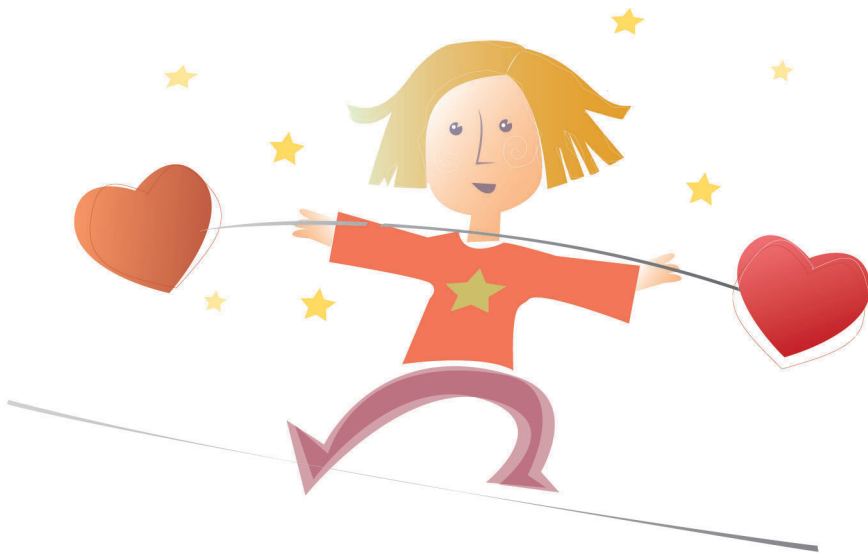


# HAVEN'T I GOT A SAY?



**BARNE- OG LIKESTILLINGSDEPARTEMENTET**

*The Ministry of Children and Equality*

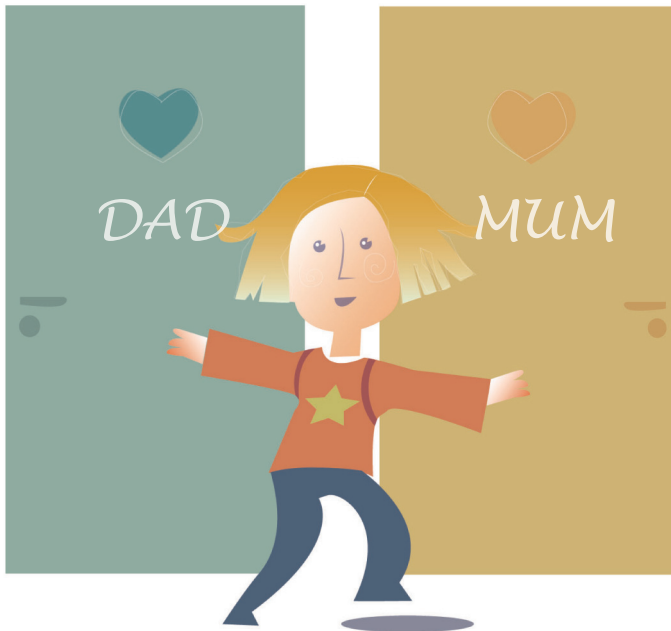
# HAVEN'T I GOT A SAY?

Have your parents told you that they are going to move apart?  
This brochure is about what happens when parents have decided  
that they don't want to live together any more.



## Difficult feelings

It can be difficult when parents move apart and don't want to be together any more. You may feel sad, frightened, disappointed and angry. Whatever you feel, it's OK, because you are who you are. Some children have experienced that their parents have quarrelled a lot before deciding to move apart. Then they may even feel a bit relieved that their parents are moving apart. Other children have never experienced that their parents have quarrelled. Then it may be difficult to



understand why they can't live together. Remember that, even if your parents will no longer live together, they will both still be your parents. Some children wonder whether it could be their fault that their Mum and Dad no longer want



*Remember that, even if your parents will no longer*



to live together, but that is not the case. It is just something that has happened in the relationship between the grown-ups that makes them want to live apart. You might find it good – and important – to have someone to talk to.

*live together, they will both still be your parents*

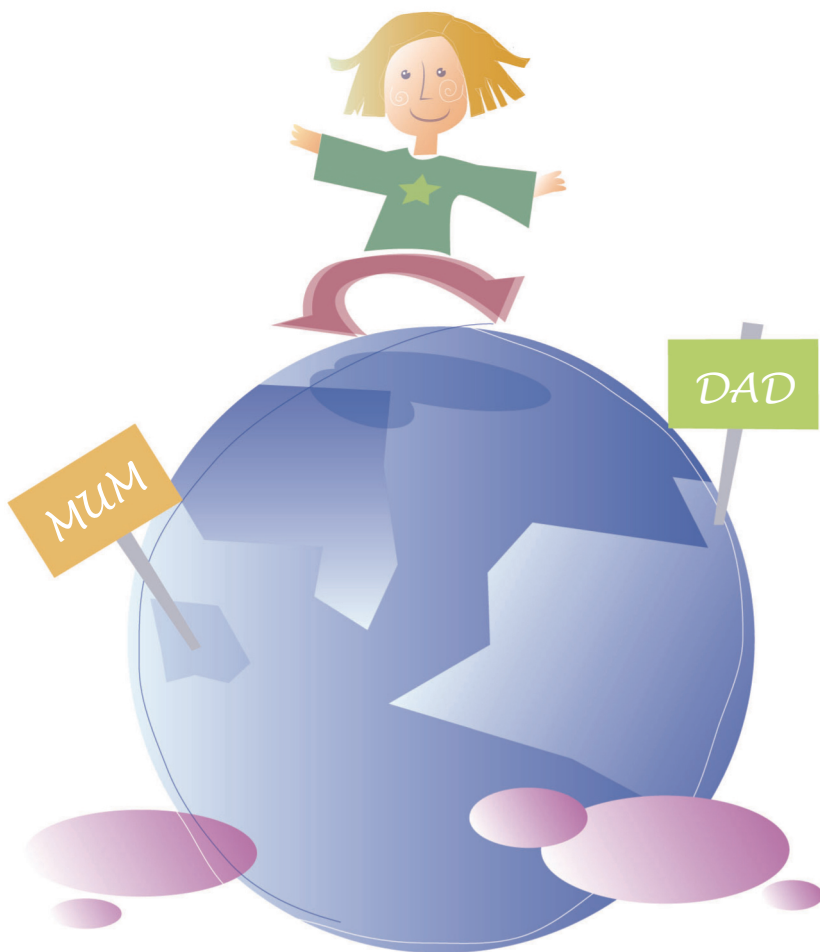
*Where am I going to live? Do we have to move? Where is the parent I don't*



It may be a good idea to tell your parents how you feel and what thoughts you have about what is going to happen. If you do not feel like talking to them, it may be a good idea to think whether there is another grown-up you trust and who cares about you and your family, for example a close relative, a teacher or a health visitor. It may also be OK to talk to friends. Lots of children have experienced the same as you. It is normal to wonder about what is going to happen. Your parents must make some important choices concerning you. They must agree on which of them you are to live with most.

Parents may decide that you are to live with Mum or with Dad. They may also decide that you are to live just as much with each of them. As a rule, you will go to school where you live. Your parents must decide how much you are to be together with the parent you don't live with. Parents choose different solutions. Some children are together with the parent they don't live with one day a week and every other

*live with going to live? Will I lose my friends? Will I have to change school?*



weekend. Some children are almost as much with both of their parents. Some children see much less of the parent they don't live with.

### *It's about me. What about my thoughts?*

When parents move apart, it is they who decide where the children will live. But, if you are more than seven years old, your parents **HAVE TO** ask you what you think would be a good way of doing things for you – and you have a right to be heard. This does not mean that it is you who decide, but that your parents must listen to what you say. Nor does this mean that you **MUST** say anything about these things if you don't want to or if you don't know what you want. It is up to you. Mum and Dad must respect it if you don't want to say anything.

It can be a good idea for you and your parents to talk a bit about what things will be like after they move apart. What do you want things to be like for you? Is there anything you are anxious about? It is important that you tell your parents what

*Sometimes parents can't agree*





*on who the children are to live with*

*It is important that you tell your parents what you are concerned*



you are concerned about. Sometimes grown-ups may feel hurt by what you say, but grown-ups must tackle that. It is their job to make sure that things are OK for you!

about. It is their job to make sure that things are OK for you!

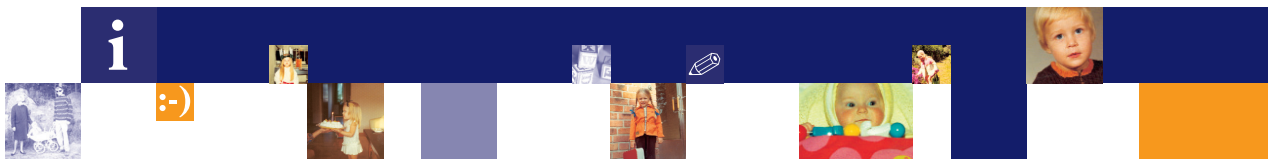


Sometimes parents can't agree on who the children are to live with. They may disagree about what is best both for you and for themselves. When your parents can't manage to agree, they need help. Then they can ask a mediator at a family counselling office or they can ask a judge in a court to decide for them. Sometimes the judge is helped by an expert (a person who knows a lot about children). Sometimes one of these three persons (mediator, judge, expert) may ask to talk to you to hear about your thoughts. You have a right to be heard, but you also have a right to decide not to say anything.

*You have a right to be heard, but you also*



*have a right to decide not to say anything.*



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