Welcome to CCEI950

Divorce is a fact of life in the United States and it can have dramatic, long-term effects on child development. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and older children all have emotional, physical, and other responses to divorce. Teachers are in a unique position to help children cope and to provide essential moral and educational support. This course offers strategies teachers can use to help children through these difficult times. Also, this course provides advice that teachers and center administrators should consider in order to avoid potential legal or ethical entanglements.

Course Objectives:

By taking notes on the handout and successfully answering assessment questions, participants will meet the following objectives as a result of taking this course:

- Identify common impacts that divorce can have on young children
- Identify common symptoms of stress that a child may exhibit at varying developmental stages
- Identify strategies teachers can use to help young children cope with divorce in the areas of physical, emotional, and social development
- Identify appropriate policies centers should put in place in order to avoid legal entanglements or undue stress on children

References:


Divorce in the United States

Research shows that ____________ ______________ between teachers and families improves the quality of care and educational outcomes for children.

What is the main purpose of this course?

Effects of Divorce on Young Children
**Infants and Divorce**
Infants do not understand ______________ but they do respond to ________________.

What effect might a breakdown in *routines* have on an infant?

Define *attachment*:

Why are attachments important in early childhood? What impact might divorce have on those attachments?

**Toddlers and Divorce**
List possible effects of divorce on toddlers:

**Preschoolers and Divorce**
What differences are there between a preschooler and an infant/toddler as a result of divorce?

**School-Age Children and Divorce**
The older children get, the more likely they are to feel:

**How Teachers Can Help**
Above all, be ______________ and ______________!

**Routines, Nutrition, Rest**

Why are each of the following factors important in helping children cope with divorce?

**Routines**

**Nutrition**

**Rest**

**Additional Strategies for Helping Children**

Write notes about how each of the following can be helpful in the classroom:

**Emotional Expression**

**Interests and Hobbies**
Physical Activity

Books

Promote Self-Esteem

Smiles, Laughter, and Brighter Days

Parental Involvement

Effects of Divorce on Child Care Professionals and Centers
It is essential all center staff have a crystal clear understanding of their role. In particular, two points need to be emphasized:

1.

2.

Parent Communication and Custody Disputes

Write a brief summary describing what role (if any) a teacher/caregiver should take if two parents are
openly hostile toward one another:

**Center Policies**

**Legal Documentation**
What types of legal documents should parents provide to the center?

**Kidnapping**
Why is kidnapping a threat? What can the child care center do to help prevent it?

**Scheduling**
Why are parents’ schedules so important?

What can a center do to help ensure that both parents stay informed and involved?
**Try This!**

**Make Food Fun**

Cooking can be good therapy for many people. Plus, children are usually more likely to eat if they are involved in making the food. This is also a good chance to get them to try something new and nutritious!

Young children should not be involved in any cooking activities involving heat, so keep them away from ovens and stoves within the center. But there are plenty of ways they can “cook” without heat, and if heat is needed, then the teacher or kitchen staff can take care of it for the child. Some ideas:

Pizza is an obvious favorite. Use readymade pizza crusts, or you can use a bagel, pita, or English muffin. Sandwiches are easy to make, whether they involves cheese, jelly, or meat. (Peanut butter is not recommended in the child care setting due to potential allergies.) Invite the child to use cookie cutters to create fun shapes after the sandwich is pieced together.

Yogurt parfait is easy to make and it’s healthier than ice cream. Add ingredients like berries and granola.

Create a Veggie City or a Veggie Forest using carrot sticks, broccoli florets, celery, sliced bell peppers, etc. You can mix cream cheese and ranch to make a thick dressing that the child can use to “glue” the veggies together for a sturdier, edible model.