



NAVIGATING PARENTING AFTER SEPARATION/DIVORCE

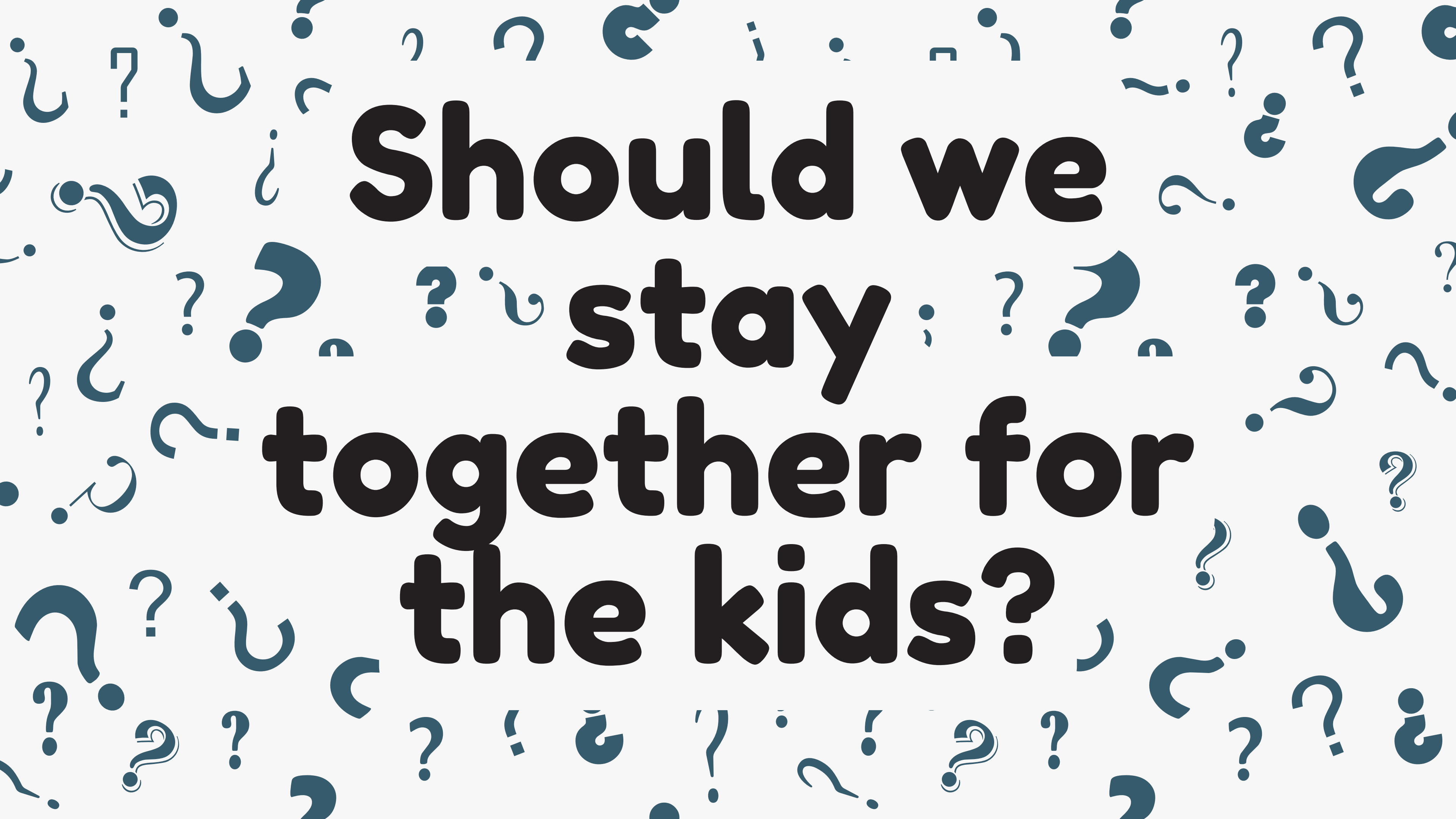
**PRACTICAL INSIGHTS AND
RESEARCH-BASED
STRATEGIES**



INTRODUCTION

My name is Dr. Karey O'Hara.

I am a child clinical psychologist and researcher dedicated to helping families navigate separation and divorce.

The background of the image is a light gray color, densely populated with numerous question marks in a dark teal or blue color. The question marks vary in size and are scattered across the entire frame, creating a pattern that suggests a state of inquiry or uncertainty. The main text is centered and reads:

**Should we
stay;
together for
the kids?**



HOW DO I HELP MY CHILDREN NAVIGATE THIS DIFFICULT SITUATION?



It's not divorce itself that harms children - it's **how** parents navigate divorce that can put children at risk for negative outcomes.



PRACTICAL INSIGHTS

What can four decades of research tell us?

**IS SEPARATION
AND
DIVORCE
BAD
FOR
CHILDREN?**



considerable variability

based on **HOW**
parents navigate divorce



consistent but small
difference in mental health

high prevalence
of divorce
(In U.S. ~
1 million / yr)

**most children
are resilient!**



Six-Year Follow-up of Preventive Interventions for Children of Divorce

Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology

A Randomized Controlled Trial

Published in final edited form as:
Fam Court Rev. 2009 July

The New Beginning

Families: Moving from Efficacy

S.A. Wolchik, I.N. Sandler, S. Jones, N. Goins, J. Braver

Abstract

This article describes a program of research (NBP), a university-tested prevention program. The status of four steps in this research are described: (1) Selecting a community partner; (2) Developing effective methods of engaging parents; (3) Redesigning the NBP to be easily delivered with high quality and fidelity in community agencies, and (4) Adapting the NBP to meet the needs of the full population of divorcing families. The article concludes with a discussion of plans for an effectiveness trial to evaluate the NBP when delivered in community settings.

When compared with their peers with nondivorced parents, adolescents with divorced parents are more likely to have mental health problems, drop out of school, and become pregnant. The long-term effects of intervention programs for this population are being evaluated in a randomized controlled trial.

The effectiveness of 2 programs designed to prevent mental health problems in adolescents with divorced parents.

The study was a randomized controlled trial of 2 intervention programs (a group program and 2 individual sessions; mother plus child sessions for children) and a control condition (no intervention) which was conducted in a large metropolitan area in 2000.

Forty percent of the original sample (with adolescents interviewed).

Some Measures Externalizing and internalizing problems, diagnosed mental health problems, drug and alcohol use, and number of sexual partners.

Eleven percent of adolescents in the mother plus child program (95% confidence interval [CI], 3.8%-18.2%) had a 1-year prevalence of diagnosed mental health problems compared with 23.5% (95% CI, 13.8%-33.2%) of adolescents in the control condition. Adolescents in the mother plus child program had fewer sexual partners (mean = 0.68 [SD = 1.61]) compared with adolescents in the control program (mean = 1.12 [SD = 1.61]).

Providing services to families is a shared value among family service providers. This article chronicles the development of the New Beginning Program (NBP), a parenting intervention designed to motivate high functioning parents to engage in effective parenting. The development of these programs was facilitated by a collaboration between the University of Colorado at Boulder and the National Center for Children, Youth, and Families. We describe our collaboration with the family service programs. Finally, we summarize lessons learned from the development of these programs for separated/divorcing

protective
resources make
ALL the
difference!



CONNECTION
COPING
CONFLICT





RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES

What can I do to support my children's
resilience during this time?



CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT.

calm discussions. problem solving.
learn to play “same game,
different rules.” avoid children
acting as spies, messengers, or
confidants. keep children out of
the middle. help them love their
other parent. avoid badmouthing.
neutral body language.



STRONG CONNECTIONS.

build family bonds. lead with warmth. be an askable parent. use good listening. show love and affection. use effective discipline. keep consistent routines. catch em' doing good. *schedule* family fun time and one-on-one time. self-care.

POSITIVE COPING.

emotion coaching.
calming techniques.
distraction actions.
social support.
modeling.



**THE POWER OF PARENTING
IS UNMATCHED.**

