

How Schools can support Single and Stepfamilies

TALK

Ask questions about what happens at Mum's house, Dad's house after school and on the weekends. Get to know their situation and BOTH parents- their strengths and challenges and how this helps AND hinders the student.

GATHER INFORMATION

Have each student's individual contact arrangement readily available to refer to at any time. (Copies of these should already be in the student's file. Classroom teachers SHOULD also have their own copy if there are family court orders in place).

** Show vigilance with this ** Student services (sign in/out) office staff should also be aware of each case.

LIASE WITH OTHERS

Student Mentors/Counsellors are a great independent party for the students and a safe place to vent their feelings and off load issues with. (Notes taken by such staff at these times can prove to be vital information for later use).

- Other staff including year level coordinators, specialist teachers
- Uniform/Stationery shop. Generic items such as hats, diaries, exercise books, pens, rulers, etc. reserved for students in "a week about" 50/50 contact arrangement (particularly junior school students).

GIVE GRACE

For students-This extends to due dates for assignments, the homework schedule, and uniform items. (This doesn't need to be 'public' class knowledge as students generally wish to be treated the same as everyone else.

Read cues from the student regarding their emotional wellbeing. For parents- Allow a 'double' slot at interview times or schedule extra times to catch up about the student's progress or any concerns. Organize duplicate copies of all information including notes and reports.