Strategies for blended families

Stress and unrest feel like the norm in your family? It doesn’t have to be like that. Take a look at some strategies to help set up your stepfamily or blended family for success.

Give everyone a voice
Even though parents should get the last say, always consider everyone’s opinions and emotions. This can help steer clear of worries when transitioning to a new family.

Take your time
Know that moving to a new family is a process, and trying to rush things may cause more stress. Relationships, such as those between new siblings, should develop on their own timeline.

Take… more time
If you’re a parent, set aside time to focus on your kids. Plan a fun activity together, and let them speak freely about what’s on their mind, including family matters. Just be careful not to say negative stuff about an ex or others.

Give space
Talking is important, and so is the other side of that coin: privacy. Respect that every child needs their own space. Talk to your kids and stepkids about what works best for them.

Don’t take it personally
You may not be besties right away with your stepchildren. And that’s OK. Try not to take things personally. Understand that how they act or what they say may have a lot to do with their process of adjusting to new family members.

At a glance

1. Stay calm
2. Recognise differences
3. Be respectful
4. Don’t ignore conflict
5. Learn to apologise and forgive
6. Work together
Say no to assumptions
If your children are adults, don’t assume that means they’re OK with a new stepfamily situation. They could be struggling to understand their place, too. Curious how they feel? Just ask.

Sources:


Tips for healing and moving on after a break up
When a relationship breaks down, you might experience anger, shame, confusion, embarrassment and grief.

Several months may pass before reality sinks in, and your emotions might vacillate during the interim. You might find yourself mourning the loss of the partnership, as well as the dreams and commitments that you shared, or the social, financial and intellectual support that you felt. You might even fantasise about reconciliation.

But, even though it’s often difficult to get over a breakup, most people do. Be kind to yourself and focus on ways to help yourself move forward.

What to do
Avoid making important decisions or life changes.
Accept the ups and downs as a natural part of the process.
Look forward – even though you feel bad for a time, it will pass.
Adopt a balanced lifestyle with regular exercise, adequate sleep and a healthy diet.
Look for the good moments – even the darkest day can hold glimpses of relief or humour.
Avoid turning to unhealthy habits, such as smoking cigarettes, taking drugs or abusing alcohol.
Give yourself time to heal and grieve. Understand that during this time, it’s likely that you’ll experience good days and bad days. Be patient with yourself and the process.
Get involved – resist the temptation to withdraw and isolate yourself. Build your circle of friends and your interests. Catch up with old interests or develop new ones.