

Start with Extension for credible relationship guidance

I'm recently married and became a stepmother, and sometimes I'm not sure I handle certain situations (both with my husband and the children) in the best way. I've looked at some advice books at the library, but it's hard to judge which might be the most credible. Any ideas where I can get general (but expert) advice?

Everyone could use some expert advice now and then, especially when dealing with new situations. But you're right, sometimes it can be hard to find.

One place to turn to is Extension. Based at land-grant universities, Extension professionals offer research-based information on a wide range of topics, including parenting and family relationships.

For example, Ohio State University Extension offers a couple of blogs you might be interested in. One, called "Stepfamilies Today" (<http://stepfamilies.today.wordpress.com/>) offers guidance from a team of Family and Consumer Science professionals on — what else? — stepfamilies. The other, "Eat, Save, and Be Healthy" (<http://osufcs.wordpress.com/>), offers general guidance focused on healthy people (particularly regarding nutrition and food safety), healthy finances, and healthy relationships.

Another resource you might find useful



is "Navigating Life's Journey," offered by the University of Arkansas's Cooperative Extension Service. Navigating Life's Journey offers information on personal well-being; couples, relationships and marriage; and parenting.

You can sign up (at http://www.arfamilies.org/family_life/life_journey/) to receive e-mail messages on one, two or all three of the topics. Articles are brief, but you can click on links for more information. Or, you can read the Navigating Life's Journey blog online at <http://uofacesfamilylife.wordpress.com/>.

Though it's just a few months old, Navigating Life's Journey has already offered guidance on a wide variety of issues, including tips on:

- How to redirect a misbehaving child.
- Reigniting the romance in a relationship.
- Identifying and capitalizing on your personal strengths.
- How to handle a situation when you're angry with your spouse or partner.
- Preventing a downward spiral when you have negative thoughts about yourself.
- Building children's decision-making skills.

Each post is accompanied by a quote from an expert and where you can learn more. Like all Extension resources, it's information you can trust.

Family Fundamentals is a monthly column on family issues. It is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Family Fundamentals, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1044, or filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



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Dear Subscriber: This column was reviewed by Kara Newby, program specialist in Human Development and Family Science in the College of Education and Human Ecology for Ohio State University Extension.

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