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Tips from the  
**Divorce Support  
Club**

Building a strong blended  
family.

# What is a blended family?

- A blended family is where you and your partner make a life together with children from one or both of your previous relationships.

# 1 Get to know each other as separate families

Take your time and don't rush. Get to know each other as separate units first. For example:



**Days out.** Going on days out establishes a new sense of normalcy, creates positive memories, and fosters inclusivity, ultimately strengthening the family dynamic.



**Spend time in your respective homes.** This is an opportunity for family members to gradually merge their lives and establish a sense of belonging in a comfortable environment.



**Take your time.** It is important that family members have the necessary space and time to build trust, understanding, and a strong foundation.

## 2 Take time to **heal**

It is important for you to take time to heal from your previous relationship.

Taking time to heal will **enable** you to not make the same mistakes.

Taking time to heal will **allow** you to leave your grief behind you.

Taking time to heal will help you **discover** who you are and what you want.

# 3 Your role and parenting styles

Establishing parenting styles and working out how to step into your new role are important practices when creating a blended family. Here are some helpful questions to ask yourself.

- What are the things my partner and I agree on in terms of parenting style?
- What do we do differently?
- Can I live with my partner's parenting style?
- How do we plan on resolving differences?
- How do my partner and I go about discipline?

# 4 Checking-in and maintaining respect

Remember that this is a big transition for everyone involved, so it's worth checking in regularly to see how things are going.

**Listen carefully** to both your partner and the children. Make sure that everyone gets heard.

If possible, **maintain a respectful relationship** for your new partner's ex. If this is not possible, focus on being the best step-parent you can be.

**Don't take it personally** when something you don't want to hear is said.

Maintain respect for **strongly held beliefs and traditions**. You may have differing opinions on things like religion or education.

# 5 Things to remember

Here are some important reminders as you create your blended family unit.

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## Time together

Having time altogether as a family in a blended family unit fosters unity, bonding, and a sense of belonging, while dedicated one-on-one time with each child helps nurture individual relationships and trust

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## Expectations

It is important not to expect immediate or absolute harmony in a blended family from the beginning, as the blending process takes time and patience. It may never be totally harmonious.

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## Flexibility

Being aware of the inevitability of change and maintaining flexibility is essential in a blended family. Recognizing that circumstances and dynamics will evolve over time enables adaptation and the ability to navigate changes and transitions effectively.