

The Causes and Solutions on the Problems of Child Rearing in Single-Parent Family

Fan Jun-qing

Department of Preschool Education, Normal College of Beihua University, Jilin, Jilin, China
fanjq20070128@126.com

ABSTRACT

As a social phenomenon, single-parent family has an important influence on the growth and development of children. However, children from single-parent families may have some problems in the process of growing up. This paper analyzes and explores the causes for possible problems of children from single-parent families which include the economic pressure of single-parent families, weakening of family education functions and lack of social care and then on this basis puts forward the solutions to solve the problems of child rearing in single-parent families. The solutions are as follows: facing reality and eliminating panic, improving education for single-parents, helping children to identify their gender roles successfully and social care.

Keywords: single-parent family, child rearing, problems, causes, solutions

1. PREFACE

With the development of society and the liberation of people's minds, divorce has become a free choice for men and women. However, with the increasing divorce rate, a new social phenomenon has emerged that there are more and more single-parent families and the number of children in single-parent family has increased dramatically. This makes a new task for the vast number of single-parent families and educational institutions how to educate children in single-parent family to make sure they can grow up healthily. Studies show that children in single-parent family are different from children from intact families in thinking, learning, character and even health in a certain extent.

Children from single-parent families may have some problems which can be attributed to the following aspects: First of all, character defects lead to the incomplete development of personality. Some study found that divorce will have a negative impact on the development of children's personality. The common character defects of children from divorced families are depression, inferiority complex, loneliness, cowardice and emotional instability. Secondly, parents' divorce also has a negative impact on children's social development including children's peer relationship, self-control ability, parent-child relationship and gender role identification and identity difficulties.

2. CAUSES

2.1. The Economic Pressure of Single-parent Families

Research has shown that on average a single mother's

income after divorce is significantly reduced. China's Marriage Law stipulates that a divorced parent only has to pay 20 to 30 percent of his or her basic salary to support the child which is only a small percentage of income. Single parents are too busy making money every day to have time or energy to discipline their children. Some parents are so busy with work and their own affairs that they do not know anything about their children's daily life and their attitudes and views on problems. They only find out the problems when the problems are serious, but it seems that it is difficult to correct them.

2.2. Weakening of Family Education Functions

More and more evidence shows that the personality, abilities and limitations of a single parent leave a clearer imprint on the children of single-parent families while the children's personalities in two-parents family are influenced by both parents. In traditional Chinese eyes, the mother is the primary caregiver of the child and the mother is usually the central figure in the children's character formation. As a key figure on behalf of the external world, the father can stimulate children's interest in the external world, improve their observation and thinking ability and attract children into a more beautiful world beyond the mother-child relationship which also affects their social, emotional, cognitive development. The different roles of parents in the development of children and their irreproachability make children in single-parent families prone to have certain difficulties in their personality development. Boys brought up by their mothers may be sentimental and indecisive and girls brought up by their mothers may have curiosity or fear about the opposite sex.

2.2.1. Simple education methods

Parents after divorce tend to have more compassion on their children, pamper blindly and believe that children's various desires should be satisfied to the greatest extent to make up for their regret of being separated from their father or mother which leads to indulgence, love and education imbalance. Some single parents teach their children in a simple and rude way lacking rationality and take their children as a vent or beat and scold constantly. As a result, children live in panic all day, their personality development is severely suppressed and they become timid, withdrawn, stubborn, lacking self-confidence. Some single parents regard their children as the only spiritual support and place all their hopes on their children, but they do not realize that their excessively high expectations are bound to cause excessive psychological pressure on their children.

2.2.2. Lack of education methods and skills of single-parents

In fact, no matter how father or mother in single-parent family make up for their children's lost love from father or mother is a permanent defect which is regrettable. Therefore, it is hard for single parents to avoid defects in their own qualities and education methods and skills meanwhile they suffer from the lack of children's father or mother to make up.

2.3. Lack of Social Care

It is widely believed that the children in single-parent families is likely to be psychologically unhealthy. The public media such as radio, newspapers, magazines, films and TV also repeatedly play up the psychological health of the children in single-parent families. All of this make people have a psychological set. Under the pressure of social prejudice, children from single-parent families are more negatively affected psychologically. The more the society thinks these children are abnormal and withdrawn, the more they will have low self-esteem, depression, loneliness and lack of contact with others which leads to a vicious circle.

3. SOLUTIONS

3.1. Facing Reality and Eliminating Panic

Public reports on single-parent families are often negative. For example, some people think single parent families are pathological and the children in single parent families have high crime rate. In fact, children living in single-parent families are not only unfortunate, but also helpless. Compared with the normal family, children living in

single-parent families is affected negatively in a degrees, but lack of involvement of a father or mother in a child's development is not catastrophic damage to the children. If both parents can deal with their relationship well and continue to give their love to children, children will grow healthily like other children. The key is education methods and many children in single-parent family grow up very well. Therefore, there is no need to panic for single parents and facing reality and having a good attitude is very important.

3.2. Improving Education for Single-parents

3.2.1. Educate yourself first

First of all, parents should improve their awareness of education. Children need love, so parents should try to give children a complete love to make up for the incomplete feelings from the other mother or father. Above all, keeping the awareness as parents is a duty. Parents should be calm and brave to face the reality and cheer up to create a good family atmosphere for their children. Single-parent families can create such a healthy and normal family environment for their children by improving the education level and quality of single parents.

3.2.2. Combine love with education

3.2.2.1. Don't hide the truth of the divorce from your children

Out of fear of hurting their children, many divorced parents often make a fundamental mistake: hiding the truth from their children. In fact, it has the opposite effect. In order to establish a stable and healthy mother-child community or father-child community in a single-parent family, the children should be told the truth that the parents divorced because they did not love each other. According to the age of the children, parents should gradually explain in order to let the child learn to understand this fact. The divorced parents should put aside their personal grievances calmly and rationally, treat their children with a broad mind and a tolerant and cheerful attitude and work together to help children through the immediate psychological crisis and temporary difficulties.

3.2.2.2. Foster the independence of children

Children in single-parent families live with one of their mothers and fathers. For compensation reasons, adults tend to show excessive sympathy and spoil to children which easily leads to their psychological vulnerability and makes them become selfish or indifferent to others. Due to the lack of effective discipline and restraint, children from

single-parent families tend to have problems in self-adjustment and adaptability and they are easy to form bad behavior habits. Children from single-parent families should be educated rationally. When children do something wrong, parents should tell children to have the courage to take responsibility. Parents should be clear about what is right and what is wrong and should not shelter their children because they feel guilty. In addition, the word "single parent" should not always be on the lips because the influence from parents plays an extremely important role in the growth of children.

3.2.2.3. *Set moderate expectations for children*

Many single parents regard their children as the only spiritual support and place all their hopes on their children requiring them to excel everywhere, but they do not realize that excessively high expectations are bound to cause excessive psychological pressure on their children. As the parents of single-parent families, they should establish appropriate expectations for their children and place the fulcrum of life on themselves instead of placing all their hopes on their children. In this way, they will not have unrealistic hopes for their children and will not make their children feel too much pressure so as to promote their healthy growth.

3.3. *Helping Children to Identify their Gender Roles Successfully*

In family education, the influence of father and mother on children is different. Fathers have a significant impact on their children's independence, confidence, social skills, intellectual development and empathy and mothers have a great influence on their children in caress, modesty, normative behavior, carefulness and meticulousness. Children have begun to develop sex role socialization and gradually acquire gender role standards through interaction with parents and people around them. In fact, same-sex parents are just the reference and model for children to learn gender roles. Children in single-parent families live only with their mother or father, so they inevitably lack such resources. Therefore, try to let same-sex parents often interact with their children because children will gain some appropriate gender behavior in the process of interaction with same-sex parents. Little boys are more independent, decisive and brave and little girls are more gentle, delicate and gentle.

3.4. *Social Care*

The whole society should care about the growth and education of children from single-parent families and give them care, sympathy and help rather than discriminate and ignore them. Everybody should protect the self-esteem of these children and give them extra attention and education.

The society should set up a consulting agency for single-parent on children education, set up a school for parents and open a telephone for consultation to make sure the children from single-parent family can ask for help in time when they encounter problems. Divorced parents should supplement educational resources to raise their children and improve their educational level by attending parents' schools and other training. The society also should impart the scientific method of educating children in single-parent families through film, television, radio, newspapers and periodicals.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper analyzes and explores the causes for possible problems of children from single-parent families and then on this basis puts forward the solutions to solve the problems of child rearing in single-parent families in order to help children from single-parent families to grow and develop better. The solutions are as follows: facing reality and eliminating panic, improving education for single-parents, helping children to identify their gender roles successfully and social care.

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