STEP 2

ACTIVITY — *OPTIONAL Activity: Respecting the Parent-in-Charge*

No matter how effective or ineffective you believe your coparent to be, they need you to respect their decisions when the children are with them. Remember that each parent is the parent-in-charge during their custodial days, meaning they are the one who makes most of the daily parenting decisions.

Please turn to page 24 of your Parent's Guide and find the box labeled "Parent-in-Charge vs. Joint Decision." Consider each of the parenting decisions listed there and circle "PiC" if it should be the parent-in-charge's call or "JD" if it should be a joint decision involving both parents.

Note: The correct answers have been circled below.

PARENTING DECISION	Parent-in-Charge	Joint Decision
1. Deciding what your child will have for dinner tonight	(PiC)	JD
2. Setting a time for your child to do homework	(PiC)	JD
3. Finding a new dentist for your child	PiC	(JD)
4. Setting your child's bedtime	(PiC)	JD
5. Deciding if your child should get allergy shots	PiC	(JD)
6. Deciding whether your child should miss school for an illness	(PiC)	JD
7. Deciding if your child will attend a birthday party on your weekend	(PiC)	JD
8. Choosing where you will take your child on vacation	(PiC)	JD

F.   Step 2 Summary

To protect your child from the fallout of your separation or divorce, you must put your own feelings about the other parent aside and allow your child to love both parents. You can best achieve this goal if you:
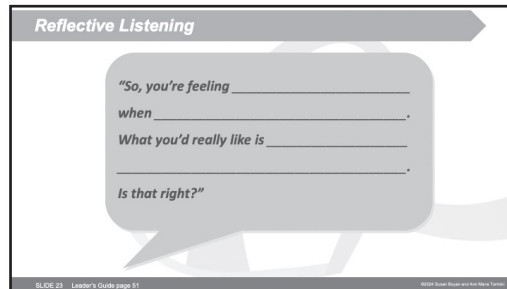
- **Value how having two parents benefits your child.**
- **Avoid making negative assumptions about the other parent.**
- **Respect your child's need for the other parent.**
- **Show that you accept the other parent.**
- **Show acceptance for your child having two homes.**
- **Show respect for the other parent's decisions during their parenting time.**

Before we move on to Step 3, does anyone have any questions about Step 2?

Take questions as time allows.

SLIDE #23

> **Reflective Listening**
>
> *"So, you're feeling _____*
>
> *when _____.*
>
> *What you'd really like is _____*
>
> *_____.*
>
> *Is that right?"*
>
> SLIDE 23   Leader's Guide page 51

Activity: Reflective Listening Practice

Write the reflective listening response format from Slide #24 on the board with the blanks empty.

"So, you're feeling _____when _____ .
What you'd really like is _____.
Is that right?"

PAGE 46

Your Parent's Guide contains some example scenarios for practice with reflective listening. Turn to page 46 and follow along while I read the first example.

Read the following aloud:

Example #1:

Your child says, "I hate it when Daddy asks me questions about you and your boyfriend. Daddy wants to know every time you two are together. And he bugs me about how much money you're spending on me. I don't know what to say. If I tell him anything, I feel like I'm a spy or something. If I don't answer him, he gets mad at me and I feel bad. He said I act like I love you more than him! I hate being divorced!"

Now let's come up with a reflective statement. First, we need to answer some questions.

What is your child feeling?
- Uncomfortable
- Hurt
- Sad
- Torn

Fill in the first blank on the board, using the word the group selects. For example:

"So, you're feeling___***uncomfortable***___"

Fill in the blanks in your Parent's Guide as I fill them in here.

How might Marcus be feeling?
- Confused
- Frustrated
- Anxious
- Afraid
- Angry
- Disappointed

What is he likely to do in the future?
- Avoid asking for what he wants.
- Avoid counting on either parent.
- Lose respect for both parents.
- Become passive-aggressive.
- Act out to force his parents to deal with one another.

Coparents need to work together to manage their financial issues, not put their kids in the middle of them. Let's see how it would look for Marcus' parents to take a more cooperative approach to the sneaker issue.

VIDEO #12B ▶

Working as a Team (0:46)

The Nelms Family: Mother (Denise), Father (Charles), Son (Marcus)

Well, you might not believe you and your coparent could ever work together this way, but if you don't ask them, you will never know.

PAGE 56
PARENTS GUIDE

Be sure to read the list of DOs and DON'Ts for handling finances on pages 56-57 of your Parent's Guide.

SLIDE #30

How to Be Dedicated to the Future
1. Encourage shared activities.
2. Embrace extended family.
3. Maintain joint financial responsibilities.
4. **Prepare for future change.**

SLIDE 30   Leader's Guide page 70

Another way you can be dedicated to the future is to prepare for future change. There is a saying: "The only thing that doesn't change is change itself."

But change still manages to take us by surprise sometimes. Imagine, for example, that