



The nightmare of Christmas

At least for anyone embroiled in a family law dispute.

Christmas can be a tough time for separated couples. Waving goodbye to your kids on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning and knowing that you have to get used to not having them around on this special day is a very sad time.

But what about your kids? How are they faring?

If they're little, they might be wondering if Santa will find them in this new house of mum or dad's and then, after discovering he came after all, may not understand why they have to give up their shiny new toy to spend some time with their other parent.

If they're older, they might be feeling stressed about balancing their parents' expectations and disappointment and angry about being forced into a situation of having to accommodate two family celebrations.

So how do you ensure Christmas is still a special day for your children?

- Buy a present for their other parent so they have something to take with them. Kids feel embarrassed if they can't share in the gift giving;
- Don't sweat the small stuff. If changeover is late, try to be understanding. We all know the Christmas lunch doesn't hit the table until 2pm at best;
- Try to hide your own disappointment from your kids. Remember to wish your ex a merry Christmas when they turn up. Nothing is worse for kids than feeling conflicted loyalties on this day;
- Let them take their new toy with them. After all, it's their gift.
- Make sure you speak to your family about accommodating your new arrangements if possible;
- Think about ways of bringing new traditions to these special days so you're not always stuck in the past.



FREE 10 MINUTE CONSULTATION

For a **FREE** confidential 10 minute phone consultation, call Managing Director, Fiona Reid.

Fiona Reid is the Managing Director of Reid Family Lawyers, a boutique specialist family law firm with offices in Brookvale and Surry Hills. She is supported by a team of expert family lawyers. The firm has a wealth of experience in all facets of family law including complex property matters, parenting matters, child support and spousal maintenance issues, relocation, de facto and same sex issues, surrogacy and adoption.



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