



***THE AARC PRINCIPLE:
BUILDING A BRIDGE OF
CONNECTION FOR
CHILDREN***

Lois Warner



How can parents overcome past conflict and begin a road to peace for children?

The road to peaceful co-parenting begins with two things:

1. Respect for the right of one another to have a relationship with their child, and
2. A willingness to work together so children can thrive.

Children need a degree of consistency between the two households. They need parent that can put their feelings aside so children can live in peace between the two separate households in which they live. The ability of parents to give these things to their children depends on the attitude of each parent to work towards a common goal of peaceful co-parenting.

“Co-parenting is all about the child and what’s best for them. Your child should have one family. You are their family, one family.”

~Candice Curry
For Every Mom



The AARC Principle

I have taught this principle to parents for many years. It is a method by which parents can change the way they think about co-parenting so children can thrive.

The AARC describes a Bridge of Connection that change the way parents respond to one another.

- It is a bridge to **A**cceptance of the other parent not expecting perfection from one another and releasing one another of past mistakes made.
- It is a Bridge to **C**ommunication that requires parents to share information about the lives of their children so they feel connected to their children.
- It is a Bridge of **T**olerance between parents that build respectful and proper parental relationship.

Building a Bridge of Peace Through AARC

Step 1. Accept the right of one another to have a difference of opinion. Treat the needs and concerns of one another to be as valid as one's own and be willing to resolve them putting the needs of children above one's personal feelings.

Step 2. Appreciate the different things you each do and give to your children. Appreciate the time and effort you put into parenting your children and avoid being critical of one another unless there is a risk posed to your children. Your children need both of you! They love both of you!

Appreciate your differences in personalities rather than allowing the differences destroy your ability to co-parent. These differences can enrich the lives of children.

Express appreciation for the monetary support, and call out the good things you see one another do for your kids. This builds goodwill between parents, bringing joy to children rather than strife.

No matter how you feel about one another or what transpired between you, remember that you are not replaceable in the lives of your children. Keep expectations of one another reasonable and avoid making unnecessary demands unless there is a safety risk to your children.



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Step 3. Respect the right of one another to be a parent. Respect one another, because children are watching you. Children learn respect from what they see modeled in the home.

Be aware of the power of words, for words have the power to heal or the power to destroy. Every time we speak, we make a choice to encourage or discourage. The words we say affect others. What you say to one another will change your children for better or words, and what you do to one another, you do to your children.

Step 4. Communicate information about your children. Communication needs to go beyond the basic information about children, such as appointments for doctors and dentists, homework or discipline.

Other information is equally important to keep parents feeling connected to their children while they are away for parenting time, like funny things your children said or did while they were with you, or about new friends your kids made, or things your children are proud of like mastering a gymnastic move or hitting a home run during a baseball game. Keep each other informed about any challenges your children are experiencing so there is parental continuity in addressing the emotional needs children. This keeps communication focused on children in a good way.






Lois Warner

Lois Warner worked as an official court reporter in the St. Louis, Minnesota courts for 10 years. She is a legal assistant and divorce mediator with education in family dynamics and crisis management through Bemidji State University. She trained in in divorce mediation and domestic violence with the Erickson Mediation Training Institute, and received additional training in advanced parenting coordination and family group conferencing. She is also trained in workplace mediation and restorative justice. She is an Early Neutral Evaluator (ENE) and the author of the Impact Parent Education Program. Learn more on her website at ImpactParentEducation.com.



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