

Before their return Children will be excited about their parent's return. They may also feel some anxiety since they haven't seen him or her in a long time. *Step into Your Child's World* with these ways to help your children prepare for their mom or dad's return.



Plan ahead

- If possible, include the returning parent in all family decisions.
- Plan a "Welcome Home" party. Involve your children as much as you can.
- Arrange a special time for each child and returning parent to reconnect.
- Allow time for the returning parent to have alone time, time with spouse, and time with friends without the children.

Prepare your children

- Talk to the children about how things will be different when Mom or Dad gets back.
- Let the children know it's O.K. to feel worry, fear, happiness, and excitement about the parent's return.
- Give the children a chance to talk about their feelings.
- Explain that everyone has changed and it will take time to readjust to being together again.

Getting reacquainted

- Let the child/parent relationship re-establish itself naturally.
- Spend time together looking at the family scrapbook, the children's artwork or schoolwork.
- Encourage everyone to share their feelings about the parent's return.

Reunion Calendar

Write the name of the month here

Write the dates in these boxes

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Take time to talk with your children about feelings—and listen!	
			Help your children gather schoolwork, drawings, etc. to show the returning parent.			
Keep family routines as normal as possible.				Remember that family changes take time and patience.		
						Plan a "welcome home" party with your children.
	Set aside some "alone time" for you and your spouse.		Plan a special activity that each child can do with the returning parent.			