



A Christmas Message Kids 'n' Dad Shared Support

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Season Greetings

The following are offered as guidelines for newly separating or changed families during this joyous but often difficult season.

- Guard against any erratic behavior by yourself or your former partner. Your children need to be children- not spectators or referees.
- Make sure that a parenting plan for the holidays is understood and followed. Few separated parents can negotiate on the fly. Given the preceding, try still to be flexible at a time when spontaneity and children go together.
- Reach out to friends or relatives and ask for their support. Many of us find that 'reaching out' to be difficult. Be honest with what you need from your family and friends and don't be afraid to ask for their support.
- Focus on making your time with your children the best possible. Depending on the time and place of your family in the separation process, many children of all ages (toddlers to adults) are going to be struggling with two Christmas homes, divided families and loyalty tug-of- wars. It is a time to build a new normalcy and calm for everyone.
- Don't spend more than you can afford. Older children know your reality- younger children enjoy simpler things. Partner up with other family members for larger purchases.
- Children are not the sole possessions of one parent or one side of their extended family. Parents can deliver their children the best Xmas message through their generosity of spirit.
- If you have a new partner and family, enjoy and appreciate their gifts of love, support and family. Blend old and new Christmas traditions.

Send your children to the other parent's Christmas celebration with your love!

A Christmas Get Together

Please join us at Kids 'n' Dad's new location to celebrate the season!

**Location: 900 Guelph St., Unit 308
Kitchener, ON**

Time: 6:00-8:00 PM on Thursday, Dec. 16

Kids 'n' Dad will provide the pizza. You are asked to bring dessert or beverages!

Christmas Donations

As most of you are aware, Kids 'n' Dad does not charge a fee for any of our services. This is a deliberate decision based on our knowledge about those early months or even years of separation where financial survival is uncertain.

Most of our clients, dads or moms or grandparents, share the common experience of their parenting or grandparenting being marginalized. I sometimes describe it as being pushed not just to the end of the bench, but rather right off the bench. Kids 'n' Dad exists to give you the strength, resiliency and parenting tools to remain an involved, supportive and loving parent.

Your support is needed for our current clients and for KND to be here for the next phone call from a distraught separated parent.

Please consider a donation if you are now able to assist that work. You may also know individuals **or** have business contacts **or** other relationships that make charitable donations at Christmas. Please consider making these other sources aware of the work of Kids 'n' Dad Shared Support.

A charitable receipt for 2010 will be completed for all donations.

Mail to:

Kids 'n' Dad Shared Support
900 Guelph St., Unit 308, Kitchener, ON, N2M 5Z6
Registered Charity #: 821669744 RR0001

Other News

I have attached a personal Christmas essay from a past year. Many people found the story hopeful as their family struggles to find their path to recovery.

Also included is a recently written essay titled **This Was Not Inevitable**. It contains my personal reflections on the terrible tragedy in Barrie, ON some 4 years ago. The mother,

Francis Campione, was convicted of the slaying of her two toddler-aged daughters. (guilty verdict Nov. 15, 2010).

I have attached the essay because this family's case included all the usual parties of our legal and social service system. Our mission must be to create the conditions that lead to both parents and families being involved in the daily lives of their children.

My commitment for the New Year is to work for; a) a system that recognizes the value of all parents and families; b) a process that is about adding love and not subtracting love from children's lives.

If you need to speak to Kids 'n' Dad, we will be available until Dec. 24. I will also be checking email and telephone calls during Christmas week.

I look forward to seeing many of you on Thursday, Dec. 16.

Please have a joyful season.

Barry