

TOP TEN MOST COMMON STUFF ABOUT STEPFAMILIES

1. Stepfamilies are more complicated than other families – there are often more people (like stepbrothers and stepsisters) around to get along with and get to know better.
2. While stepkids have only one family, it is normal for them to belong to two (or more!) households.
3. Lots of times at least one of a stepkid's parents is not around all the time. The parent might be living in another household or is only living in memory.
4. Everyone in a stepfamily has a different family history. This can make it challenging to understand where family members are coming from and how to deal with each of them.
5. A stepkid has known (and loved!) their parent longer than their stepparent has. It can be frustrating trying to share a Mom or a Dad with a stranger.
6. Stepparents are new to being your caretaker and sometimes they have never been parents at all before. They may put new rules in place that seem like they expect their stepkid to be a baby again or your parents might have their own baby that makes life even more complicated.
7. Stepfamilies are formed as part of someone (or everyone!) being hurt. Expressing your feelings of hurt is very important.
8. Stepfamilies are never someone's first family and they usually aren't anything alike. Face it – family change happens and learning to deal with it is what matters most.
9. As a stepkid, expect it to take lots of time and effort to make it all work with new family members. Communication between everyone is very important.
10. While stepfamilies are the most common form of family now in the United States, not everyone gets it. Sometimes stepkids are teased about living in a stepfamily – they should stand up for themselves and tell a trusted adult.

