**Friday Forum handout, July 10, 2015**

By Nora Firestone

[www.norafirestone.com](http://www.norafirestone.com)

**Various Types of News and Outreach**

**Event or brief news blurb**

Purpose:

* Notice of an upcoming event.
* Brief statement about a company milestone, an award won, etc.

Examples:

**Inside Business Sales and Leases data** (Usually about a two-page spread. Requirement: extremely minimal details. Result: guaranteed.)**:**

**Harvey Lindsay Commercial Real Estate**

**Bay City Classics** leased 14,034 square feet of industrial space at 3335 Croft St., Norfolk. Billy King handled the negotiations.

**Cut Above** leased 850 square feet of retail space at 3214 Victory Blvd., Portsmouth. Bob King handled the negotiations.

**Fastenal** leased 5,000 square feet of industrial space at 602 Park Center Pkwy., Portsmouth. Jim Resolute handled the negotiations.

**Calendar event listing, 112 words** (Requirement: essential info.; word limit. Result: semi-guar.)**:**

Publicity and media relations: Mastering development and pitching of your company news – Get the “inside scoop” on effective media relations and outreach, press-release development and more from professional writer, news reporter and longtime instructor Nora Firestone. This in-depth, eight-session workshop will start Sept. 22 and cover: understanding members of the media and their outlets, audiences, and needs; how to develop “newsworthy” press releases and pitches about your business, events, etc.; ongoing publicity, media-relations and outreach strategy; much more. Perfect for entrepreneurs, small-business owners, authors and others in charge of pursuing media attention for their causes, books or organizations. $175 in-person; seating limited. Online version $79. Call 757-705-7174 (no texts) or visit [www.norafirestone.com/speaking-and-training](http://www.norafirestone.com/speaking-and-training)

What info. is essential? If necessary for space, what could be omitted?

**News of Dr. Zaba being recognized as local Health Care Hero, 283 words** (pitched to Jewish News and W&M alumni mag; Jewish News asked me to send a write-up for print)**:**

Joel N. Zaba, a Norfolk- and Virginia Beach-based optometrist who in 42 years has helped shape and promote the field of developmental optometry, was named one of 18 Health Care Heroes for 2015 by “Inside Business” news journal in February. The annual award recognizes excellence, innovation and impact of health care professionals, volunteers and organizations within Hampton Roads.

Zaba, a lifelong Norfolk resident and a member of Ohef Sholom Temple in Norfolk, opened his private practice in 1972 as one of only few O.D.s nationwide to also hold a master’s degree in education. Through his work as practitioner, researcher and international lecturer, merging the fields of optometry and education, he has helped countless children, parents, teachers, health care providers and others worldwide to understand the essential relationships between untreated vision problems and learning disabilities, social and emotional issues, juvenile delinquency and more. His distinguished career includes serving on numerous local and national professional boards and as education consultant to school systems.

“I am honored and humbled to be recognized along with the other health care professionals and volunteers in our region,” Zaba said following the March19 awards banquet. “In the beginning of my career, I stood on the shoulders of the pioneers in the new field of learning and performance-related visual problems,” he recalled. “My family, religious values and a position as a short-term medical social worker in Norfolk instilled in me empathy, sympathy, compassion, caring, and the understanding of each individual in all situations and circumstances.” Zaba’s work and intense commitment will continue to touch the lives of generations. A more in-depth account of his contributions can be found in the book “A History of Optometry in Tidewater, Virginia” by Nora Firestone.

What information made this relevant to local outlets, including *Jewish News*?

Any outlet approached could have either printed this as-is or called upon Dr. Zaba for an interview for a larger article.

Results: *Jewish News* printed the entire “blurb” almost word-for-word (they trimmed a bit). Timing was perfect for its own “Health Care in the Jewish Community” edition. Bonus: They didn’t omit the last line of the blurb. William and Mary alumni magazine editor never responded.

How to contact these outlets? Open up the papers or visit the websites and get the contact information. Also note the frequency of the publication and any requirements, deadlines and other pertinent information you’ll need to approach them with timeliness, relevance and respect.

What outlets could you approach with similar information about your organization?

**Press releases and pitches (various styles)**

Consider:

* Purpose
* Specs/format
* What to include
* What to expect
* More: Read the “Accompaniment” and “Supplement” to my writing for small-business presentations for more on all of this. Find these handouts under ***June 12 Material*** at [www.norafirestone.com/friday-forum](http://www.norafirestone.com/friday-forum)

Examples:

* Dylan Hawkins (casual, friendly, not formal) …
* Alison Hamer (professional; more formal; friendly) …
* Thanking of You and Shoot for Good (formal) …
* Lynn Johnson and Tony Macrini (very personal; informal/friendly)…

**Email pitch from Dylan Hawkins of Napolitano Homes to my editor at “Home”**

This is what I call a **“friendly style” email pitch** that worked. It’s a pitch, meaning that Dylan is asking if we’re interested in doing a story, but it’s more a statement of company news than it is a *talking-points* or *tips* style pitch. It’s fairly informal and isn’t perfect (instances of improper capitalization), yet it was still effective because it included the most important and relevant information and we thought it would interest our readers:



Hi Victoria,

I work at Napolitano Homes and wanted to tell you about a Facebook campaign we're doing. I think it might be pretty interesting for readers in Saturday Home, so our ads rep Jennifer Mueller gave me your email address.

We are building a spec home in one of our communities that is based entirely on Facebook Fan votes. Each week, I present our followers with a set of choices, and they tell me which option they like best. The option that gets the most votes, gets put into the house! First we started with floor plans and elevations, and once those were chosen, we moved to color schemes, flooring, cabinetry, countertops, and even plumbing fixtures. Fans are having a lot of fun with it and giving great feedback.

The house has already broken ground so I'm really excited to continue the voting as well as take progress photos of the fans' choices.

You can see its progress on our Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/napolitanohomes>) or on our blog at <http://www.napolitanohomes.com/blog/built-by-facebook>

Is this a story you might be interested in? If so, I can write up an official Press Release if necessary, or maybe we could chat on the phone about it? Whatever you think is best. A little biased, but I think it might be a good example to show how social media is connecting builders with homeowners and local residents.

Please let me know what you think!

Best,

Dylan

**Dylan Hawkins**

**Marketing & Design Director**

1492 S. Independence Blvd.

Virginia Beach, Va 23462

**O** [757.474.0888](tel:757.474.0888) ex.20

**C** [757.435.6936](tel:757.435.6936)

What did you identify that Dylan did well with his media outreach?

Do you think Home readers would find this news interesting and relevant? If so, why?

**Let’s look at the copy with my notes …**

Result: A nice article in *The Virginian-Pilot*’s Home section.

**Style: Story idea/pitch with talking points or tips**

Read the following press release. I received it while a feature-story reporter for *The Virginian-Pilot*’s Home section. While the PR person who sent it is a professional, it did not include the more formal formatting (no date, dateline, heading) that is typical with professional press releases, and there are a couple of style corrections I would make. Still it’s great, effective and resulted in me doing an article on the topic and including First Alert input. This is what I consider a “less-formal” approach, but it still contained all the essentials and was well written. Notice the elements that make it timely, relevant, interesting and helpful to me, as a journalist, and, most importantly, to my readers:

May 24 – 30 marks Hurricane Preparedness Week, a national observance that aims to educate people about steps to protect themselves in the event of a hurricane or tropical storm. And, while savvy homeowners busily board up windows and stock up on food, water and batteries, many overlook one of the most dangerous threats associated with these types of storms — carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

“Hurricanes and other major storms bring power outages that cause people to turn to alternative fuel sources for cooking, light and heat,” explained Deborah Hanson, director of external affairs for First Alert. “What they often don’t realize is that these sources emit carbon monoxide, in some cases at levels that can cause serious illness and even death.”

CO poisoning is responsible for an average of 450 deaths in the U.S. each year and is the number one cause of accidental poisoning deaths.\* Incidents tend to become more frequent during hurricane season due to increased and improper use of portable generators. Magnifying the problem is the fact that nearly half (47%) of American homes are not equipped with carbon monoxide alarms.\*\*

Permanently installed automatic standby generators are one of the safest ways to provide backup power to your home. Portable generators also will provide electricity when power goes out, but it is important to know how to use them safely.

Following are some safety precautions designed to help people avoid the dangers of CO poisoning during hurricane season and all year long:

* Put generators in their proper place. Proper placement is critical to generator safety. Portable generators should always be used outdoors and placed away from open windows, ideally at least 25 feet away from the home. Never use a portable generator indoors or n any enclosed space, such as a garage. This can cause a dangerous build-up of CO gas.
* Connect to protect. Be sure generators are connected correctly. Do not plug generators into regular wall sockets, and never connect a generator to the wiring of your home.
* Be armed with alarms. When using a generator, always have a battery-operated CO alarm in your home. CO alarms will warn you if there is a dangerous level of gas in your home. For instance, [First Alert’s battery-operated CO alarm](http://www.firstalert.com/index.php?option=com_flexicontent&view=item&id=288:battery-operated-carbon-monoxide-alarm) continuously monitors CO levels and alerts to potential danger. For the best protection, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends installing CO alarms on each level of the home and outside every sleeping area. It also is important to test alarm function regularly and replace units as needed or at least every five years.

For product samples, images, additional tips or information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 312-565-4632 or via email at [ahamer@lcwa.com](mailto:ahamer@lcwa.com)

Kind regards,

Alison Hamer

for First Alert

\**SOURCE: Journal of the American Medical Association*

\*\**SOURCE: 2010 nationwide alarm-usage survey by First Alert*

Alison Hamer

Senior Account Executive

L.C. Williams and Associates

(Address …)

(Office phone number …)

(Fax number …)

(Cell phone number …)

What were some of the elements that Alison got right?

Did you notice anything that we discussed that she got wrong?

**Let’s look at the copy with my notes …**

Result: A nice article on the topic in Virginian-Pilot’s Home section

**Formal press release written and sent by me for Thankingofyou.com and Shoot for Good**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE          Media contacts:**

**Stephen Katz 757-581-5511**   
September 19, 2011**Nora Firestone 757-705-7174 7174**

HAMPTON ROADS, Va.

**Locally-founded initiatives Shoot for Good and ThankingOfYou.com join forces to "showcase the good" generated by individuals and organizations throughout Hampton Roads and beyond and to "give back" reflectively.**

Between midnight and midnight Saturday, Oct. 8, photographers of all levels — from hobbyists to professionals — are encouraged to seek and shoot acts/expressions of kindness within the Hampton Roads region and upload their photos to [www.ShootforGood.org](http://www.shootforgood.org/), a growing photographic journal initially designed to document slices of altruism in Southeastern Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina.

"The idea is to create a mosaic of benevolence, a 24-hour snapshot of the spirit of our community, that we will share in nearly real-time on our Web site," explained Stephen Katz, co-founder of Shoot for Good and a photojournalist with The Virginian-Pilot newspaper in Norfolk, Va. **These valuable photographs will be made available to participating/photographed non-profit organizations at no charge for use in their own promotional endeavors** and will also be exhibited in unique ways throughout the region, "in hopes of inspiring others to give of themselves" in the spirit of volunteerism, Katz said.

In the spirit of gratitude for the goodness, Thanking of You calls upon people who've benefited from the benevolence of local individuals and groups to showcase the impacts with words at [www.ThankingOfYou.com](http://thankingofyou.com/). Established in 2008, ThankingOfYou.com is the Web-based forum for posting and receiving stories of gratitude (messages of thanks) to recognize, affirm and honor the people who've made a difference in our lives.

Although folks worldwide post Thank you messages at ThankingOfYou.com year-round, founder Nora Firestone, a freelance journalist and Virginian-Pilot correspondent, noted that teaming up with Shoot for Good this year "broadens the scope of each project's individual call to highlight positivity within Hampton Roads and gives those who are already engaged in the exchange of kindness on October 8 a nudge to reflect upon their own sense of gratitude for the contributions of others in their lives and to express that gratitude within this purposefully-focused 24-hour period."

Organizers of both projects encourage people to join the upcoming effort, as documenting meaningful acts and impacts of people and organizations, whether with photographs or with words, is one way to "give back" to them "by shining light on their talents, hearts and potential to influence others in profound ways," Firestone said. "Typically it's not money that motivates people to act with kindness and volunteerism," she explained; "most often it's the desire to be making a difference in the lives of others. Illuminating their impact can go a long way toward affirming one's sense of life's purpose, boosting morale or re-energizing a challenging mission, inspiring new acts of goodness and naturally fueling the continuum of a virtuous collective human spirit-all concepts with which an increasing number of people seem to be struggling to actualize lately."

While Hampton Roads has been the primary focus of Shoot for Good since its 2010 inception, this year founders invite photographers nationwide to initiate Shoot for Good dates and online galleries within their own communities. Interested parties may contact Stephen Katz to get started.

All those in favor of showcasing the good and the gratitude can act by grabbing a camera, keyboard or both and uploading their observations of unheralded greatness at [www.ShootForGood.org](http://www.shootforgood.org/) and/or [www.ThankingOfYou.com](http://thankingofyou.com/) Saturday, October 8, 2011.

For more information or to have a Shoot for Good or Thanking of You team member document an event or a "Thank you," visit the Web sites or call Stephen Katz at 757-581-5511 or Nora Firestone at 757-705-7174.

**About Shoot for Good:** Founded in 2010 by three Virginia-based photojournalists in awe of the power of photojournalism to evoke thought and inspire change, Shoot for Good aims to encourage hobbyists and professionals alike to grab cameras, explore their communities and feel empowered to document positive activities that will motivate others to act.  The growing online gallery, from which non-profits may pull photographs free of charge for their own libraries and promotional efforts, is a give-back to those organizations as well as a gathering place of sorts, where all can turn for inspiration and motivation in a world where life's most brilliant gems sometimes lay just beneath an understated surface.

**About ThankingOfYou.com:** Founded in 2008, ThankingOfYou.com was inspired by freelance journalist Nora Firestone's longtime desire and unsuccessful search to thank two teachers from elementary school in Plainedge, L.I. for the seemingly small things they'd each done decades ago that had a lasting, positive impact on her as she grew.  Frustrated by her inability to locate Mrs. Shore and Mr. Sybil, Firestone realized the opportunity to fill two universal needs for people worldwide: the need to express gratitude for the people who've made a difference in our lives, and the need for those who've made a difference, no matter where on Earth they roamed nor how much time had passed, to discover when, how, to whom, and why it mattered. Thanking of You.com aims to build a lasting story bank of these true-life testimonials for their recipients and the world and to inspire the continuum of positive influences via the heartfelt messages of thanks posted on-site.

What did you notice? (Ignore how long my sentences ran. I was in a rush to write and submit it.)

Do you think this ended up being effective? Why or why not?

Results: Joint interview on Cathy Lewis’ HearSay show; feature about ThankingOfYou by Cheryl Tan on a WAVY TV news show.

**Formal press release with talking points, tips and advice** (If a journalist doesn’t pick up on the pitch for an interview, all or part of this may be printed by news outlets almost as-is if they need the content):



Kimberly King Books

**November 13, 2014 Media Contacts**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** Nora Firestone  
 (757) 496-2527; (757) 705-7174; [nfirestone@verizon.net](mailto:nfirestone@verizon.net)

Kimberly King: (757) 375-5020

# Holiday Stress Prevention: Keeping Children of Divorce in Good Spirits Amid the Complexities of Holidays

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.** — **Parental separation or divorce can be traumatic for children**, even when it’s the most reasonable solution. And navigating the waters can be just as difficult for the adults involved. **Add holiday obligations, expectations and a newly defined “togetherness” (or lack thereof) to the picture, and the ordinary stress resulting from divorce can quickly swell to levels that provoke anxiety and overwhelm for all.**

This is especially true for the kids, notes Kimberly King, author of the children’s book *When Your Parents Divorce* (a kid-to-kid guide to dealing with divorce), as they’re often more affected and conflicted by such things as changes in routines and feelings of split loyalty and unwarranted guilt, yet not as equipped to handle them as one would hope the adults are. Their feelings of loss can be heightened at the holidays amid the contrasting projection of others’ excitement and expectations. For some children, this brew of emotional strife and external tension can evoke feelings of depression, physical ailment and/or the desire to avoid holiday festivities altogether.

“No good parent wants to impart stress, anxiety and ill will in the hearts and minds of the children, especially during the holiday season, which we expect to be a time of reunion, celebration, forgiveness, hope and good will,” King said. “But often the adults are still reeling from the newness or ongoing effects of a divorce or separation. They may be so busy tending to holiday-related tasks and events that they miss the signals that a child is suffering in silence and don’t recognize the many opportunities they have to ameliorate stress-provoking situations and facilitate a sense of calm, predictability and even joy by way of some simple forethought and planning.”

King, an elementary-school teacher and mother of three, wrote *When Your Parents Divorce* from both personal experience and the perspective of a child-development professional and early-childhood educator. The 41-page story, illustrated by Julissa Mora, is told in the voice of young Kimmy, with whose experience other kids can easily identify, and includes a section for readers to journal their own experiences.

For parents and extended families, King offers the following tips for navigating the season amid the turbulence of divorce or separation. Why? Because “sometimes the most precious gift an adult can give a child for the holidays is a sense of emotional support and stability and the fond memories that spring from the fun, formative moments that such an environment encourages,” she said.

## Tips for the holidays for newly separated or divorced families

1. Put down the anger and discontent for the holidays.
2. Thanksgiving: Try to preserve existing family traditions in spirit and be flexible and creative in holiday planning. If your custody agreement is somewhat flexible and you’re making an effort to cooperate with your ex-spouse to put the needs of the children first, consider doing two Thanksgivings. For the non-custodial parent, plan to celebrate a week early. The holiday is about being thankful and enjoying family time, after all. You can still celebrate this together, over a wonderful turkey (or alternative) dinner, regardless of the calendar date. On Thanksgiving day, the custodial parent should facilitate a phone call to the other parent. Don’t assume the kids will remember to call on their own; more often than not, they won’t! Kids tend to forget about the other parent when they’re wrapped up in holiday travel and catching up with cousins. There’s nothing worse for the non-present parent than feeling forgotten on a special day, and the unnecessary guilt the kids might feel if they *did* forget can easily be prevented. The custodial parent should take photos of the kids and text or email them to the non-present parent.
3. Christmas, Hanukkah and winter holidays: These can be difficult holidays to divide, but maintaining some form of a tradition that will continue year after year can provide a sense of stability for children. Perhaps an annual plan such as this: The kids spend Christmas Eve and Christmas morning with Dad and Christmas day, dinner and New Year’s Eve with Mom. Kids crave tradition.
4. If you attempt a holiday together, be careful. Especially if the split is recent, heed the following:
   1. Understand that emotions are still raw and kids are still adjusting to this huge life change.
   2. Avoid alcohol, which can fuel hostile or depressive feelings.
   3. Don’t discuss difficult issues or topics with your ex, either in private or in front of the kids.
   4. Agree to keep all discussions within a “non-confrontational sphere” to avoid arguments or disputes.
   5. Be aware that sharing the holiday during a separation or divorce can add to the confusion and might lead kids down a path of false hopes about parents reuniting.
5. Avoid speaking in a negative tone or manner about your ex. Especially during the holidays, avoid all conversations about your ex unless they are kind. Try to get in the holiday spirit by practicing some forgiveness and good will.
6. Show compassion. There’s usually one parent who is not handling the divorce well. Kids may consider that parent the injured party. There is nothing wrong with showing your ex compassion and forgiveness during the holidays or any other time throughout the year. If you can’t be married, at least you can be kind to one another.
7. Always avoid “parentification,” especially during the holidays. Parentification is a form of role reversal, in which a child is inappropriately given the role of meeting the emotional needs of the parent. Don’t confide in your child about the divorce or other life stressors as if they were a friend or other adult. Don’t share with your child that you are depressed because Mommy left you. You have to put on a strong front and protect your children at all costs from any additional stress. Going through a divorce is hard. Get a good therapist or talk to a good friend. Children should never be put in the middle of adult business and emotions.
8. Never participate in parent alienation! This is a group of behaviors that are damaging to children’s mental and emotional well-being and can interfere with a child/parent relationship. It is also considered a form of child abuse in most states. These behaviors, whether verbal or non-verbal, cause a child to be mentally manipulated or to believe that a loving parent is the cause of all his or her problems. The following rules apply to all parents, stepparents and extended family:
   1. Never speak an ill word about the other parent.
   2. Don’t speak to your lawyer on the phone in within earshot of your children.
   3. Don’t share with your child any of the details of your divorce. Even if you’ve been hurt, cheated on, lied to, abandoned, etc. Don’t risk the chance that your child will develop ill will toward the other parent because of you. Kids need to be able to love both parents. Participating in this type of behavior can place the kids in the middle. It can cause a hatred of the other parent and ruin the potential for relationship growth and improvement.

# # #

*Kimberly King is a child-development professional, certified early-childhood educator and speaker. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood development and family studies from University of Maine and a Master of Science degree in early childhood education.* ***She is the author of “I Said ‘No!’,” a best-selling children’s book about sexual-abuse prevention, and “When Your Parents Divorce,” a kid-to-kid guide to dealing with divorce****, illustrated by Julissa Mora. King lives with her family in the Coastal Virginia region and is available for media interviews.*

Learn more about author Kimberly King and her children’s books at: [www.kimberlykingbooks.com](http://www.kimberlykingbooks.com) or [www.bouldenpublishing.com](http://www.bouldenpublishing.com)

*When Your Parents Divorce* is available at: <http://www.amazon.com/Parents-Divorce-guide-dealing-divorce/dp/0615487831>

**Informal pitch to Tony Macrini about author Lynn Johnson:**

Author Lynn Johnson wrote a book titled “Warriors of the Forgotten Front,” an historical fiction based upon his father’s real-life recollections and accounts of battle in WWII.

Although Tony doesn’t do too many on-air interviews anymore, I thought he would be interested in hearing about it.

Why did I think this book would interest Tony Macrini?

I emailed Tony very informally and included the main points: A local man has published a book based upon his dad’s experience in WWII. The battle around which the book is based was one that’s not well known; not a lot has been written about it but what these men went through was fascinating. I said we’d drop off a book and suggested he call Lynn if he’s interested in interviewing him on-air about the book. We happened to see Tony when we got to the studio, so he had the chance to meet Lynn in person. The two chatted for a while off the air. An interview ensued a few weeks later.

I recorded the interview and created a little video to post on his website. You can check it out on Lynn’s home page: <http://www.lcraigjohnson.com/>

**HARO query and response**

30) Summary: Talking To Kids About Divorce

Name: Audrey Keyes Skinny Mom

Category: General   
  
Email: [query-4xu4@helpareporter.net](mailto:query-4xu4@helpareporter.net)   
  
Media Outlet: Skinny Mom  
  
Deadline: 7:00 PM EST - 8 July

Query:   
  
We want to know the best steps to take in discussing divorce  
with your children (whether the parents are getting divorced and  
it therefore directly affects the children, or how to approach  
the topic of a friend's parents getting divorced).

Requirements:   
  
Preferably a family psychologist, pediatrician, or child  
psychologist.

**My HARO response/pitch on behalf of Kimberly King:**

Good morning Audrey,

### For your piece on talking with children about divorce, I introduce and recommend to you Kimberly King, a child-development professional, teacher, mom and author of multiple children’s books, including “When Your Parents Divorce -- a kid-to-kid guide to dealing with divorce” (see book and read synopsis here: <http://www.kimberlykingbooks.com/#!when-your-parents-divorce/c1zf4> ).

### King can share in detail an array of effective ideas, tips and advice for talking with children about what to expect, how to put the divorce into perspective (it’s not their fault, etc.) and more. To start, here are some points she put together for you:

1. When preparing to tell your children about a divorce prepare yourself with a thought-out plan. Be ready to tell your kids the truth in a kid-friendly, age-appropriate way. Leave any and all adult information out of the conversation. If "we are getting divorced because your dad is a cheater" is the truth, keep that to yourself. That may be your truth, but it should never be the kids’ truth. The kids need to know that you can't get along and you can't be married for *adult* reasons. Kids need to know the reasons for divorce have nothing to do with them. Kids tend to blame themselves. Divorce is a grown-up decision that affects kids, and it is our job as good parents to minimize, at all costs, the damage our divorce will cause them.

Try to get your emotions out before you have this meeting, and try to be as stable, calm and gentle as possible during the talk. Understand that this news for kids can be devastating. Be prepared for tears, tantrums, anger and apathy. The range of emotions can span the spectrum.

2. Ideally try to present this information with your spouse. Telling your kids together presents a "united" front. Avoid blaming any parent or giving unnecessary information that might cause additional stress, anxiety or parent alienation. It helps to explain to the kids that you will always be their parents and you will always love and support them. Treating your soon-to-be ex-spouse with respect and kindness is a good example to set from the beginning. Divorced families can still be positive and happy families. It just takes a lot of planning, energy, cooperation and support. Follow the golden rule!

3. Never put your kids in the middle as messengers. All planning and decisions on schedule and custody should be handled directly from parent to parent. Finding a good family therapist can be very helpful here. Also something as simple as doing a joint family calendar for everyone to work on together can help. This can be created and used online, with a tool such as Google Calendar set up in a new, joint account if necessary.

4. Establish mutually agreed-upon rules for each household. When parents work collaboratively and cooperatively the divorce process is easier and less damaging to a child's emotional stability and overall health.

5. Have talks with your kids after the initial meeting. Encourage your kids to talk with you and their friends. Often reading books about the topic or starting a journal is a really productive way to cope with the difficulties of divorce. Kids need to know you are always ready to listen and help. Give your kids the time they need to adjust to this new family situation. Keep a routine, plan fun activities, find the good in each day, keep a journal, read books, and keep talking. Try to maintain the pre-divorce schedule and traditions as much as possible and find ways to create new traditions with your new situations.

### ~Kim King 757-375-5020 [kimberlykingbooks@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlykingbooks@gmail.com)

Feel free to call or email Kimberly to ask her additional questions or arrange an interview.

FYI, here’s a press release we developed last holiday season to help families of divorce handle the holidays: <http://www.kimberlykingbooks.com/#!help-children-of-divorce-handle-holidays/cvd9>

**Other article ideas/opportunities:**

If you’re interested in an article about how to talk to kids about **sexual abuse**, King can also talk about sexual-abuse prevention and recognizing and avoiding the unique “opportunities” for abuse that come this time of year, with summer camps, family vacations, etc. King is also working on a children’s book on **nutrition and exercise**, which aligns beautifully with your clever tagline: *Where moms get the skinny on healthy living*. Feel free to contact her anytime regarding keeping kids healthy, fit and inspired.

*Kimberly King is a child-development professional, certified early-childhood educator and speaker. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood development and family studies from University of Maine and a Master of Science degree in early childhood education. She is the author of “I Said ‘No!’,” a best-selling children’s book about sexual-abuse prevention, and “When Your Parents Divorce,” a kid-to-kid guide to dealing with divorce.*

Best wishes,

Nora Firestone

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Reach Nora Firestone at 757-705-7174 (Calls only; no text service.)

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