

Blended Family Problems? 21 Ways Counseling Can Help

As a psychologist and counselor practicing in the Woodstock-Cary-Algonquin-Crystal Lake and Lake in the Hills areas of Illinois, I find that there are 21 essentials you can expect when receiving counseling for problems in your blended family.

But first, what are the signs of blended family problems?

1. Conflicting parenting practices between biological and stepparents
2. Child rejects the stepparents disciplinary practices
3. Biological parent foments dislike for stepparent
4. Biological and stepparent compete for power and control
5. Conflict develops among the children in the blended family
6. Ex-spouse interferes with the blended familys lifestyle
7. Childs behavior problems become personalized by the adults, causing fracture within the family system

If this sounds like your family, you should seek counseling. But when you begin treatment, what will your counselor do? How does marriage and family counseling for blended families work?

1. Your therapist will help you to identify the positives and negatives of the stepparents disciplinary procedures..
2. You counselor will create a neutral zone so family members can express themselves without fear of retaliation.
3. Your therapist may train you in certain communication skills to build the relationship between relevant spouses.
4. The marriage or family counselor will likely facilitate a healthy dialogue among disgruntled children and any step or adoptive parent.
5. Your family or marital counselor will likely help the children explore any feelings of conflict or disloyalty regarding biological parents.
6. Your psychologist or counselor will probably facilitate a healthy release of any of the childrens fear of abandonment or displaced anger that may be inhibiting acceptance of their stepparents directives.
7. Parents will be helped to identify and resolve conflicts between themselves in parenting strategies.
8. The stepparents disciplinary strictness or rigidity will be assessed as to whether it may be creating resistance on the part of the child.
9. Your therapist may assess the degree to which an ex-spouse may be unfairly blamed for parenting problems existing within the blended family.
10. The counselor will help the parents identify and resolve any insecurity or jealousy regarding warmth displayed between a parent and stepchild.
11. Your psychologist may invite a former spouse or biological parent into a joint session with other biological or stepparents in order to discuss and resolve differences in parenting philosophies and techniques.
12. You may be asked to consider any potential manipulation of the child in playing one parent against the other for territorial or power advantages.
13. The children will likely be reassured that they are not responsible for their parents conflicts and that these conflicts do not reflect adversely on their parents love for them.
14. The children may be asked to express directly or through a letter the foundation of their feelings for being treated unfairly by a stepparent.
15. You may be encouraged to negotiate with the children as to actions that they may perceive as fairer to them.
16. Your therapist may suggest a list of special activities that the parent and stepchildren can do to reduce any feelings of alienation.
17. Parents may be encouraged to behave assertively toward children from whom they are afraid of receiving a negative response.

18. The therapist may help you to identify self-defeating patterns relevant to your parenting skills that may exist in your blended family and suggest ways of modifying them.

19. The therapist may prescribe psychological testing for some members of the family, children or parents, to expose any factors that may be neglected in isolating the causes of the family strife.

20. You will be helped to identify sources of ongoing support and reassurance to effectively improve and hone your parenting skills.

21. If you are engaging in any unusual parenting strategies, their methods and effects will be reviewed to be sure that they are contributing efficiently to the well-being of the family.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Dr Shery is in Cary, IL, near Algonquin, Crystal Lake, Marengo and Lake-in-the-Hills. He's the only marriage counselor and psychologist who adds targeted training to his counseling to get faster results. Call 1 847 516 0899 or learn more at: <http://www.nextdayappointment.com>