

Too Much Fact Or Fiction

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Some parents feel the need to include their children in all of the family discussions and traumas. Their position is that all that happens has an impact on the child so the child should be aware of everything-in detail.

Other parents take the directly opposite approach that children should be shielded from everything that could possibly upset them and told that there is nothing wrong in their world. They should be kept completely in the dark until one day one of their parents is no longer living in the house any more.

Still other parents take the approach that it is important for the children to think of that parent as blameless in any problem and to view the other parent as the "bad" one. They create fictional parents.

While it would seem like these must be three extremes, and you would think that that most cases would have some of each, the reality is that the extremes are the norm in contested family law cases. The reason may be because people who have those type of cases also have those types of parenting styles. Winner take all. Black or white. My way or the highway.

In parenting, in law, in life, few things are all or nothing. There are times when there can be too much fact. Everyone does not have to know everything all of the time. There are even times when there should be some "fiction"- not lying, but at least pretending to get along for the sake of the children during visitation exchange; times when you say a good word about the other parent or at least, say nothing at all.

Children should not be privy to the minute details of their parents' domestic problems. They should never become a parent's confidante or ally. They are the children of both parents. If you need to vent, talk to a professional. They are paid to listen and have the expertise to actually help you through the situation. Children are damaged by this conduct. It takes its toll on them personally and in their future relationships. They are not equipped to handle the fact or the fiction...so tell them what they need to know as children and keep the rest to yourself.

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