

Twelve Commandments for Divorced Parents (Both of You)

- 1.** Never make visitation arrangements directly with children under 12.
- 2.** Never suggest visitation arrangements you have not previously discussed with the other parent. Always confirm with the other parent any visitation arrangements made with children 12 and over.
- 3.** Send and return children who are clean, well-rested and fed. Do not send or return a sack or suitcase full of soiled clothes.
- 4.** Do not use a telephone answering device to screen calls from the other parent or limit telephone access between your children's *actual* bedtime, not the bedtime you would like them to have.
- 5.** Do not discuss divorce disputes with your children or allow them to hear you discussing your differences regarding them.
- 6.** Do not send messages or money with your children.
- 7.** Do not speak ill of the other parent or of his or her relatives, friends or loved ones.
- 8.** Do not ask your children for information about the other parent's household, friends, income or activities.
- 9.** Do not believe everything you hear from your children.
- 10.** Do not second-guess the other parent regarding discipline, rewards or everything else.
- 11.** Give a sympathetic ear to your children, but affirm and reaffirm as often as necessary that you are not a referee or a mediator between your children and the other parent.
- 12.** Be courteous. Do not honk your horn for your child to come out. Walk to the other parent's door. Have the children ready to go. Always be on time and smile.

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