The Impact on Children of Divorced Parents

By

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Abstract

Below is a thorough research project on the impact on children of divorced parents. It discusses the different affects divorce has on children from a young age into their adulthood. As well as adults’ personal perspectives from their experiences that came from their parent’s divorce. The main argument of this paper is that divorce negatively impacts children throughout their earlier life stages rather than during their adolescent stages. My research questions include “How does divorce affect a child’s well-being?” and “How do adults make sense of their parents’ divorce? Does this differ from when they were children and if so how?”. I research to find literature on the different affects divorce has on children and how adults view and act towards divorce. The method that will help me advance in research about this topic is by undertaking media content analysis.
Introduction

Divorce takes place throughout the United States more often than not. “Approximately 50% American children will witness the breakup of a parent’s marriage. Of these, close to half also see the breakup of a parent’s second marriage.” ([www.verywellfamily.com](http://www.verywellfamily.com)). Couples are getting divorced without necessarily being aware of the consequences that occur after the situation takes place. For example, a major consequence that occurs during the time of divorce is unfortunately for the children involved. Being a child that is suffering through their parent’s divorce is an extremely difficult time for them. It mentally damages a child to witness their parents lose their love for one another. As stated within the article, “The Impact of Divorce on Young Children and Adolescents”, “Divorce introduces a massive change into the life of a boy or girl no matter what the age. Witnessing loss of love between parents, having parents break their marriage commitment, adjusting to going back and forth between two different households, and the daily absence of one parent while living with the other, all create a challenging new family circumstance in which to live. In the personal history of the boy or girl, parental divorce is a watershed event. Life that follows is significantly changed from how life was before” (Carl E Pickhardt Ph.D, 2011). Pickhardt statement reflects on the emotional understanding and difficulty of acceptance for any child to go through. No matter the age or gender, divorce is an extremely hard situation to cope with.

The term “divorce” is defined as “a judicial declaration dissolving a marriage in whole or in part, especially one that releases the marriage partners from all matrimonial obligations”. ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)). Unfortunately, going through a divorce with your significant other contains
the capability of affecting family members that are involved, especially the children, as well as financially. A variety of different things frequently will go through a child’s mind. They may believe that they were the main cause of their parent’s divorce. They may even begin to contain behavioral distress. Parental divorce contains the capability of affecting the child’s academic performance in school. It may cause them to contain different emotions, such as: anger and loneliness. It can even cause problems within their social life with other individuals. Divorce can be very difficult for a child to cope with because their parents aren’t in the same household anymore. This leaving the child to have to go back and forth in order to see both parents. Another reason that this is a problem for children is because they have to wait and remain patient in order to see the other parent. This situation contains the capability of causing them to get frustrated and constantly complain.

Children of divorce will use their experiences they went through with their parents with their future relationships. It will affect a child’s relationship because they only observed the negative impacts that their parent’s marriage left on them. They may seem to question, “Are all marriages meant to last?” “Are all divorces negative?” However, things like this are different depending on the specific situation that the child is going through. Gender typically takes place throughout these types of specific situations. A divorce can disrupt any consistency a parent has with their children. The change that takes place within the relationship of a father, for example, and his child can affect both genders. A father’s relationship with their child, regardless of the child’s gender, can be detrimental. The separation can cause a child to feel negative feelings towards their father at that time and can last for years to come. Trust can be an issue this child may have with any other male figures. In another scenario, a child may grow to feel as if they
must defend and even over state their masculinity as a result of being angry for the disruption or lack of a male guide and support from their father. Aside from divorce affecting the children involved in that sense, it can also affect them because of the other things that have to take place during a divorce. Going through with a divorce unfortunately comes with a lot of negative baggage. Those problems including: custody battles, child support, equal visitation arrangements, and even holiday arrangements for the children.

Majority of the time, the mother contains the custody of the child or children that are involved. As stated within the article, “Why do mother’s generally get custody of the kids during a divorce?” Author, Eric Johnson states a few reasons as to why the mother’s generally get custody over the fathers. One main reason that Johnson stated is, “The belief that women are better parents than are men. Not true. While it is true (even if politically incorrect) to that women are (and the science is confirming this again and again) generally the member of the couple more likely to want to give and to give personal care and attention to babies and young children, that does not make them better parents than men, it makes them different parents than men. Children need and want the influence and interaction of both parents throughout their childhood. The “best parent” is both parents” (Johnson, 2018). This statement infers that women are scientifically proven to contribute more personal care to their children and award them with the attention that they generally need. Although, it may not be one hundred percent true in some cases, that is something that typically takes over the mind of a judge through family custody battles. The parent who contains the custody of the child will often begin to struggle raising the child or children because of financial situations. However, the opposite
parent contains the right to spend some time with the child and give child support. Personally, I generally believe that holidays are the time of the year that children often struggle the most because they have to either split the days or spend it with one family member rather than both. I believe it is a struggle because they are already used to spending it with both parents together and changing that tradition is extremely difficult to handle.

Another thing that causes a child to remain confused about their parent’s separation is the reason as to why the divorce is taking place. Parents need to learn and comprehend a proper knowledge on how to explain to their child what is going on throughout the situation, while soothing them to the best of their ability. This way, the child gets a better understanding from their parents and it eases this difficult challenge for them. Even if it is just a little bit. Personally, I have experienced all these situations as a child growing up. It was difficult at the times when it all began. Observing my parents argue and not get along with each other. Then, my father was starting to not show up at home. I was wondering why this was happening, I could not understand. My mother spoke to me about the situation between them. She told me that they have been arguing constantly. I thought to myself, that is the reason why my father has not been home as often as he used to be. As I began to get older, I began to comprehend the real reason why my parents were being separated.

My emotions were generally all over the place because I was not used to this. I began to become anti-social in a sense that I did not associate with my peers. I contained the tendency of keeping to myself. All because my feelings were extremely hurt, and I overall felt damaged.
My parents went to court to arrange the visiting times and holidays between my mother and father. I had talk to a professional about what I wanted to do. Therefore, I decided to split the weeks in half and go to one family’s side every other year. It was difficult making this choice because I wanted to spend as much time with the both of my parents. However, I knew it was the right decision to make. My mother received custody of me. She struggled her whole life as a single mother trying to give me the best education I can receive and remain happy.

I eventually learned how to cope with these difficult feelings that caused unimaginable pain for a young child to go through. One main thing that somehow always managed to make me forget the agony, even if it was just for a little while was playing baseball. Whenever I step onto the field, all my emotions suddenly fade away. I’ve been playing the game of baseball since the age of three. Baseball is my passion and taught me several things that relate to the real life. It has taught me how to work as a team, work ethic, working under pressure, how to overcome failure, and be discipline. Baseball has shaped me into the person that I am today. This is why I am so grateful to have the opportunity to play this sport to help me get through the tough times when I needed it. I began to make new friends at my school who also had divorce parents and went through the same situations that I have. This was comforting for me because they understood the feelings that I was continuously feeling. Sometimes we used to comfort each other during times of need.

This a huge problem because it means that people cannot fix their problems and work things out. It also contains the capability of affecting married couples who have children. Children who live with both their real parents are twenty to thirty-five percent more physically healthy than the children who live without their biological parents. (www.verywellfamily.com
This means that it is possible for children who have suffered through their parent’s divorce to receive positive outcomes in life and not only receive negative behaviors.

The question that I decided to conduct for my research is “How does divorce affect a child’s well-being?” and “How do adults make sense of their parents’ divorce? Does this differ from when they were children and if so how?”. The reason that I decided to use this question is because they are the main situations and experiences that children generally go through following a divorce between their parents. More often than not, children contain the tendency of being affected negatively during this unfortunate time. Through a child’s perspective, witnessing their parents separate and lose their love for each other, is an extremely difficult experience for them. Unfortunately, these situations contain the tendency of negatively affecting the child’s life throughout a series of different things. Specifically, their behavior, academics, and social life. There is research that prevails that children of divorce significantly increase within behavioral, social, and academic problems. Overall, my perspective on this senior project is that children who are affected by divorce from an early age contain the capability of eventually receiving long term problems throughout their everyday lives. Specifically, these ways can be through behavioral skills, social skills, and their academic skills. A method that will strongly become beneficial for answering my question and offer me background information and knowledge on this topic is media contact analysis. Containing websites and blogs with comments and stories on the a person’s own experience with their parents divorce.
Literature

Causes and Consequences

For multiple researchers, studies on children of divorce has continuously been a main objective. There are many aspects and explanations that come together causing problems for children who have suffered through a divorce. Approximately half of the children born from married couples go through a divorce occurrence before the age of eighteen (Clarke-Stewart & Brentano, 2006). Experiencing this traumatic situation at a young age can be challenging due to the children feeling misperception and disloyalty as they observe their family collapse and feel unloved while their parents battle with their own difficulties. What are some of the causes and consequences shown by children that have been inside of a family where their parents are divorced? The evidence that was received about children of divorce was that they have farther social, emotional, well-being, and educational problems. Children often contain the tendency of being in a greater risk of developing violent and antisocial behavior.

Children often get spoken to about a divorce while the parents are unprepared. This leads them to become concerned, afraid, and confused because parents don't typically explain the whole situation. In Wallerstein’s study, he found out that all parents had difficulty telling their children and many as one-third did not know about the divorce earlier (Clarke-Stewart & Brentano, 2006). This is an extreme problem for children because leaving them out of the picture during the process of divorce will cause them to think the absolute worst. Discussing the situation with your child as soon as possible has to be done in the right way. That way, they are not forced to think the wrong way. The main priority throughout a divorce should be primarily
focused on the child and/or children. Reassuring that they contain the full comprehension of the entire issue will help them calm down, even though they will still have to deal with their parent’s separation.

The consequences of each situation contain significant importance because it has the capability of impacting their life in a negative way during early adulthood and further years. Twenty-seven percent of children living with their mothers and twelve percent of children living with their fathers are in poverty (Clarke-Stewart & Brentano, 2006). This means children often experience low quality of schools. Which leads to behavior problems. Behavior problems are an issue with many children following a divorce. This is not uncommon for children because it is a challenging difficulty for them to cope with and grow out of, occasionally. When I say occasionally, I mean that there are some ways that children’s adjustment problems after divorce can become a positive outcome as time goes on. Establishing low quality schools with behavior problems causes poor academic results and aggression. Violence contains the capability of starting when they become aggressive and begin to fail in school. This is sociologically important because as a child, school develops the emotional, social, and physical perspectives and contains an effect on how they will become in the future. However, if children are misbehaving in school, they will not have a chance to develop those perspectives.

A variety of different studies have contained the research involving the overall attitudes following a parental divorce. The researchers concluded with the adolescents pertaining a sense of fear that they will lack love, trust, and communication, and that it might unfortunately
end in infidelity, conflict, or even abuse (Al Gharaibeh, 2015). Divorces can often leave the children with a negative attitude towards marriage, decreasing their commitment to relationships. Children who had experienced with divorce occasionally consider that all relationships that they encounter are going to conclude the way that their parents once did. This causes them to think twice about their spouse's trust and faithfulness. However, it is possible for a child to be fully committed to their spouse even though their parents were not.

Children develop stressful interactions between the environment and their parent’s separation. These interactions include interparental arguments, bad-mouthing, and missed visits by the noncustodial parent. They cause adjustment challenges for children. However, all children do not get affected by these stress interactions. It is important for children to deal with these negative interactions because it contains important implications for their mental health (Sandler, 1994). Some coping strategies that were effective throughout their study were their avoidance and distraction strategies. “Our avoidance coping dimension includes behavioral strategies to stay away from a problem, repress thoughts about it, or to engage in wishful thinking. Distraction involves efforts to do something else to keep oneself from thinking about the problem” (Sandler, 1994). Coping strategies can be a beneficial way to cause children to ease their problems. Therefore, they can forget them as much as they have before. Due to feeling sadness, anxiety, stress, and loneliness, children verge to a decrease in social skills between other children that have not been through this tragic experience.
Family and Financial Issues

Prior to and following a divorce, children are not the only ones suffering from this tragedy. The two partners also struggle with the procedure of divorce including family and financial problems. When talking about family problems, family arrangements come in to play. In a variety of different ways, children’s everyday lives are significantly impacted. Due to the fact that there are generally forced to commute between two households, in order to remain seeing both of their parents after the split. These specific children are generally immune to the routines and rituals that their family has entailed prior to the divorce. As stated within the article, “When children commute between two households, the repetitive cyclical arrangements can be regarded as double looped. Children must remember, negotiate and make sense of the everyday aspects of each household both alone and in relation to each other. The loops are connected, but as the following analyses will indicate, the connections vary. For some children these loops are single and side-by-side connections; to others they are seen as overlapping and supplemental” (Marschall 2017). Through the parent’s perspective changing their child’s daily routines and having them commute from household to household may not be a negative impact in their eyes. However, through the child’s perspective commuting from household to household and changing their everyday routines can cause a significant negative impact. Changing daily routines can cause a child to have unfortunate behavioral changes in order for them to please both parents. Some of those changes being: their mental feelings, their behavioral changes, and their daily routine changes.

Whichever parent contains custody on their child and/or children, it can be overwhelming and exhausting because of the full-time responsibility every day that they have
to deal with. They are not used to having to do majority of the work, taking care of the children because their partner was there to help. This also effects children because it can weaken the relationship bond between the child and the parents. Whoever is the parent that has custody of the child, the noncustodial parent, or if it is a share custody between the spouses, making the children feel as it is still a real family is important. It is important because they are already struggling to cope with the divorce. Therefore, doing this can be essential to the child’s self-worth. In order to help them continue to feel as if they are a part of the family, think about family rituals. Family rituals connect children with their family and creates positive memories for them to rely on creating happiness for the them.

Being the noncustodial parent can be different and awkward at first for both the children and parent. The reason for this is because the children and the parent are primarily used to being within the same household every day. Also, when children visit a new household, it can take a while for them to get comfortable with the new living arrangements. In order to help make the children feel more comfortable, the parent should try to spend more time with their child on days that are not a special event. Simple activities such as going to the park, going to see a movie, or a trip to the amusement park can contain a positive impact on the child. These activities will remind them that not everything has changed after the divorce. Indicating to them that not everything has changed due to their parent’s separation. They will still contain the capability of creating new positive memories with each parent. Rather than, being upset and having negative memories about their parent’s unfortunate separation.

Even though children think that the noncustodial parent is not in their lives anymore, parents should reassure that they are by attending their child’s events. These events can
include their child’s sports games, dance competitions, or even their school activities. Showing their children numerous moral supports can mean a lot to them. Convincing them that they are still important. The noncustodial parent cannot be upset if they see their child looking upset when they go to their house. Instead, they should comfort the child and observe them. Attempting to try to gain an understanding of the child’s behavior. They need to give them time by spending nights more often. That way they can become adjusted and comfortable with their new living arrangements.

Custody is a necessary aspect within every divorce. Considering it manages the actual post-divorce living arrangements. Traditionally following a divorce, the mother is the parent who receives custody and remains responsible for the child. The father is usually the parent who contains limited visitation of the child. “In 1973, Indiana was the first US state to introduce a law favoring joint custody (Brinig and Buckley 1998) and improved thereby the access of divorced fathers to their children. Since then joint custody has spread to nearly all US states” (Halla, 2013). Joint custody was closely researched on the effect on the children’s well-beings following the release. Advocates predictably debate that children might find it beneficial to continue supporting and prevail resources from both parents. This is apprehended in several proportions including behavioral adjustment, economic well-being, educational attainment and parental involvement. However, research on the unexpected relationship between custody arrangements and child outcomes is mostly in conclusive and clear (Halla, 2013).
However, divorce is not the only concept that contributes to family issues. Financial problems between both spouses also contains a large impact on the family. Divorce can contribute an impact for either spouses financially during the procedure as well as in the future. Custody issues are the primary issue when it comes to divorce. “A further potential cost effect operates through the cost of the divorce process. Halla and Hölzl (2007) show that some of the parents who are unable to find a mutually binding custody agreement in the sole custody regime can find an agreement in a joint custody regime. This is equivalent to a reduction in the cost of divorce. This cost effect should increase the aggregate incentive to divorce (Halla, 2013).

Following a divorce, parents do not necessarily need to communicate with each other. However, when it pertains to the child, it is necessary. Normally, the parent who does not contain custody of the child thinks that they do not need to pay for any of the child’s educational or activities fees. This is because they are already paying for child support. Certain children will be afraid to ask for money because they know that their parents will most likely argue over who pays for what or if they are paying half and half.

Even though financial issues are a large impact, parents should try their best to communicate and cooperate with each other. Therefore, they can do what is best for the child. For example, college tuition is a major problem when parents are divorced. They may have different options or opinions about how they want to pay for their child’s tuition. Some might want to pay college with their own money, whereas others might want to take out student loans. After their child is finished with college, they will need to find a job to start paying off
their student loans. That is why I personally believe that parents should always communicate when it involves their child. Therefore, they can have the best experience and not place the child in the middle of financial issues. Parents who talk about money issues to their child contribute a sense of frustration and make it extremely hard on them. Rather than the parents placing their child in the middle, they should talk to them about it in a better way. This will at least make them comfortable and not feel as if they are the problem.

There are promptly multiple challenges raising for the legal landscape of gay marriage. The federal government now extends federal protection and rights for married same-sex couples. Gustavsson and MacEachrom stated in an article, “Social workers need to educate themselves about these issues because they have an important role in helping same-sex couples navigate the legal and psychological complexities of divorce” (Gustavsson & MacEachrom, 2014). The procedure for heterosexual and same-sex married couples who want to have a divorce is different. There are few rules and procedures for when a same-sex couple wants to file for divorce because lawyers and courts have little experience with it. Whereas heterosexual couples, it is the opposite. It is possible for a heterosexual couple to file for divorce in any state. They are able to move to any other state from their current location of their marriage and have their marriage recognized by the state. “Same-sex couples, on the other hand, may not be able to file for marital dissolution if they live in a state that does not recognize their marriage. They may need to return to the state that granted the marriage
license to satisfy restrictions such as establishing residency for up to a year before they can file for dissolution” (Gustavsson & MacEachrom, 2014).

Now that same-sex marriage is legal, professionals like social work practitioners will be helping to cope with challenges of gay divorce. There is not a lot of evidence to figure out if gay divorce has an effect on children. I would believe that it would affect them the same way as if they had heterosexual parents. Children may need programs developed by social workers that are inclusive, encouraging, and nonjudgmental “to provide the support children will need as their gay parents navigate the difficulties of divorce” (Gustavsson & MacEachrom, 2014).

Children who had lesbian mothers were not comfortable to talk about their feelings and point of view. However, Karen Gail Lewis, who studied and interviewed children of lesbian mothers, wanted to talk to children about their experiences and their feelings. Mothers believed that their child would speak to a professional to give them the opportunity to discuss their feelings and point of view. It can be awkward for a mother that is lesbian to tell her child her relationship with another women. Some children accepted their mother’s homosexuality but voiced a mixture of concerns about its effect on them. There were different aspects of its impact between younger and older children. “The younger children focused on the need for secrecy and the isolation a secret imposed on them, separating them from their peers” (Lewis, 1980). Children were worried about their friends calling them names like “lesie or “fag” and not wanting to play with them. Numerous younger children used their mother’s homosexuality as an excuse for not being close to other children.
Divorce can have an impact on children when it occurs to the causes and consequences and family and financial issues. Children of divorce will have farther social, emotional, well-being, and educational problems. Children often contain the tendency of being in a greater risk of developing violent and antisocial behavior. Coping strategies is extremely beneficial for children who experience this tragedy at a young age. The best strategy is talking to another child who has experienced the same situation. This is because they can relate to similar topics and help each other cope with them. Not only the causes and consequences effects children prior to and after divorce. Family arrangements and financial issues also plays a role on children effectiveness. This is because it weakens the relationship bond between the parents and the child. That’s why it is important to make the child feel as if there are still a part of the family.

Showing the child that is essential to their self-worth.

**Meaning of divorce on young adults**

There haven’t been many researches done on the cause of divorce and young adults. Specifically focusing on college-aged students. Majority of the time people experience their parents divorce when they are a young child. There are many researchers that found how divorce effects younger children in different ways. However, my goal is to find out if college students have similar effects as a younger child would have. Also, to find out from a college student point of view the meaning of divorce because they are at an older age where they understand divorce better than younger children. Being an adult is different from being a child because adults have choices on whether who they want to live with and not. “In addition, con-
tact with either parent could diminish due to the divorce because the child is old enough to control the contact and young adults are more likely to choose sides with one parent during the divorce” (Bulduc, Caron, Logue, 2007). As a young adult, they understand the meaning of divorce more and know if it is going to happen between their parents or not. In a survey conducted by Bulduc, Caron, and Logue discovered that half of their participants which were college students knew that their parents were getting divorced. The other half did not know, but they weren’t surprised that it occurred.

Some parents stay together as long as possible while their child is still young because they believe that it is the right thing to do. I think they parents act like this so they can protect the child from developing negative affects at a young age. “Most of the students believed that their parents had stayed together for as long as they did “for the sake of the children.”” (Bulduc, Caron, Logue, 2007). These authors found that their research participants said their fathers were the reason why the divorced occurred. This made them grow negative feelings towards their fathers during their childhood.

Summary

There is a good amount of research done on the effects on children of divorce because it has been and currently a major problem all over the world. However, there is little research done on the personal perspectives and what is the meaning of divorce from people who experienced their parents divorce. I believe that this was a gap in the literature, so I would like to do further research by performing interviews or look at websites for comments related. The studies that I discovered discussed negative effects in the emotional, well-being, educational,
and social aspects. Financial and family issues also had an impact not only on the parents, but children. Overall, I discovered some research to answer my questions and give me background information to help support my argument.

**Methodology**

There are different method systems used for a particular area of a study or activity. Methods are components of research, for example, qualitative and quantitative. Throughout my research and findings, I came across methods including interviews, experiments, books and content analysis. To collect my data, I perform content analysis on articles, comments, and blogs that studied the effects and personal perspective on children of divorce. I noted different comments from different websites to find similarities and differences about people’s experiences at a young age. I also read a book, “Divorce: Causes and Consequences”, where it presented multiple chapters about children of divorce. More in detail, I chose two chapters that I answered my questions. The following chapters were “Effects of Divorce on Children” and “What Causes Children’s Problems?”. This book consisted in studies about the divorce and its foundations, causes, and significances. The authors intertwine theory, research, and examples in a way that specifies evidence valuable for individuals, families, and policymakers concerned in overcoming the outcomes of divorce and enhance family performance.

Every resource that I found to help me answer my questions all contained similar research and findings. They all found out that children of divorce had a negative impact in their lives. These were behavior, emotional, education and social problems. However, there were
also family arrangements and financial issues that effected children. Anja Marschall’s article sets out to research children’s viewpoints on post-divorce family life with time-sharing arrangements. The studies in this article are normally conducted in large groups of children. This article also studies how differences between families affect children’s ways of understanding themselves and their family. The methods used for these studies are psychometric tests and parents’ self-report to measure the children’s variation and typical well-being in the aftermath of divorce. In the study, “Exploring children’s perspectives on everyday life with two households”, it was a qualitative research project. From the results of all the studies, Anja concluded in most cases that post-divorce family life is quite a peaceful matter and children’s time-shared lives is manageable.

Another author Hyun Sik Kim set out to research the consequences of parental divorce for child development. To do this, a three-stage estimation model was recommended to observe the effect of parental divorce on the development of children’s intellectual skills and noncognitive traits. This three-stage model contained contexts including pre-, in-, and post-divorce time periods. Also used the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Class to evaluate the three-stage model. It was discovered that children of divorce are lacking several life outcomes, involving dropping out of high school, cognitive skills, psychosocial well-being, and social relation, compared to children with married parents. The study found obstacles among children of divorce in math test scores during and after the experience of parental divorce, an increase in externalizing behavior problems in any stage, et.
Content Analysis

Divorce has been and is still currently a major issue for children around the world. I conducted research in order to find websites and blogs where there are comments from adult’s perspectives. Specifically, adults who experienced their parents’ divorce when they were a young child. I want to look at their own perspective on divorce and what they had to deal with while growing into an adult. I found a variety of different data from different websites like reddit.com and blogs. All websites contained similar data containing negative comments and stories due to divorce.

An adult experience when they were a child. How was divorce for them?

There are numerous different experiences from different people who have experienced their parents’ divorce and/or separation. When I was looking at different comments from different people, I noticed that majority of the discussions were about how parents talked negative about each other. No child wants to hear or be in a conversation when one parent is talking down on to the other parent because it can affect them in a negative psychological way and cause them to feel uncomfortable. One comment stated “This is what I came here to say. It was a completely awful, jolting, confusing, f***ed up experience to witness the two people I loved most in the world hurl insults at each other, especially WHILE being nice to me. I had no f***ing idea how to handle that or even put it in context. A kid loving both their parents despite their flaws is an obvious thing... why would anyone talk shit about the other parent to their child? That's what you have adult friends and reddit for” (Reddit.com, 2017). Another comment stated “Cannot upvote this enough. My parents got divorced when I was really young, and since
then, I have been bullied, moved to a completely different country, had no friends, moved back again, and I can still say talking badly about the other parent was the worst experience I had to endure” (Reddit.com, 2017). I definitely agree with these two comments because no child wants to experience or hear their parents talking negative about each other. If a parent wants to talk about another parent, it should not be in front of or in the area of a child. From reading those comments, I can imagine how difficult and uncomfortable it is for a child to go through that stage.

Further researching and reading comments, someone stated “It was a total mess. They used us against each other all the time, and constantly talked shit about how the other was "totally crazy" or whatever. Nothing like making a 7 year old kid go into court to testify to the judge about what the other parent did, and then the other parent holding that against you. The divorce part was actually pretty quick, it was the visitation, custody, and child support arrangements that made everything explode. It's been almost 30 years since the divorce and they are still completely hostile to each other. The only time I can recall in my adult life that they managed to get together and not fight each other was when I graduated from college” I can agree on how this person discussed the visitation, custody, and child support arrangements were the main problems because I personally experienced it. It is very frustrating to keep going back and forth to one household to another and find out who has custody over you. Children these days are very smart and observant. Therefore, they will catch on to situations if you allow them to observe too much. This comment that I found is similar and explains what I stated previously, “It would have helped if they had gotten a divorce five years earlier. It was obvious by the time I was 10 that they didn't love each other anymore, but they decided to stay
together "for the kids", so that my brother and I would have a stable family life until we turned 18 and went to college. Unfortunately, the result was that we lived in a loveless home with parents constantly at each other's throats. It was such a relief when I turned 18 and they announced their divorce plans. They thought they had done a good job of keeping their problems between the two of them, but parent forget how aware and observant kids are. Even though they thought they were providing us with a better home, the reality was that I hated coming home and found every excuse to stay away” (Reddit.com, 2017). Parents need to become more aware of when and where to have a conversation with each other because children will listen to everything if they have the opportunity to. Because of this, it can significantly affect the child emotionally. There was another comment that replied, and it stated “I repressed it all for many years, joined the Army, went to Afghanistan, came back with PTSD, and have been in therapy ever since. Apparently I have a lot of issues from those years at home that were never resolved and just lay in the back of my mind until I started seeing a psychologist for my combat-related problems, so now I have to deal with nightmares about dying Afghan children while also fixing all the damage from my messed up family life” (Reddit.com, 2017). This comment is extremely robust because it shows how much of an impact divorce issues between parents can have on a child. This can happen to anyone. Therefore, it is important that parents remember that children suffer negative effects even if they think it does not.
The Effects on Children

There are many ways that divorce can have an effect on people at a young age. A comment that related to my subtopic stated, “They divorced when I was 16, Junior year of high school. Throughout my childhood I knew that they never liked each other and honestly I believe the best reason why they stuck around that long was because of me. They wanted to split up after I left to college but they couldn’t wait anymore. Although the divorce was inevitable, it wasn’t my parents splitting up that affected me. It was that I had to live with one of my parents after that and I wouldn’t see my mother as much as before. Emotionally this was devastating and I had the largest dip in my grades in Junior year, the most important year in High School! I recovered second semester barely but first semester had the worst grades I’ve ever received! Thank God colleges acknowledged that. Currently going to UC Berkeley” (Reddit.com, 2016).

Children of divorce contain the tendency of becoming emotionally unstable where it can cause a decrease within their educational grades.

It can also have an effect on someone’s perspective of a relationship. Because if a child witnesses their parents’ relationship in a negative way, they will think their future relationship will be similar to that. This will cause them to think twice about having a future relationship with someone else. “My Dad cheated on my mom and mom didn’t wanna get divorced and wanted to get back together.. it hurt my heart that she felt that way. Then he took all my mom's money to live with his new girlfriend. When he comes to visit he stays in moms room cuz its comfortable and mom sleeps in the living room couch. It’s really confusing and f***ed up relationship. I dont like to blame people but their relationship kinda f***ed up my ability to
have a healthy relationship with someone” (Reddit.com, 2016). This quote best explains my sentence prior to the quotation because this persons’ experience effects their view on relationships and will have a hard time building the trust with any partner in the future. Finally, I found another comment that stated, “I’ve become less and less trusting of people. I don’t think my parents remarrying would really help” (Reddit.com, 2016).

While researching to find more information to relate to my subtopic, I came across a blog website page. The blog was done by an older woman, a mother, who experienced their parents divorce. What she wrote was really intriguing. In the blog, she stated “Divorce = pain, any way you look at it. Whether the reasons are valid or not, someone gets hurt. And while time may heal the adults in the relationship, it won’t the children. It’s a scar that will last forever. I don’t always feel this way. Random things will trigger the sadness. My hope is that those who may be reading this, who are considering divorce, will think long and hard about the children involved. Your reasons may be valid. But they don’t come without consequence. Especially to those little ones you most likely love the most in this world” (Citymomsblog, 2015).

Kristen, who replied said “I know your pain, I know the flashbacks, I know that time cannot heal all wounds. I still think about my mother and father and what life would be like as well. It’s almost daily, and they have been divorced for 19 years...your story is amazing and I wish the same for those who ponder the thought of divorce” (Citymomsblog, 2015). Parents who want to file for divorce have to remember the consequences, not only for themselves, but for their child/children. It can cause them a lot of negative impacts emotionally and physically. There are people who feel the same hurt as an adult as well when they were a child.
Conclusion

There was numerous information that I successfully discovered and helped me research about my topic. Through my personal perspective, divorce does contribute a negative impact to a child’s life. Personally speaking, witnessing your parents no longer love each other and maintain arguments constantly is not easy on anybody, especially a child. A divorce can be an overall traumatizing experience. Leaving a child with the capability of containing social issues such as anxiety or even physical issues such as depression. It also plays a huge role within the family. Generally speaking, whoever is surrounded by the divorce, gets significantly impacted by it.

Overall, my conclusion on this topic would be that there are a variety of different reasons that contribute to divorce. There are also a variety of different impacts on children and the family while the divorce is taking place. There are negative problems as well as society related problems. Divorce has the capability of tearing apart a family and often leaving the child stuck in the middle of the two parents involved. It enables the child to have to commute from household to household continuously. Overall, impacting their daily routines. Although majority of the time divorce is a negative situation, it is typically the social norm in today’s society. More children contain divorced parents than not. It was extremely interesting to find similarities between the literature and content analysis. Many authors shown that children of divorce parents experienced negative effects in an emotional, physical, and psychological aspect. However, finding a way to cope with these situations is a great strategy to repair someone’s feeling for a moment. It is clear that majority of children whose parents became divorced is suffering from negative affects until they become an adult and learn the reasons of divorce.
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