

Since his birth, we've read little stories to our son about animals. Noah's Ark, The Creation, Goodnight Gorilla, Curious George and other treasured favorites. Most feature an Elephant in one form or another. William had always heard of an Elephant and he had seen pictures of it. He understood the concept of what was an Elephant, but he had never seen an Elephant until I took him to the Zoo. I was lucky enough to catch it on film. If you watch the video below you can notice his reaction, he knew what an Elephant was from his everyday interactions with books, but when confronted with an actual Elephant, you can see the light come on and his eyes light up.

Parenting you child post divorce is a lot like the Elephant. You may think that your former spouse is the worst person in the world. You may have zero respect for their parenting skills or the amount of time that they spend with the child, but it should never be your job to tell your child your feelings on the matter.

There are a multitude of ways one could even do this inadvertently. For example, when a party is late for a visitation exchange, "i bet they got tied up in traffic, lets wait a little bit longer", is much preferred to "Why can't your Father/Mother get here on time?" Or the ever popular, we can't afford that, ask your Father/Mother, his child support isn't enough for me to buy those things." Instead lets go with "Let me talk with your Father/Mother, and see if that's something we can do."

The point is your child will know what is an what is not bad parenting, they may not know it on the front end, but eventually, after hearing stories from others and experiencing it themselves, they will now. One day, when they look at that parent and say "Oh...thats what a deadbeat looks like?" I promise, the next thought will be "I wonder how Mom/Dad put up with that" Eventually the child will not only understand the sacrifices you made, but they will thank you for not involving them in this issue. It won't be easy, it may be impossible. But kids like Elephants have very long memories, we just want to make sure your a fond one.