



A Care and Counseling Initiative



Supporting Singles

and Helping Them Thrive



Charis is an Urban Alliance initiative. www.urbanalliance.com

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About Charis

*Through Charis,
Urban Alliance works
with churches and
organizations to help
them communicate
about mental health
in ways that offer
hope and create safe
environments where
people feel comfortable
seeking help.*

Many people who are struggling with their relational, emotional and mental health do not receive the support they need. They often do not know where to turn for help, or are embarrassed to acknowledge they are struggling. Additionally, a lack of resources in the community, poverty and stigma are barriers that keep people from receiving help.

Research shows that the church is one of the most common places people go to seek help when they are struggling emotionally. This is why it is so important for pastors and care providers to be equipped to offer care and connect people to appropriate help. Many churches offer support groups, care ministries or pastoral care. And, professional counselors who offer care from a Christian perspective provide services in the community.

Through Charis, Urban Alliance works with churches and organizations to help them communicate about mental health in ways that offer hope and create safe environments where people feel comfortable seeking help. Urban Alliance also equips care providers to respond sensitively, effectively connect people who are seeking care to appropriate support, and provide care, so they may cope well and heal.

The Charis website is a tool, managed by Urban Alliance, that can be used by individuals and organizations to help connect people in need of support to high-quality professional counselors, support groups and specialized support services offered from a Christian perspective.

These collaborative efforts have helped hundreds of people overcome barriers and more effectively cope, have ongoing support, strengthen their relationships, experience hope, joy and peace, and persevere despite life's challenges.

*To learn more about Charis, visit www.urbanalliance.com/charis.
To visit the Charis website, visit www.charisnetworkct.org.*



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Since the 1960s, there has been an increasing number of singles and unmarried adults in the United States. In 2017, about 45% of the U.S. population (110 million Americans) were either divorced, widowed or have always been single (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The term “single” is a broad-brush term describing a group of people from a variety of different situations who are not currently married. The following scenarios exemplify some of these life situations:

- Mary is a 40-year-old actuary who has been single her entire life. She was engaged when she was in her late thirties, but the relationship did not work out and they decided to separate. Mary is currently not dating anyone and lives with her friend in an apartment. She struggles with feeling lonely and wishing God would provide a husband. She wonders if she is called to a life of singleness or should pursue a relationship.
- John recently divorced his wife after 20 years of marriage. He shares custody of his teenage children with his ex-wife. They stay at his home on the weekends and with his ex-wife during the week. John is not currently dating anyone. He struggles to know how to best buffer his children from the conflict that is present between him and his ex-wife.

Introduction

- Sarah's husband recently passed away after a long battle with cancer. Sarah is a retired teacher and spends most of her time volunteering in the community and babysitting for her grandchildren. Finances are tight as Sarah lives on a fixed income. She struggles as she works through the grief of losing the love of her life.
- Chris proposed to his high-school sweetheart after they both graduated from college last spring. They are planning to marry in two months and are looking forward to spending their lives together. Chris struggles to remain sexually pure as he awaits his wedding day.
- Kate is a single mother with a very busy schedule. She works full-time, takes weekend college classes and cares for her three young children. Kate lives with her parents and recently started dating. She struggles to know when to introduce her new boyfriend to her children.
- Leah is a 33-year-old adventure-seeker who enjoys volunteering and checking items off of her bucket list. She is not interested in romantic relationships of any kind and doesn't want to be bogged down with the responsibilities of marriage and parenting. As her friends get married, she struggles to maintain deep relationships and feels isolated.

It is apparent from these vignettes that there is great diversity among singles including age, relational status, caregiving responsibilities and relationship history to date. Since 45% of the US population is single, it is imperative for churches to be intentional about offering emotional support to this group and designing ministries and discipleship opportunities that foster their spiritual growth. Further, it is important for all singles to have a healthy and biblical way of thinking about being single so they can thrive in the life situation to which God has called them.

Single and Complete

All too often, people think of being single as a season of waiting to be married, with a focus on preparing oneself for marriage and dating with the goal of finding a person to marry. Many singles wait to be made complete by a husband or wife. According to Dr. Tony Evans in his book *Kingdom Single*, living in the posture of waiting for something or someone places a person in a perpetual state of conscious want, need and future-orientated thinking. He warns that in thinking this way, a person runs the risk of missing out on the now. Rather, he says, "Single is not a second-class status. It's not a perpetual waiting person. Singleness is a unique platform and position provided to you for great enjoyment, accomplishment, discovery, exploration, freedom and meaning."

Evans goes further and challenges the popular notion that "marriage completes a person." He says, "When one incomplete person marries another incomplete person, you wind up with two incomplete people living together in what most often results in a hot mess." As a believer in Christ, each

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Single and Complete

person is already complete. Before marriage, it is important for each person to understand and live in the reality of that truth. Colossians 2:10 says, "You have been made complete,

and He is the head over all rule and authority." To look to anything or anyone or anyone other than Christ to be made complete, including marriage, is idolatry.

"Living in the posture of waiting for something or someone places a person in a perpetual state of conscious want, need and future-orientated thinking."

Examples of Singles in the Bible

Sometimes God calls people to be single. For some, it is for a season and for others it is a more permanent calling. There are a number of examples of people in the Bible who were single:

Ruth and Naomi. A man from Bethlehem named Elimelek took his wife Naomi and his two sons Mahlon and Kilion, to Moab to find food and ended up staying there to live. Elimelek died and Naomi continued to live with her two sons who married Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth. Both sons also passed away, leaving Naomi with her two foreign daughter-in-laws. Themes in this story related to being single include grief, relationships with extended family and remarriage after a loss of a spouse.

Mary Magdalene. Mary remained faithful in following Jesus after he delivered her from demons that tormented her. She was one of three ladies at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified and was one of the first people Jesus appeared to when he rose from the dead. Being single allowed her to be fully devoted to serving God.

Mary of Bethany. Mary was the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Mary was a follower of Jesus. During a meal at the

home of Simon of Bethany, Mary entered and broke open an expensive jar of perfume with which she anointed Jesus and then wiped his feet with her hair. This was an act of love. Being single allowed her to be fully devoted to serving God.

John the Baptist. John was the voice crying in the wilderness preparing the way for the coming Messiah. He followed Jesus and preached His message regardless of any personal consequences he might endure. Eventually, he was beheaded by King Herod for his persistence in spreading the Word and chastising the king for his marriage to his brother's wife. John's singleness allowed him to be fully devoted to his calling: to prepare the way for Jesus. (Mark 6:14-29)

Jesus. Jesus was never married. This allowed him to be fully devoted to his Father and his mission as Savior of the world. He provides a good example of how to live as a single person fully devoted to the Lord and focused on His calling.

There is much we can learn from these examples about being fully devoted to the Lord, developing close relationships with others and looking to God for strength and comfort as a single.



According to Roberts (2014), there are four truths about being single that are important for each person to remember whether they are single or supporting a loved one who is single.

1. **Singleness is a gift from God.** Much of our culture is structured around couples. When a person is single, they often feel pressured to find a partner. According to Paul, the state of being single is a gift from God, just as marriage is a gift from God. When a person receives the gift of being single, and seeks to understand how God wants to use it for their good, they are better positioned to grow and thrive.
2. **Singleness has its advantages.** Not only is it a gift to be single, but in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 Paul shares some advantages to being single over being married. While marriage is a blessing, it comes with “trouble.” Single people are spared the troubles of marriage. There are challenges in every marriage relationship and when two people are united in marriage life is more complicated. There’s more than one person to

consider in decisions about use of time, holidays and even what to eat at meals. Children bring great pleasure, but plenty of anxiety as well. There’s always more than one person to worry about. “But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.” (1 Corinthians 7:28). In fact, Paul even goes so far as to encourage people who are unmarried to remain unmarried, if they can remain sexually pure, “Now to the unmarried[s] and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” (1 Corinthians 7:8-9).

3. **Another benefit of being single is the ability to remain fully devoted to the Lord.** 1 Corinthians 7:32-35 says, “An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs, how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world such as how he can please his wife, and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord’s affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is

Being Single

concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.” When a person is married, they have the responsibility to care for their spouse and family. Their time is divided. An unmarried person can devote more of their time to serving the Lord.

4. **Singleness is hard.** While it is important to recognize that being single is a gift and has its benefits, it is equally important to acknowledge some of the challenges to being single. Many people are not single by choice. Rather, they are single because they have not met the right person, lost a spouse to death or had a relationship that ended in divorce or separation. For many, there is loss associated with being single. It was not the way they envisioned their life would be. When this is the case, it is important for each person to honestly acknowledge their feelings. We can bring all of our thoughts and feelings to the Lord and look to Him for comfort and strength, and it is also important to have close friends to confide in and lean on.
5. **Although the New Testament is positive about singleness, there’s no doubt marriage is regarded as the norm in our culture.** It is God’s loving gift to humanity and the chief context in which our desire for intimacy is met. Single people may struggle

with loneliness and sexual temptation. While those struggles are not unique to people who are single, there are unique dynamics that makes them more common in that context. In some cases, the struggles are interconnected. The lonelier a person is, the more likely they are to struggle with sexual fantasy and tempted to sin. God designed us with a need for relationship and connection, so it is important for people to be proactive about building and maintaining close relationships. That may mean taking the initiative in keeping in close contact with friends and family. And, believers must be self-disciplined in “fleeing from sexual immorality” (1 Corinthians 6:18). It often helps to have one or two mature friends to be accountable to in this area.

6. **Singleness is not permanent.** Many people who are single will eventually get married, like Ruth. However, others will remain single throughout their life, like Paul, Naomi and John the Baptist. Regardless, the Bible speaks about Jesus as a “bridegroom” who will one day return to take his “bride”. Jesus is an “engaged King” and one day will be a “married King”. His bride will be the people of God, the elect from every race and nation. One day, all of God’s people will experience an intimate marriage relationship with King Jesus.

Challenging Situations

As noted previously, single people come from a variety of situations. The following sections describes some common challenging situations among singles. It is important for church leaders to understand the unique dynamics of each and be prepared to support people who are struggling or need additional support.

God cares very much for people in vulnerable situations. In fact, Deuteronomy 14:28-29 says, “At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year’s produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or

inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” This verse refers to three vulnerable groups of people who are likely to need special care from the church: the fatherless, the widow and the foreigner. How a person treats people in these situations is connected to the way God will treat them. Therefore, it is important for individuals and the Church to prayerfully consider how they will love and care for the fatherless, the widow and the foreigner in our communities.

Separation and Divorce

Nearly half of all marriages end in divorce and the end of a marriage is almost always a very difficult event. For many, it marks the loss of a relationship, dreams and expectations for the future, and a change in family structure for children. Additionally, there are many legal, financial, parenting and practical decisions to be made and changes in responsibilities. It often takes people some time to adjust to all of the changes and find a new normal.

It is particularly important for people to have support through the process of divorce and after as they adjust to all of the resulting changes. Divorce is a difficult topic in many churches and many leaders are not sure how to offer support. Matthew 19:7-9 says, “Why then,’ they asked, ‘did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?’ Jesus replied, ‘Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.” It is clear that God does not desire

divorce and every effort should be made in a relationship for forgiveness and restoration.

Because of this, leaders must use great wisdom and discernment as they offer counsel and support to people in the process of divorce. On the one hand, leaders do not want to communicate explicitly or implicitly that they are in favor of the divorce (especially if the couple has not done all they can to bring healing to their relationship). On the other hand, it is important that families do not feel alienated, abandoned or unloved by their church family because of their decision to divorce. This is especially important for children and teens who are very much impacted by their parents’ choices, but do not have a say in them. Further, there are situations where domestic violence or abuse make a marriage relationship unsafe for one or both spouses or the children. In these cases, it may not be safe for both spouses to live in the same house. It is important for leaders to wrestle with theological as well as practical issues and determine how they will offer ongoing support through the process of divorce.



DivorceCare is a support group for people who have experienced divorce. Sessions consist of video seminars, group discussions on a variety of topics related to divorce, and opportunities to build supportive relationships. Churches can identify a leader to facilitate a group or share website information to help people find a nearby group: www.divorcecare.org

Single Parents

For the last six years, the prevalence of children growing up in the U.S. in single-parent families has held steady at 35% (approximately 24 million children). That means about one out of three kids in America are growing up in single-parent families.

This statistic varies widely by race and ethnicity. Both African-American and American-Indian children are more likely to live at home with one parent versus two, according to the Kids Count Data Center. In 2016, 66% of all African-

American children and 52% of all American-Indian children came from single-parent families. At the other end of the spectrum, Asian and Pacific Islander children are less likely to grow up with one parent. Sixteen percent of children from this demographic group have one parent at home (Kids Count Data Center).

Children are less likely to experience poverty when they have both parents at home. For example, in 2016 one-third of single-parent families with children were living in poverty

versus just 7% of two-parent families. There is a huge body of research documenting the effects of poverty on development. Developmental challenges associated with poverty include academic deficits, reduced access to safe communities and quality enrichment activities, and a heightened risk of physical, behavioral and emotional issues.

Further, raising a child alone is a very difficult job. Parents have the dual role of meeting all of the practical and household needs as well as providing for their emotional and spiritual needs. It is a truly exhausting job. Therefore, it is important for single parents to connect to programs and relationships that offer practical, emotional and spiritual support.

In Psalm 27:10, David says, “My father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up.” David is saying that God will be a parent when one parent is missing. God cares very much for single-parent families. It is important for churches to offer support for single-parent families to help them feel connected and have a positive identity in the body of Christ. Just as the Angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar assuring her that he knew her situation and would not only take care of her and her son, but make a great nation out of him (Genesis 21: 17-18), the Church can assure all single-parent families that God sees them, loves them and has an important place for them in His kingdom.



Single and Parenting is a support group for single parents. Sessions usually consist of video seminars, group discussions on a variety of parenting related topics, and opportunities to build relationships with other single parents. Churches can identify a leader to facilitate a group or share website information so single parents can find a nearby group: www.singleandparenting.org.

The Death of a Spouse

The death of a loved one is overwhelming. When a spouse dies, the living spouse's world is turned upside down and they are thrown into a state of grief. Grief is a normal and natural emotional reaction and can impact a person physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually. When a person grieves, they can feel both physical and emotional pain. People who are grieving often cry easily and can have trouble sleeping, develop little interest in food, have problems with concentration, and have a hard time making decisions.

Many people are able to cope and grieve after a loss with the support of family, friends and clergy. Clergy often play an important role in offering support after a loss has occurred. They may offer spiritual guidance and support, help plan a funeral or service, or help connect a grieving family to needed resources. Friends, family and support groups may

also offer needed support. They may prepare a meal, help with child care, provide prayer or offer a listening ear.

For a person who was married, the death of a spouse requires them to assume a new relational status—single. It takes time to mentally and emotionally adjust to a new way of thinking about themselves as well as practically adjust to new routines as they assume responsibilities their spouse once had. Grief takes time and important days, anniversaries or holidays can stir strong emotions even long after a person's death.

Urban Alliance's booklet, *Supporting People through Grief and Loss*, is a free resource with more detailed information about supporting a person after a loss and can be viewed and downloaded at www.charisnetworkct.org/grief-and-loss.



GriefShare is a model that offers support groups in the community for people who have experienced a loss. It is Biblically based, and through their group meetings, communities of people support one another as they grieve. Churches can identify a leader to facilitate a group or share website information so people can find a nearby group: www.griefshare.org.

How Can Churches Support Singles?



- 1. Treat singleness as a legitimate way of life.** All too often being single is seen as a “pre-married” state. Singles are often asked if they are dating anyone, dating couples are asked when they are getting married and well-intentioned people play “matchmaker.” It is important for singleness to be recognized and honored as a valid way of life. This requires churches to offer their congregations strong Biblical teaching on singleness and marriage as well as a balanced view of the pros and cons to being single and being married. It also requires an acknowledgment at the organizational level that many people in various stages of life are single and need opportunities for spiritual growth and discipleship. Church programming should reflect this reality and offer meaningful opportunities for relationships and spiritual growth to people who are single. Churches may also encourage mature single Christians to assume leadership positions. This allows for the perspective of singles to be voiced in church decision making and for single people to have examples to follow.

How Can Churches Support Singles?

2. **Prepare unmarried couples for marriage.** Another way to support singles who are in serious relationships is to prepare them for marriage. Marriage is often romanticized. Dating couples are usually in the “honeymoon stage” of their relationship and may not understand the challenges that come with marriage. Churches have the opportunity to prepare them through mentoring relationships with more mature couples, premarital counseling, accountability to help them remain sexually pure until they are married, and helpful relationship books and resources such as those found in the free Charis booklet, *Building Healthy Marriages*, which can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.charisnetworkct.org/marriage.html>.
3. **Use terms and sermon illustrations applicable to people in various life situations.** Most pastors are married and it is natural for them to use sermon illustrations related to marriage and family life. While there is nothing wrong with this, it is important to make sure messages and illustrations are applicable to singles as well as married couples. For example, a message on healthy relationships given to a congregation should include points that can be applied to friendships as well as marriage. And examples should include a variety of different types of relationships so that everyone can relate regardless of relational status.
4. **Don't make marriage and childrearing goals to be met or callings to be fulfilled.** It is important to remember that God has a different plan for everyone's life. Marriage and childrearing are not universal callings for everyone. A youth ministry that sees their primary role as preparing females to become good wives and mothers has connected their purpose to a calling that might not be God's will for every youth. Our primary calling as believers is to love God, follow God and share His love. This calling is not linked to a relational status and may be expressed differently in different peoples lives.
5. **Remember the diversity among singles.** As stated earlier, it is important to remember the diversity among singles and the unique types of communities and support needed to help them thrive. This often requires building relationship with the singles at church and understanding their life situations. For example, creating a singles ministry and putting all singles together in one discipleship group may not be the best fit if the singles vary greatly in their life situations, ages, maturity and parenting statuses. By understanding the life situations of singles, leaders can plan programming that fits their needs.

Helpful Christian Resources



Tony Evans
Kingdom Single

If you're single and feeling incomplete or even like a second-class citizen in Christian circles, Dr. Tony Evans wants to encourage you to live fully where you are.

Kingdom Single will encourage you to see yourself as complete in Christ and free to serve Him. It will empower you to live as Kingdom men and women in a corrupt culture.

Tony Evans is a much-loved pastor and known for his sense of knowing when to encourage and when to lovingly admonish, to help people become who God calls them to be. If you are single and reading this book—or if you lead or pastor singles—your identity in Christ will be affirmed. Additionally, you will receive coaching for what to look for in a prospective spouse, and be challenged to live godly lives while pursuing Kingdom causes.



Lina Abujamra

Thrive: The Single Life as God Intended

Tired of feeling sorry for yourself? Sick of answering the same old questions about why you still haven't found your perfect match?

Despite what many people think, singleness is not a disease. It's not the lesser option. Singleness is God's gift to you today.

In *Thrive*, Lina Abujamra, who has been single for over 40 years, will show you how you can make a difference with your life right now instead of sitting around waiting for something to happen to you. If you're ready to figure out what God has to say about singleness instead of relying on your own feelings and conclusions, this book is for you.

Isn't it time you get excited about your life in Christ and quit falling back into the same old pattern of thinking? Freedom. Joy. Abundance. Hope. All these are yours the moment you embrace all that God has for you right here right now.

Go ahead. It's okay to smile. Life as a single Christian is good.



Tony Evans

Living Single

Many singles are often overlooked or marginalized in our Christian culture and churches, but this isn't how God sees them. He places a very high value on His singles, and we should too.

Taking truths from 1 Corinthians 7, Dr. Evans shares three vital principles for singles: How to wait on the Lord and his timing and direction, how to work for God and experience the satisfaction of fulfilling your personal calling in life, and what it means to be wedded in the Lord, whether that is through an eventual marriage or through your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Dr. Evans writes to a variety of types of singles, the: decidedly single, never married, divorced, separated, widowed, single parent.

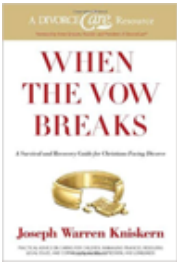
In this hope-filled and popular title, Dr. Tony Evans encourages us to embrace the often unheard Biblically based truth about singlehood: Being single is more desirable for a Christian than being married!



Sue Birdseye

When Happily Ever After Shatters

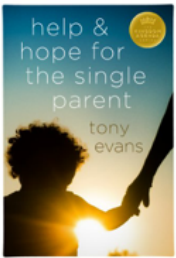
With abandonment and adultery, there is no five-step plan for survival, but there can be hope and healing. *When Happily Ever After Shatters* will be a comfort to those who grieve in solitude, and a hope-filled practical guide for those whose lives have changed irrevocably. Susan Birdseye will help readers learn to honor God when there is no hope of restoration, survive abandonment in and out of marriage, glorify God during a divorce, walk children gracefully through the crisis as a single parent, please God as a single person, again, and truly forgive the one who wronged them.



Joseph Warren Kniskern
When the Vow Breaks

Now an official resource of the nationwide DivorceCare ministry, this new edition of *When the Vow Breaks* offers practical advice to Christians regarding the top five felt needs and issues that result from facing divorce: kids, finances, anger, depression, and loneliness.

In this sensitive and thorough guide, author/attorney Joseph Warren Kniskern recounts the emotions of his own failed marriage and shares a comprehensive study on what the Bible says about marriage and divorce. More important, he shows how God continues to work in people's lives to provide hope and encouragement in the aftermath of divorce. Kniskern also provides important insights about how to seek reconciliation, secure proper marriage counseling, find a good attorney, and negotiate settlements and custody issues.



Tony Evans
Help and Hope for the Single Parent

Single parents have the toughest job in the world. The obstacles can feel overwhelming, and 24 hours in a day never seems to be enough time to take care of children, home, and all the other items on an endless to-do list. It's exhausting!

Add to the exhaustion feelings of vulnerability and loneliness, thoughts of never having a mate, the fear of the future for children left with no father or mother, and the lack of personal time—and it can just seem too much.

No doubt being a single parent is very difficult, but there is also hope and joy that comes in this season. Dr. Evans gives you the encouraging reminder that you are not alone! God can—and will—help you live a satisfying life and succeed in parenting. There is hope and help for the single parent; discover it today.



Dr. Kevin Leman
Single Parenting that Works

Being a parent is challenging enough. Being a single parent can seem downright impossible—until now. Drawing on material from his successful Single Parenting That Works curriculum guide and video series, America's favorite parenting expert, Dr. Kevin Leman, brings help and hope to the legions of single parents struggling to raise happy, healthy, well-adjusted children in a loving, caring and biblically grounded way. Using his trademark quirky, no-nonsense approach, Dr. Leman shows parents how to build healthy, mature relationships with their former spouses, how to develop their children's self-esteem, and how to discipline and relate to their kids in accordance with their unique God-given personalities.

Features:

- Building stability for your children by getting your own life in order.
- How forgiveness opens the door to healthy relationships
- Learning to deal with your "ex" with an olive branch rather than a hammer
- Dating and remarriage
- Helping your child thrive in a single parent home

Other Helpful Resources



Karen Bonnell and Kristin Little
The Co-Parenting Handbook

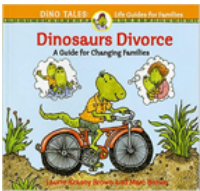
The Co-Parenting Handbook helps parents confidently take on the challenges of guiding children through divorce or separation and raising them skillfully in two homes.

Addressing parents' questions about the emotional impact of separation, conflict, grief, and recovery, the authors provide a road map for all family members to safely navigate through separation/divorce and beyond. Through tested and reassuring guidance, parents will discover how to move from angry, hurt partners to constructive, successful co-parents who are able to put their children's needs first. Chock-full of strategies to help resolve day-to-day issues, create boundaries, and establish guidelines, this handbook will help ensure kids and co-parents thrive.



Claire Masurel
Two Homes (Ages 3-7 years)

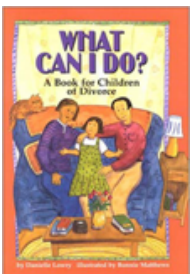
At Mommy's house, Alex has a soft chair. At Daddy's house, Alex has a rocking chair. In each home, Alex also has a special bedroom and lots of friends to play with. But whether Alex is with Mommy or with Daddy, one thing always stays the same — Alex is loved. The gently reassuring text focuses on what is gained rather than what is lost when parents divorce, while the sensitive illustrations, depicting two unique homes in all their small details, firmly establish Alex's place in both of them. *Two Homes* will help children — and parents — embrace even the most difficult of changes with an open and optimistic heart.



Marc Brown
Dinosaurs Divorce (Ages 3-7 years)

Dinosaurs Divorce will help children understand:

- Divorce words and what they mean
- Why parents divorce
- Having two homes
- Celebrating holidays and special occasions
- Meeting parents' new friends
- Living with stepparents
- Having stepsisters and stepbrothers
- And more



Danielle Lowry
What Can I Do?: A Book for Children of Divorce (Ages 8 and up)

When Rosie's parents tell her they are divorcing, she wonders what she can do to keep them together. She tries being her cheeriest self, giving them the money in her piggy bank, keeping the house clean, and getting good grades, but none of her plans work. By the time her parents separate, Rosie is sad, frustrated, angry, disappointed and confused. One day she blows up at her best friend in school. As a result, she visits the school counsellor, and joins a group of children with divorced parents who meet and share their feelings, experiences, and helpful ideas. By the end of the year, Rosie has learned many good answers to the question, *what can I do?*

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