

CHRISTMAS SURVIVAL TIPS

Christmas can be the loneliest time of the year for divorced or separated parents. It is the time they most want to see their children but it may not be their turn to have them for Christmas Day.

- 1** Remember to put the kids first. Even though you are missing them don't put your distress ahead of their enjoyment. Encourage them to look forward to the next time they're with you.
- 2** Try and negotiate with your former partner at least a phone call with your children on Christmas Day so they know you are thinking about them and sharing their excitement.
- 3** Try and agree with your former partner that it's fair for the children to have Christmas Day with each of you on alternate years.
- 4** If you do have them this year don't go overboard on arrangements. Think ahead about what they'll enjoy rather than what's expensive. It's time together that counts in the long run.
- 5** Don't compete on presents with your former partner. Outspending will create friction especially if money is short for both of you. When you have limited time with your children it's often tempting to try and compensate by extravagant gestures. **Don't.** Good cheer now may pay off in the New Year.
- 6** Keep in mind that your children will remember the time they have with you. Don't worry that they don't give you a second thought when they're not with you. That's what kids are like.
- 7** If you don't have any contact with your kids at all, sit down and write them a letter. Even if you never send it it'll be your time with them this year.
- 8** Don't let yourself get miserable or lonely at home. Make sure you see friends or think about volunteering with some of the organisations that look after others at Christmas.

Families Need Fathers Scotland is a charity that provides information to separated parents facing problems arranging contact with their children

Contact us on 0131 557 2440 or scotland@fnf.org.uk

***10 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh EH12 5AA www.fnfscotland.org.uk
Scottish Charity SC 042817***