**Separated or divorced parents (Topic 1: LO 1.4.3 in the Student’s Book)**

Being separated or divorced does not mean that you no longer have any responsibilities towards your children. You still need to provide care, love and financial support.

* Have a regular visitation schedule and keep to this. Allow each parent opportunities to bond with the child. Share responsibilities as well as fun outings and treats.
* Avoid saying bad things about the other parents in front of the child. Do not put pressure on the child to choose between parents. Avoid arguments in front of the child.
* Do not try to punish the partner or ex, through withholding the child or limiting access. This only serves to damage the child.
* Do not allow the child to manipulate either parent by playing one up against the other. This can happen for example when parents want the child to have a favourite parent or be popular with the child. They then compete with each other in providing the child with treats and toys. Avoid spoiling the child with too many gifts to appease guilt for the divorce or break-up; this will not benefit the child. Rather spend quality time with the child on a regular basis.

Where one of the parents is not suitable as a role model or dangerous due to uncontrollable temper, violent behaviour or a history of sexual or substance abuse or a paedophile, then do not allow unsupervised visits or do not allow visitation rights. Where a parent has started a new family and/or joined a family where there are already children, make the transition easier for the child by giving the child assurances that they are just as loved as before and that nobody would take their place