

☀ **How Are Your Toddlers Doing? (18 months - 3 years)**

Things to Consider

Issues

- consistency of caregivers, environment, and routine
- fear absent parent has disappeared
- nurturing and love
- concern about security (who will take care of me?)

Changes to watch for

	Problem	No problem
• increased crying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• trouble sleeping (for example, having nightmares)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• trouble eating (for example, demanding to be fed instead of feeding self)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• changes in toilet habits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• increased anger (temper tantrums or hitting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• clinging to adults or security objects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How you can help

- give love and affection
- tell your children that you love them
- maintain consistency of people and routines
- reassure the child that he or she will be cared for
- provide simple explanations of changes
- allow the child to express feelings through words or play
- avoid fighting or yelling in front of the child

Children's Worst Fears

- I did something wrong and that is why Mom and Dad are separating; it's my fault.
- If Mom and Dad loved each other before and now they don't, they might stop loving me too.

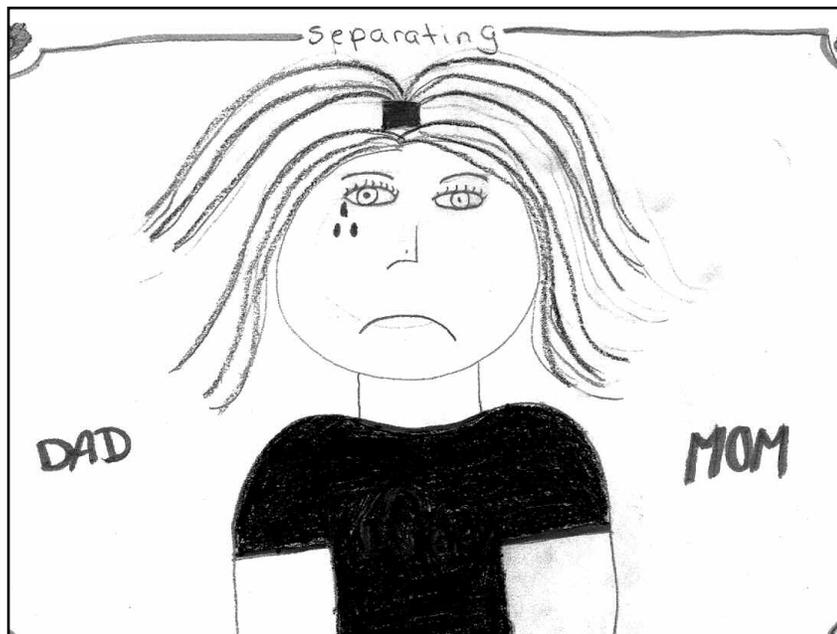
What Children Most Want to Know

- Mom and Dad will continue to love me.
- Mom and Dad will stop fighting.
- BOTH Mom and Dad will be here in my life.
- If I can't have that, at least one of my parents will be here in my life.

How Children Often Respond

In general:

- Children of all ages experience insecurity and anxiety when parents separate
- Pre-schoolers focus on security "who will take care of me"?
- Elementary school children show depression and/or anger.
- Junior high school students ask "why", "what is going on"?
- High school students question whether long-term commitment exists in relationships.



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