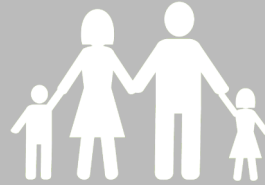


BLENDED FAMILIES



THE PHASE
WHEN



NEW STEPS

AND EVERYONE
IN THE FAMILY



ARE TAKEN

STRUGGLES
DURING THIS

“TIME TO ADJUST.”



6 STEPS TO AN EFFECTIVE STEPFAMILY:

- 1. STEP DOWN** your expectations of how quickly your blended family will bond and find harmony. The average stepfamily needs between five and seven years to form an identity.
- 2. TWO STEP.** The most important relationship is the (step)mom – (step)dad relationship. Focus on it for the sake of the marriage and the kids.
- 3. STEP IN LINE** as a parental team. Communication becomes even more important now that more parents are involved.
- 4. SIDE STEP** common pitfalls.
 - 1. Acknowledge the children's grief.** You're not my mom, I don't have to listen to you, means, I miss my mom, don't try to replace her.
 - 2. Traditions surrounding holidays and special days can cause tension.** Keep old traditions and create new ones as a new
- 5. STEP THROUGH** the wilderness with determination. For stepfamilies, the honeymoon comes at the end of the journey rather than the beginning. Stay committed to forming a new family identity gradually and all will be blessed.
- 6. STEP UP.** your faith. Find support in your church family.

Adapted from Ron L. Deal, *The Smart Step-Family: Seven Steps to a Healthy Family* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002).

DID YOU KNOW?

- One third of all kids will have a stepparent by age 18 (50% will at some point in their lives).
- 100 million Americans have a step-relationship. 40% of families are blended families.
- It takes longer for a child to adjust to remarriage than it does divorce.

Smartstepfamilies.com/view/statistics

MYTHS AND UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Love will happen instantly between all family members

Love, security, and trust are developed slowly over time. Stepfamilies should be cooked slowly in a crockpot, not mixed forcibly in a blender.

Our children will feel as happy about the remarriage as we do

On average, it takes more time for a child to adjust to a remarriage than to the original divorce.

Adapted from Ron L. Deal, *The Smart Step-Family*.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- The Smart Step-Family by Ron Deal (available for check out at the Phases booth)
- smartstepfamilies.com

PHASE

A TIMEFRAME

IN A **KID'S LIFE** WHEN YOU CAN

LEVERAGE

DISTINCTIVE	OPPORTUNITIES	TO	INFLUENCE
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THEIR **FUTURE.**