

Five Factors that Determine the Outcome of Divorce for Children

From Elizabeth Ellis – Divorce Wars

1. To what degree are the children exposed to overt conflict
 - a. Conflict between the parents
 - i. Shielded or open
 - ii. Violence
 - iii. Duration
 - iv. Resolution
 - v. Step-parent issues
 - b. Conflict related to the children
 - i. Abuse
 - ii. Focus on children or other issues
 - iii. Behavioral problems with the children
2. Quality of the parents' relationship with the children
 - a. Access issues
 - i. Absence or geographical separation
 - ii. Visitation
 - b. Alienation
 - i. Own emotional distress and preoccupation
 - ii. Emotional distress and preoccupation of other parent or step-parents
 - iii. Get it started and then it is easily fueled
 - c. Changing roles – nurture and discipline
3. Emotional stability of primary caretaker
 - a. Chronic mental health issues
 - b. Addiction
 - c. Inability to maintain consistency and predictability
4. Economic hardship
 - a. Decline in standard of living
 - b. More stress secondary to preoccupation of parent on economic issues
 - c. Child support issues
5. The number of disruptions to the children
 - a. Additional divorces
 - b. Moves
 - c. Changes in caretaker
 - d. Adjustment issues
 - e. Loss

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