages in the US end in divorce, thus only half the number of children live with their biological parents and stepparent. However, it is challenging to bring two parents and their kids together since specific children were used to different family routines and parenting styles (RECH, 2017). The incidences of stress in the new blended family are very normal since there exist various conflicts among the separating parents, between the stepsiblings and also conflict between stepparents and parents who live outside the new family. Sometimes the blended family may experience a smooth transition, however, some take longer to get used to living together due to various factors which include; conflicting emotions, different disciplining and parenting styles and also the development of new relationships (Coleman & Ganong, 2004). The couple usually encounters hard time to adopt the new role in the family as they will need to learn how to parent stepchildren.

The following are difficulties that are experienced when individuals are trying to adjust to the blended family

- a) Reluctance of children to share a biological parent
- b) Rivalry with half or step-siblings
- c) Co-parenting issues
- d) Financial issues
- e) Difficulty adjusting to partner's children

Initially, stepparent roles tend to be the most difficult role to play. However, to ensure efficiency, both the biological and the stepparent should openly discuss their expectations and fears regarding the relationship with children. Every individual should know his or her expectations toward guiding, supervising and disciplining the children (Phil, 2017). Stepparents have various roles to play that is;

Stepparent need to show love and affection towards the children

- Formulate house rules which are as consistent as possible
- Create new family traditions such as doing crafts, game nights, bike riding or even cooking
- Do not use children as messengers but learn to communicate directly with other parents
- Talk to the partner or spouse before making a decision

No matter the situation the new family is in, blending parents should be ready to face bumps along the way (Coleman & Ganong, 2004). They should not give up; rather they should make things work by ensuring that they are improving the situation of the new family as time goes on.



A new blended family can foster family identity through observing following issues.

1. The parents should have a financial and living arrangement they should agree where they will live and how they will share their resources.
2. Family identity can be fostered when the partners agree to resolve feeling and concerns about the previous marriage since remarriage can arouse old unresolved anger and hurt from the past marriage (Miller, 2017).
3. The identity will be realized through anticipating change and decisions. The couple should table down the role every partner should play while raising new spouse's children as well as formulating new household rules.
4. Also, the parent needs to cater time to spend with the new blended family
5. Agree on the mode at which to guide, direct and discipline stepchildren

References

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