

Sharing the Separation News

Aside from telling your spouse the next thing to remember is putting your children's needs first

1. Make a list considering the circles of people in your life.

- ✱ The people closest to you and the ones most directly affected
- ✱ Those who support or work with your children – teachers, minister, coaches
- ✱ Those that do not need to know
- ✱ The acquaintances or work related people who do need to know
- ✱ The professionals in your life that manage aspects of your life - insurance, banker,

2. Be brief

- ✱ Tell people as little as possible
- ✱ Decide ahead of time what you are going to say and stick to the script
- ✱ Say something like “My spouse and I, after a great deal of thinking and discussing, are splitting up. I am sad, but optimistic.” Only carry on if there are specific things you need them to do for you or your children.
- ✱ Avoid the “Greek Chorus” effect people rallying around feeding your negative thoughts and feelings like anger, blame, shame, fear, guilt, worry ...

3. Speaking with your children

- ✱ Make an agreement with your spouse on the story about what is happening.
- ✱ Remember there is a great deal that children do not need to know.
- ✱ Tell the children together in a clear and short message
- ✱ Wait and answer their questions
- ✱ Make sure you tell them the important key messages they need to hear

4. Telling extended family and close friends

- ✱ Make your message clear and concise avoid getting into detail
- ✱ Avoid blame and self-justification
- ✱ Consider who is best to tell who and remember that your children might be privy to the messages you give to others through cousins or other extended family.
- ✱ Set boundaries if your family members start to get entrenched
- ✱ Put yourself in their shoes. If they were telling you how would you want to find out
- ✱ Do not use friends as therapists this can strain the relationship
- ✱ Give yourself permission to say “I choose not to discuss this further”

5. What to say at work

- ✱ You may need someone in the know at work as this might impact your work because you'll need time to attend appointments or take calls.
- ✱ Limit who you tell to who needs to know sometimes work can be a place you get away from your personal life
- ✱ It is okay to ask co-workers to cover you periodically if you need time to get your composure or handle an emergency.

**Ending a marriage is a big decision. Telling people makes it real.
If you need help contact Family TLC and get the help you deserve!
(705) 737-3513 or resources@familytlc.ca**