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Kids and Family Relations

By Kathy Jenkins, CPO®, CFMC®

Recently, many families have struggled because of tough economic times and increasingly stressful situations. Some have had to move, change their lifestyles, find a new job, or learn new ways to manage money. While these major life changes seem like adult issues, there's no doubt that they also affect kids in very real ways.

Parents need to recognize that kids are very intuitive! They generally know more and sense more about what is going on than parents realize. Frequently, mom and dad leave the kids out of the conversations, and sometimes that is appropriate. However, their fears, questions, and anxiety about the future are real. Furthermore, kids are not always good at verbalizing their feelings. Instead, they express themselves and seek attention by acting out. They may misbehave, struggle with schoolwork, ignore instructions from parents and teachers, and generally seem frustrated and discouraged.

If you have noticed that things are a little "off" with your kids, and you can't quite put your finger on it, maybe it's time to get them talking. Sitting down and having a conversation with them can help you uncover hidden emotions or worries. The problem is many parents aren't sure how to begin that conversation! This can be especially challenging with older kids, as they begin to answer questions with fewer words and more grunts!

Maybe this will help...this "Kids' Questionnaire" worksheet developed by [Kathy Peel of Family Manager, Inc.](#) This is a good tool to gauge just what your kid is thinking and be a jumping off point for a productive conversation. By reviewing your kid's answers, you will begin to see topics that most concern you child. With this information, you'll be able to ask more direct questions, get to the heart of the matter, and then discover ways, together, that you can improve relations, communication, and behavior.

About the Author

As a [Certified Family Manager® Coach and Love & Logic® Parenting Facilitator](#), Kathy Jenkins can help you run a more organized, efficient, and happy household and raise happy, healthy, responsible, and well-mannered children! Visit www.cometoorderva.com for details on the Family Manager® Assessment & Plan or Love & Logic® Parenting classes or one-on-one coaching.

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