

Review of the Day
Life After Marriage Breakdown: Effects on the Family
June 26th, 2010
(Young Person = YP)

1. What might be helpful for children or young people? (may include “what not to do?”

DO...

- The ecclesial welfare team could include children as well as baptised members.
- Ensure good communication with the young person, maybe an identified adult becomes “big brother/sister” to the young person.
- Remember the special occasions for young people (i.e. birthdays, Christmas, or “just because”) and make them feel special as when a family is breaking down they may feel forgotten.
- Include a contact person through CSN for children/young people to talk to confidentially. Build the relationships before the crisis happens.
- Include single parents and children as they can often feel on the outskirts of “normal” Christadelphian families.
- Encourage awareness of family breakdown through CYC or youth activities so YP can be more aware and ‘alerted’ to include YP who may be hurting.

DON’T...

- ignore them or the problem.
- Ask how they are through the parent, ask young person direct.

2. How might children/young people feel during and after the family breakdown?

- loss, SHAME, guilt, embarrassment, blame, anger at perceived hypocrisy and that they don’t get support. Feel let down, no one talks about it.
- Double standards – state one set of rules and live another.
- May feel anti-religion as result of what they have seen and experienced in the ecclesia. Do we show YP that we care?

3. What might you do individually or as an ecclesia to help a family going through a break up?

- Try to take a “No blame” approach
- All members of the ecclesia to take on a pastoral role with members of the family.
- Training for AB’s to develop their pastoral skills
- Prayer, develop prayer groups where small number of sis/bre can get together to pray for each other, others. Also: have prayer partners where you meet on phone or online to pray together.
- Don’t interfere or assume knowledge. Don’t need to know the details in order to offer a listening ear, moral support or spiritual guidance.
- DON’T force a decision such as disfellowship/withdrawal.
- Have sisters able to meet with a sister experiencing difficulties, avoid brethren meeting alone with single sister.