

Some of Our Favorite Quotes for Family Cases

Morguson County Judges
Updated September 29, 2022

1. “Without question, the single biggest problem for children of divorce is being exposed to continuing parental conflict.”
—Edward Teyber, *Helping Children Cope with Divorce*, p. 79.
2. “By far the best predictor of how parents will do in divorce is how focused they are on building peace for their children.”
—Senior Judge Michael P. Scopelitis, St. Joseph County, Indiana
3. “Parental conflict not only sends kids messages about love, marriage, and relationships, it speaks volumes to them about who they are. To a child’s ears, any comment about his parent—positive or negative—is a judgment of him. Any critical barb about your ex goes right to your child’s heart.”
—M. Gary Neuman, *Helping Your Kids Cope with Divorce*, p. 202.
4. “Each child is an adventure into a better life—an opportunity to change the old pattern and make it new.”
—Hubert Humphrey
5. “Parents who agree on one thing will agree on everything, if that one thing is, ‘What do we want our children to look like when they’re 25?’”
—Indiana attorney/mediator Patrick Brown
6. “Children also find it difficult to talk about sensitive topics and feelings . . . because they fear they might escalate the fight. . . . Instead, some turn inward, trying to make do with their own meager resources.”
—Janet Johnston, Karen Breunig, Carla Garrity, Mitchell Caris, *Through the Eyes of Children: Healing Stories for Children of Divorce*, pp. xiv-xviii.
7. “Live so that when your children think of fairness and integrity, they think of you.”
—H. Jackson Brown, Jr.
8. “You can get everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want.”
—Zig Ziglar

9. "In the battle between you, they'll learn to be polished diplomats. They'll tell each of you what you want most to hear—not because they're liars but because they want desperately to soothe each of you, to calm you down, to reduce their fears that you'll become enraged. They're afraid of your anger, they pity you, and they want you to feel better."
—Judith Wallerstein and Sandra Blakeslee, *What About the Kids?*, p. 204.
10. "In divorce . . . the choices put before children do not lead to a sense of control. Rather, they often lead to the child being placed in a position of feeling like they are betraying one parent or the other (or both)."
—Jeffrey Zimmerman and Elizabeth S. Thayer, *Adult Children of Divorce*, p 61.
11. "Parents' highest obligation is to enjoy their children."
—Dr. Timothy Onkka
12. "Children believe they are responsible for all of the major occurrences in their lives—including parental fighting."
—Edward Teyber, *Helping Children Cope with Divorce*, p. 82.
13. "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see."
—Neil Postman
14. "Many things can wait; the child cannot. Now is the time his bones are being formed, his mind is being developed. To him, we cannot say tomorrow; his name is today."
—Gabriela Mistral, *His Name Is Today*
15. "Because they are often the centerpiece of their parents' arguments, children feel responsible for causing the disputes, yet must feel helpless to control or stop the conflict."
—Janet Johnston, Karen Breunig, Carla Garrity, Mitchell Caris, *Through the Eyes of Children*.
16. "If we are to reach real peace in this world, we shall have to begin with the children."
—Gandhi
17. "Children in high-conflict homes are more likely to view themselves . . . in overly negative and hostile ways."
—E. Mark Cummings and Patrick Davies, *Children and Marital Conflict*, p.5.
18. "Bitter are the tears of a child: Sweeten them.
Deep are the thoughts of a child: Quiet them.
Sharp is the grief of a child: Take it from him.
Soft is the heart of a child: Do not harden it."
—Pamela Glennconnor

19. “*Peace* will mean different things in different families. In many, it may mean transitioning from the hurt, anger, and fear of a failed marriage into a peaceful, respectful, child-focused co-parenting relationship. But if there has been violence or verbal or other abuse, survivors should reach out as soon as possible for confidential professional help to build the peace necessary for them.”
—Family Judges, Morguson County
20. “Children have no defense against their parents’ anger.”
—Dr. Ross Campbell
21. “Kids are always the only future the human race has.”
—William Saroyan
22. “Conflicts between parents are likely to cause self-destructive behaviors in children.”
—Philip M. Stahl, *Parenting After Divorce*, p. 25.
23. “Peace for children is success for parents. It’s a peace most parents really want to give their children, and can then live in themselves.”
—Dr. Kylea Asher-Smith
24. “[I]t’s clear that children of all ages regard fighting between parents as their number-one divorce-related problem.”
—M. Gary Neuman, *Helping Your Kids Cope with Divorce*, p. 197.
25. “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”
—Fredrick Douglas
26. “The studies are absolutely clear on one point: Conflict between parents is the best predictor of a child’s later maladjustment.”
—Dr. Anthony Berardi
27. “Our task now is not to fix the blame for the past, but to fix the course for the future.”
—John F. Kennedy
28. “Nothing is so strong as gentleness, and nothing is so gentle as real strength.”
—Ralph W. Sockman
29. “The level and intensity of parental conflict is the most potent factor in children’s post-divorce adjustment.”
—Carla B. Garrity and Mitchell A. Baris, *Caught in the Middle*, p. 19.
30. “In divorce matters, all family professionals (whatever their other responsibilities) should realize they share one client in common: the future co-parenting relationship.”
—Dr. Timothy Onkka

31. “Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius—and a lot of courage—to move in the opposite direction.”
—Albert Einstein
32. “Civility costs nothing and buys everything.”
—M. W. Montagu
33. “It is easier to lead men to combat, stirring up their passions, than to restrain them and direct them toward the patient labors of peace.”
—André Gide
34. “Conflict essentially stops kids in their tracks—they are less free to go about the business of being a kid, meeting the developmental tasks that are essential to forming a healthy self.”
—Mary Ellen Hannibal, *Good Parenting Through Your Divorce*, p. 58.
35. “They cry in the dark so you can’t see their tears. They hide in the light so you can’t see their fears. Meanwhile, love and hate become one and the same in the eyes of the wounded child.”
—Pat Benatar, lyric, *Hell Is for Children*
36. “Someday, maybe, there will exist a well informed, well considered, and yet fervent public conviction that the most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child’s spirit.”
—Dr. Erik Erickson
37. “Cherishing children is the mark of a civilized society.”
—Joan Ganz Cooney
38. “Children who are exposed to more intense conflict between parents are more likely to suffer harm resulting from their parents’ divorce.”
—Andrew I. Schepard, *Children, Courts, and Custody*, p. 31.
39. “Never claim as a right what you can ask as a favor.”
—John Churton Collins
40. “The thing that stresses children most, sometimes for many years, is lingering conflict between their parents.”
—Constance Ahrons, *We’re Still Family*, p. 80.
41. “When I approach a child, he inspires me in two sentiments: tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become.”
—Louis Pasteur

42. “I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving. . . . We must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor.”
—Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendall Holmes, Jr.
43. “Morals are three-quarters manners.”
—Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, *The Quotable Lawyer*, p. 223.
44. “Things didn’t really get better until we insisted our families respect our decision to move forward peacefully. Things improved so much then. I think they wanted to do better, but they needed to hear it from us.”
—37-year-old mother of two
45. “A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. But the world may be a different place because I was important in the life of the child.”
—Forest Witcraft
46. “Our data show that the long-term consequences of interparental discord for children are pervasive and consistently detrimental . . . [and] have a broad negative impact on virtually every dimension of child well-being.”
—Paul R. Amato and Alan Booth, *A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval*, p. 219.
47. “Fanaticism consists in redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your aim.”
—George Santayana
48. “Some parents desperately hold onto the belief that children are not affected by the parents’ conflicts. Sadly, this just isn’t true. [E]very divorce will take its toll unless some corrective steps are taken.”
—Archibald D. Hart, *Children and Divorce*, p. 121.
49. “Nothing you do for children is ever wasted. They seem not to notice us, hovering, averting our eyes, and they seldom offer thanks. But what we do for them is never wasted.”
—Garrison Keillor
50. “The overarching policy goal of all family cases with children is the protection of those children’s best interests.”
—Indiana Supreme Court, 2007.
51. “In every community there are heroic co-parents who’ve set aside their hurt, anger, and fear—and decided to save their children. And through that, saved themselves. Perhaps the greatest gift you’ll ever give yourself is finding one or two of these heroic parents and asking how they did this.”
—Charlie Asher, UpToParents.org

52. “Nothing is more confusing than being abused or violated in a family. If you, or a child of yours, is a survivor of violence or abuse, get confidential professional help today. Help is a phone call away. Please call today.”
—Family Judges, Morguson County
53. “All parenting requires a certain degree of heroism. I struggle, and ask you to struggle, to be the superheroes we need to be.”
—Thaddeus Goodavage
54. “For a while when my spouse was pouring conflict into our children’s lives, I used that as an excuse to fight, too. I finally realized that the worse my co-parent was doing, the better I had to do. Not only did my kids love me for being the bigger person, but my spouse started doing better, too.”
—32-year-old father of three
55. “The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.”
—William James
56. “High conflict between parents not only causes children immense suffering, it causes serious problems in their development.”
—Judith S. Wallerstein and Sandra Blakeslee, *What About the Kids?*, p. 204.
57. “Our children are watching us live, and what we *are* shouts louder than anything we *say*.”
—Wilfred A. Peterson