



PARENT PAGE

SESSION FOUR

Welcome to the DivorceCare for Kids family. Each week you will receive a Parent Page. This Parent Page will do three things: (1) make you aware of the theme for the week's session, (2) give you tips to create stronger bonds in your single-parent family, and (3) enhance the parent/child relationship. We suggest you purchase or create a journal to record stories, comments, and funny things that happen in your family. For more information about DC4K, go to www.dc4k.org. Find single-parent resources at www.dc4k.org/parentzone.

Journey from anger to sadness

This week's goal:

To help you become familiar with the grieving phase of depression or sadness in your children.

What the experts say:

"Research has shown that children as long as 10 years after the divorce are still depressed. What is at root of the depression is the loss they have experienced. Not only the loss of a parent, but the loss of dreams, the loss of ideals, the loss of the intact home. God has designed us to respond to loss with depression, which can be damaging to children [if they do not learn how to recognize and cope with it]. Of all the emotional consequences of divorce, this is the one emotion that parents pay least attention to," says Dr. Archibald D. Hart.*

This week in DC4K:

The children were introduced to the sadness of grief that happens in divorce. We helped them to recognize the difference between feeling mad and feeling sad. They learned that it's okay to feel sad and that God will provide comfort for them. They also learned that even though they may feel sad, they will get through this period and feel happy again.

One family's story:

One divorced mom had an 8-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl. Sometimes when the mom was sad, the boy was happy and the girl was mad. Other times

the mom was happy, the boy felt mad, and the daughter was sad. They realized each one felt differently at different times. When the boy was sad, he liked to eat applesauce. So the mom bought him jars of applesauce. The daughter liked to go to her room and listen to music when she was sad. So the mom bought her some music CDs. It was decided that each person in the family would respect the others and give them some space when they felt sad or mad, but it was still important to connect with each other every day. They decided to hold family devotions each morning. They took turns reading out of a devotional book and praying for each other.

This week's Scripture focus:

Deuteronomy 33:27: "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (NIV).

Building family strengths:

Pay close attention to your children and their emotions. Even if it seems impossible with your job and other responsibilities, take the time to notice changes in their behavior and talk with them about it. Set up a time for family devotions and pray with your children. A prayer time can become a solid foundation in your routine each day. During your devotions, take time for the children to share praises for what the Lord is doing in their lives. You need to share your praises also. Keep a list of prayer requests and a list of praises. Once a month during one of your family meetings, decide when and how to celebrate the good things happening in your lives. Celebrate with ice cream or have a pizza night. Do something fun with food—you might even have applesauce to eat. Play a special music CD!

The best way to help your children is to help yourself. Link up with a DivorceCare divorce recovery support group, www.divorcecare.org.



* Church Initiative interview with Christian clinical psychologist Dr. Archibald D. Hart.