

BEING A STEPPARENT

Part of the STEPFAMILIES' series

I want us to be a family.

It takes time to build a new family – for new relationships to develop and existing ones to feel secure again. But children often have a greater capacity to adapt to new lifestyles and with time and effort it's possible for the new living arrangements to feel completely natural to them.



Free Parentline
0808 800 2222

Free Textphone
0800 783 6783

Website
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Email
parentsupport@parentlineplus.org.uk

 **Parentlineplus**
because instructions aren't included
0808 800 2222
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

📌 Parentline Plus Tips

WHAT TO DO

- ✓ Remember that if the children aren't welcoming towards you, it might just be because your presence suggests to them that their original family is never going to get back together again.
- ✓ Learn from past mistakes. Remind everyone that relationships need to be worked at and a key ingredient is to value those around you.
- ✓ Teenagers can be difficult, especially when it comes to discipline, so don't always assume that the problems arise from your role as a stepparent.
- ✓ Family obligations like caring for elderly or frail relatives can be particularly complicated for stepfamilies. Make time to plan what you have to do and what you can share out with others.
- ✓ If you're getting married, try to find a role for the children in the wedding arrangements. This will make them feel included in the changes to their family.
- ✓ A death in a stepfamily can act as a reminder of the different relationships in the extended family. Try not to resent it if you're excluded from any events that you can't reasonably be a part of.
- ✓ Remind your stepchildren that they could gain additional friendship and support through your friends and family.
- ✓ Make time for yourself. Time is needed for you both to be alone to strengthen your relationship – the key to the stepfamily's success.

FURTHER HELP

Relate

Counselling for people experiencing relationship difficulties.

→ Tel: **0845 456 1310**

→ Email: enquiries@relate.org.uk

→ Website: www.relate.org.uk

OTHER USEFUL PARENTLINE PLUS PUBLICATIONS

'A new baby in a stepfamily'

'Being a stepfamily'