

right to be patient and take it slowly.

Dr. Donna Tonrey, a marriage and family therapist at La Salle University, says it's common for children of divorce to hope their parents reconcile. A parent's decision to begin dating will often dash the child's hopes that the parents will get back together. Tonrey says it's important for you to talk to your daughter about her feelings. Tell her you understand that it's difficult for her to accept the divorce as final.

Be clear with your children that that you're not going to get back together with your ex, suggests Brette Sember, a former family law attorney and author of "How to Parent with Your Ex." If you get along well with your ex-husband, your children may expect or hope that you'll get back together, she says.

"You should not get into the details about why you won't get back together, but instead just be firm that it is not a possibility and that the two of you are happiest living apart. Stress that you will always be parents together but that you are no longer partners in life," Sember says.

You should also understand that your daughter may feel torn about your partner, says Tonrey. If your daughter likes your partner, she may feel disloyal to her dad, she says. You might want to discuss this issue with your daughter.

Hubert Fleming, a syndicated relationship columnist for Elites TV, suggests that you spend plenty of one-on-one time with your children.

"Most kids are worried or afraid of losing you, and where they fit," he says. They need to be reminded that they come first, and that dating will not compete with your commitment to meeting their needs, he says.

Malinda Jo Muzi,, a psychologist , family therapist and author of "Your Kids, Their Lives: A Parent's Guide to Raising Happy, Competent, Caring Children," agrees that children often fear they will be abandoned after a divorce. "Mom's dating reinforces that fear," she says. "Often a mother and child become very close after a divorce in the family. The new relationship is a threat to that closeness," she says.

W.S., be sure to take your time and keep your kids' interests and feelings in mind. Reassure them often.

Best,
Lisa

Posted by Lisa Cohn at 12:30 PM

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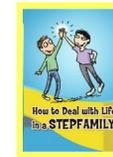
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About Me



Lisa Cohn

Lisa Cohn is an award-winning freelance writer and author. Her favorite part of her job is interviewing kids and adults like the ones she interviewed for this book. She also is the author of One Family, Two Family, New Family: Stories and Advice for Stepfamilies. Her articles have appeared in the Christian Science Monitor, Mothering, Parenting, Brain, Child: The Magazine for Thinking Mothers, and other publications. Debbie Glasser, Ph.D., is a psychologist and writer who helps kids and parents in all kinds of families learn how to understand each other and get along better. She is a freelance parenting columnist for the Miami Herald and past chairperson of the National Parenting Education Network (NPEN). She also edits an online newsletter for parents and can be reached at www.NewsForParents.org. Debbie lives in a stepfamily. Two of her three children, Emily and Ben, are stepkids. Debbie and her husband, Glenn, also have a

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