

SOME COMMENTS FROM PROFESSIONALS

Received the ABA Dispute Resolution Section's "Lawyer as Problem Solver Award," on August 8, 2003.

"I fully endorse these Commitments for use with all divorcing parents. Too often, the message to divorcing parents is that they should simply refrain from badmouthing the other parent. These Commitments communicate that parents have a responsibility to actively support and nurture the child's relationship with the other parent—and they stimulate parents to consider numerous ways to do so for their children. Bravo." --Janet R. Johnston, Ph.D., *In the Name of the Child; Impasses of Divorce; Through the Eyes of Children*

"A free public tool with enormous promise for minimizing harm to children. . . . I could easily see lawyers encouraging their clients to use UpToParents.org in every dissolution case involving children." --Justice Brent Dickson, Indiana Supreme Court

"I have seen UpToParents.org effect a sea change in the perspectives of divorcing parents. So many voices encourage conflict in divorce: here's one showing parents how to build cooperation for the sake of their children. My advice to family law attorneys and mediators is simple: send parents to this unique resource." --Deborah Berecz, attorney/mediator, past chair of ADR Section of the State Bar of Michigan

"Without question, the single most important thing parents can do to prepare for our divorce adjustment classes is to complete *UpToParents.org*. We'd never again write or teach a co-parenting class without this parent preparation as a component." --Dr. Michael Sheehan, *Child Advocates In Divorce (CAID)*

"Judges, attorneys, mediators, and the other professionals working with parents in divorce cannot afford to ignore this phenomenal tool. In fact, I envision a day in the near future when it will be outside the standard of care for professionals not to refer parents to UpToParents.org. It helps parents and professionals that much." --Deborah Tuttle, attorney/mediator

"*UpToParents* sets the focus squarely on children and their needs. Most parents who do this work actually arrive [to our co-parenting classes] eager to learn more about helping their children. It's truly ingenious and transforming." --Ann M. Thomas, MS, LPC, *National Coordinator and Trainer, TransParenting Program*

Some Recent Parent Feedback about *UpToParents.org*

1. I thought it was awesome. I really wish I had known about this site at the time of my divorce filing. To be honest, there were times that I cried when I was looking through my son's eyes and seeing things as he does. I really think you should get this out there to more people because I believe it can make a difference.
2. I was very impressed with the information this website provided. It made me think in a completely different direction. Seeing thru my boys' eyes and truly feeling what their hearts must be feeling put me in a whole new way of thinking. They were always in my decisions, but maybe now I'll put more effort and thought into how my decisions affect them.
3. This website is a great tool and drives home the importance of thinking about the children's well being. It is so easy sometimes to lose that focus. The audio of the three young ladies was very touching and helpful. It made me think of my own children and how I do not want them to be in the position the girls were describing and having to hurt more than was necessary.
4. I did the work on this website three months go. I feel this experience has made a big difference in my and my children's life. They are my complete focus in everything I do and every decision I make. I thank God for them every day and am constantly reminded of my commitments to them. I would definitely recommend this website to other parents. I see and hear a lot of comments from parents who do things just to irritate their ex-spouse without thinking of the consequences to their children, and it is very sad to see.
5. It made me think about some of my actions. I had always thought that it was their dad with the problem. Now I see that it was both of us. I really feel like I understand how to deal with stressful situations better.
6. I think it's wonderful. I cannot believe how much danger I had put my child in. By fighting with her father all the time I was hurting her and wearing her down to thinking she had to choose. I for one want her to have a meaningful and loving relationship with both of us. That is what loving a child is all about.
7. Fantastic. By the end, I felt I had really reprogrammed my thinking about divorce. This site has helped me think through the repercussions of our actions from the viewpoint of Isabella and Hawthorne. I tend to think that I know what's best for them, but this helped me to put myself in their small vulnerable shoes!
8. I was very moved by the ability of the website to see life through the eyes of a child. It made me reconsider the rationale I was using to justify my actions and words. Often we, as parents, do not realize the impact our words and body language have on our children. They are always watching and listening.
9. Bless you both! Just when I felt like I was running out of hope I discovered your site through a mediator, Brian Florence. Thank you, thank you! I feel so much more at peace with my decision to focus only on the children. I am very hopeful that my co-parent will work with me.
10. It's attractive, easy to navigate, and above all balm to the soul at this very difficult time. The message about focusing on the children is so crucial, and actually helped me—as well as the children—because it takes the focus off of my hurt and anger.
11. I thought it was very well put together. The part about calling the other parent "Mom" or "Dad," not "your mom" or "your dad" really struck me. My mom did that when my parents divorced, and even though I was 20, it really bothered me. But here I was doing the same thing without thinking about it. Thank you.
12. I'm sure you get responses like this all the time, but let me thank you for a wonderful resource. My children's mom and I (note my new vocabulary!) are getting divorced and your website has really helped me solidify what I knew instinctively—that the process is going to be difficult for my two children but that I can make a huge difference in how difficult it is. You have helped me in defining what I want for my kids and gaining the courage to do so.

13. Working on the website made me see things in a different way. I thought I was doing everything correctly. I was doing a lot of things suggested, but I was also doing things I probably shouldn't have been doing. I especially love the suggestion of sharing compliments and good memories about their dad. Thank you for caring enough to create such a helpful website.

14. I think gave me the courage to work for my children's benefit and not my own. It makes you open your eyes to what the children are going through and helps to make you understand that its not just about you.

15. I though it was wonderful! Some of the questions were a bit hard to answer emotionally, but it forced me to see the harsh reality of divorce and its effects on my children. I especially appreciated the quotes used as I felt they were very appropriate to my situation.

16. The website is an excellent reminder of what is important in such difficult times as divorce. It's very easy to follow. The exercises were clearly defined and thought provoking. The work on the website helped to clarify my position in this transition. I want to do what is best for our children and want nothing more than to be able to find a way to do it together.

17. I liked it and wished that it was given to us in the beginning of this mess. It would help the children so much more. I feel that it should be required when parents think about divorcing. It is a sad state to be so far behind on the welfare of the children. They end up paying for parents' mistakes.

18. I really did a lot of reflecting as I filled out the information. I especially like the different quotes included with the commitments. I cried a lot and want to thank you for making this available to families going through divorce.

19. What a wonderful site. I'm a police officer and recently lost two very close friends and brothers in a line-of-duty shooting. During my sorrow over their loss, my wife and I separated. I found your site and the comments and quotes to be of great help to me while I am dealing with all of this and trying to raise two young boys on my own. Thank you for your help.

20. This website was a miracle that helped me to keep my sanity at an insane time. I needed to be reminded that my kids are still kids and that it is my job to take care of them. And make sure that they do not start trying to take care of me. I must be the strong one—I must be the grownup. I think every counselor and divorce lawyer should read this entire site.

21. Very helpful, and a big eye opener for the both of us. We have been going back and forth with the court system now for 9 years, and it took both of us reading through these commitments to realize what we were doing to our child. If only we were introduced to you 9 years ago.

22. I'd recommend this site to all parents and all attorneys, judges, counselors, and mediators. This website is not only for parents but everyone that comes in contact with children.

23. This is excellent. I have never thought that I could or should change the way I'm feeling and acting about all of this. I just never thought of that being possible. I do think it will help me and my co-parent relate. Even if I am the only one to complete the exercises, it will help us.

24. Words cannot adequately describe the impact of this information. It affirmed the things I have been doing well and pointed out opportunity on things that could be handled better. Simply outstanding.

25. There were many times while completing the tasks on the website that I started to cry. The divorce has been really hard and it is something I never wanted to go through, let alone put the kids through. Your suggestions, quotes and activities really make you think and put things into perspective. I have already noticed a difference in the way Brandon and I interact with each other and handle things. The kids seem to notice a difference too.

26. I cannot thank you enough for your website. I have always loved my children but never realized how some very little words can send a message. My husband and I are divorcing currently. I hope he can also benefit from your awesome website.

27. It reminded me what was important, and to put my son's needs ahead of my feelings. I have plenty of time to fumble with those while he isn't around. It reminded me that my son's job is to be a child. At the times when I was feeling most selfish with my pain, it was very helpful to remember what was important from my son's point of view.

28. I really didn't expect this to be as life-changing and thorough as it was. I am extremely grateful and impressed! I am absolutely certain it will help me to focus on the kids.
29. This is a wonderful tool for anyone who is divorcing on who and what comes first in life: our children.
30. I thought it was very informative, easy to use and eye-opening. Subjects were right on the money and hit home. I found it very helpful. I think this is an incredible tool for couples that are angry with each other about the divorce. This has helped me to remember when I get upset with him that we share two beautiful children and their feelings are the most important thing to me.
31. I thank you for this website. It really made me step outside of myself and focus on Starr in a different way.
32. I loved this! Thank you so much for this incredible site. It is so traumatic to go through a divorce. The hurt and scariness alone can push you off track. You brought me back into focus and reminded me of how important it is to work things out and focus on our precious daughters.
33. What a great idea to personalize this site by putting in the names of my children. I learned so much within the first few moments of logging on. I intend to view this web site often in the future.
34. It was a godsend at the worst time in our lives.
35. It gave me a hopeful view for the future. It gives great information on how parents' behavior affects the child. I know that coming from a broken home affected me a lot. It changes who you are.
36. I will tell anybody that can possibly use this website about it. I plan to keep visiting it so that I don't lose focus on what my goal is, which is to be my son's hero and do what I can to show him the love he deserves.
37. It showed me a complete other way to get through this. It really helped me realize that I still have deep feelings of respect for my children's daddy and what a wonderful dad he is.
38. I loved doing these exercises. They made me look at things from more of our children's point of view. The strongest words I read today were, "We remember that this is Mackenzie and Tyler's one and only childhood."
39. Oh my gosh, my actions will be so different now. It will not be about how much I am going through anymore, because I recognize exactly what it is doing to them.
40. It really helped me realize and remember some things that are vitally important in the days ahead. Thanks for causing me to take time to think of someone's hurt and fears besides my own.
41. Prior to the website, I tried very hard to apply these same basic principles to my divorce. At times, however, it is easy to lose focus and fall into the trap of vindication at the expense of the children. This website helped me solidify my attitudes towards the divorce. I will value the commitments; I will read them and live by them.
42. I would like to give my sincere thanks to the people who created this site. It has been (and will be) a tremendous tool in helping my kids, myself, and hopefully my wife to heal and make the best of a bad situation. Thank you so much.
43. Completing the commitments was a very helpful experience. I completed it in one long sitting and was sobbing at the end—with relief. I was moved, touched and inspired by so many of the topics, questions and quotes.
44. I just wanted to tell you that I am extremely impressed. This information has proven to be invaluable during a most difficult time in my life. Please tell everyone involved in keeping this site working that they are providing a tremendous service.
45. It was a great experience for me. I really like the opportunity to express myself in my own words. I feel a sense of completion after going through all of the exercises and the commitments. I have already given my mom and dad a copy of my responses and commitments.

46. It will definitely help me be more positive, especially HAVING to find good memories and nice things to say about the co-parent. I must remember not to be negative toward him around my children, and instead to always have something nice ready to say.
47. Absolutely awesome. This website was absolutely necessary for me to clarify my priorities—my children.
48. I was very happy to find such an encouraging website that challenged some of my beliefs that needed challenging. I was really stuck in being hurt and angry and now I'm committed to making sure my child's needs are met first. This was a great experience.
49. This is the best thing that I have encountered since the divorce 4 years ago. I wish I had known about it sooner. It touches so many issues that we are dealing with at this very time. I can only imagine what our children must be going through.
50. I feel this is a great way of reinforcing that there is a positive way to go about a negative thing that happens in our live. I loved taking this and would let others know about my experience.
51. I thought the website was great. It touched me in many ways. It is extremely easy to use and very well put together.
52. Thought provoking and inspiring. This website should be mandatory for every divorcing parent.
53. The website identified for me many areas in my life that need work and revision. There is no doubt in my mind that the website has caused us to seriously reflect on the patterns and behaviors we have practiced over the years, much to the detriment of our son.