

# What We Know

## ARTICLES & INSIGHTS

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[A.T. Debnam](#) is a Board Certified Family Law Specialist by the *North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization* and a certified family financial mediator through the *North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission*. She concentrates her practice in the area of domestic law and represents clients in all aspects of family law, including divorce, custody, equitable distribution, child support, and alimony.

## Nine Helpful Tips for Recently Separated or Divorced Parents

May 16, 2023 | by

Any of us with children knows how hard it is to co-parent with our spouse or partner in an intact relationship. It is not uncommon for parents to disagree with one another on how to parent their child or children in the best of circumstances.

Now apply that same challenge to parents who have recently separated or divorced. Wow! Those same parenting differences in an intact relationship are magnified 1,000 times in relationships where the parents are separating or divorcing. As a family lawyer, I spend most of my day dealing with co-parenting issues.

### **HERE ARE NINE TIPS/THINGS TO REMEMBER TO HELP MANAGE THE DIFFICULTIES OF CO-PARENTING POST-SEPARATION OR DIVORCE:**

1. Always put the child or children before your feelings towards the other parent. Keep your personal feelings and emotions out of it.
2. Try to focus on the other parent's positive attributes instead of the negative ones. Remember, just because your co-parent may have been a lousy spouse/partner does not mean they are a terrible parent.
3. Please refrain from making negative or derogatory comments about the other parent in front of the child or children or within their hearing.
4. Don't be afraid to take an electronic time-out. Getting into a text/email war with your former spouse/partner is easy. When you feel heated or emotional, put your device down and take a time out.
5. Keep communications with your co-parent child-centered.
6. Try to establish consistency for the child or children in both households. Be open to trying different things so that your child or children understands that there is the same basic set of expectations at each house.
7. Don't get bogged down in minor issues; be flexible.
8. Always encourage the other parent's relationship with the child or children.
9. Ensure there is a free flow of information from one household to the other. For example, share important events or news about the child or children with the other parent.

In our court system, the polar star that guides our judges is what is in the best interest of the child/children. Co-parenting is tough, but if you keep the best interest of the

child/children as your guiding principle, that makes for an easier and better co-parenting relationship.

---

#### CONTACT US

919.250.2000  
mail@smithdebnamlaw.com

#### RALEIGH OFFICE

The Landmark Center  
4601 Six Forks Road, Suite 400  
Raleigh, NC 27609

Phone: 919.250.2000  
Fax: 919.250.2100

#### CHARLESTON OFFICE

171 Church Street  
Suite 120C  
Charleston, SC 29401

Phone: 843.714.2530  
Fax: 843.714.2541