



PARENT PAGE

SESSION FIVE

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.

I am not alone

This week's goal:

To help every member in your household feel a part of the family.

What the experts say:

"Loneliness rarely occurs when everything is going just right. When you go through experiences of loneliness, invariably you're going to begin looking inward, thinking, 'Did I do something to set this up? Is there something wrong with me?'" says Dr. Les Carter.* Children feel loneliness in a divorce situation. They ask themselves the same questions. When children feel alone within the framework of the family, it can affect their self-esteem. They need to be valued. Each child needs to be a contributing member of the family. Pull together and work like a family.

This week in DC4K:

The children learned that everyone has problems and they are not alone when they have problems. They recognized that there are other children like them. The concept of asking others for help was introduced this week.

One family's story:

Upon arriving at church one Easter Sunday, a single mom and her children were invited to have a family picture taken. The daughter screamed, "We can't have a family picture taken because we don't have a family anymore," and she ran into the church sanctuary.

The son said, "Didn't you know our dad moved out? We don't have a family." The mother had no idea her children felt this way. After church, the mother sat the children down and explained they still had a family. The son said, "Look around, Mom. In case you haven't noticed, there's no dad in this house!" She told the children that God could be the other parent in their family. The mother told the children that they needed to work on creating a new kind of family. A few weeks later this family made some big decisions. They went to the paint store where everyone picked out new paint for his or her bedroom. Everyone helped to paint. After painting, they rearranged the furniture in every room. Slowly these three became a strong, Christian "new kind of family."

This week's Scripture focus:

Psalm 68:6: "God sets the lonely in families" (NIV).

Building family strengths:

"A common problem with one-parent families is that too often the parent tries to shoulder all of the responsibility of running the family. Do not make that mistake. Learn to delegate to the children, to relax too rigid standards, and to focus only on priority tasks," says Dr. Bobbie Reed.† Make a list of the chores that need to be done at your home. If you haven't done so already, divide that list into a checklist and let everyone decide what he or she will be responsible for. After taking care of daily chores, decide on a household project you will do together as a family. It could be rearranging the furniture, cleaning out a closet or the garage, or painting a room. Let all family members contribute.

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

DIVORCE *Care*

* Church Initiative interview with Christian counselor Dr. Les Carter.

† Adapted from Bobbie Reed's *Christian Family Activities* (Standard Publishing, 1982), p. 25. Used by permission from the author.