

Ask Miriam...

Individuals and families in the community are faced with challenging issues and concerns regarding their social, emotional and psychological health. Through the cooperation of **The Jewish World**, Jewish Family Services will offer responses.

Q. Dear Miriam,

I am considering moving my parents to this area so they can be closer to us. They are still doing fairly well, but I see some signs that indicate that they will need help in the near future.

We have discussed the possibility of their moving here and they are not receptive to the idea.

I know that if I insist, they would probably make the move. It would be easier for us if they were here, but I don't want to force them into something that will make them unhappy. What should I do?

Conflicted Daughter

Dear Conflicted Daughter,

You should as honestly as possible consider all of the circumstances.

It is difficult for older adults (or anyone) who have lived in one location for a long time to adjust to relocation. Losses pile up as we get older. Leaving one's home can be a loss in addition to a change.

If and when they come to this area, make sure they are located in an area that gives them the opportunity for independence. For example, moving someone from N.Y.C. to the suburbs without transportation would probably be only for your convenience.

The best decision is to help people stay where they are for as long as possible, assuming they want to stay. Get some help in for them. When and if that is no longer safe or sufficient, you need to make decisions based on both your and their physical and emotional health. Going every weekend to take care of parents who are out of town can be a burnout.

When you need to have them make the move, try to find a living arrangement that most closely approximates their lifestyle and interests.

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Q. Dear Miriam,

My husband and I have been divorced for two years. We have two sons ages 10 and 12. My ex-husband is now seeing someone and it appears to be a serious relationship.

After my sons return from a visit with their father, I get the impression from what they say that this woman is trying to act as their mother. This is very upsetting to me and I would like to know what I could do about this?

Unhappy Mom

Dear Unhappy Mom,

Since I don't know the nature of your relationship with your ex-husband, I assume it is a reasonable one. I suggest that you speak with him alone and discuss your concerns for the best welfare of the children. You should not be critical of his new relationship.

We know it is difficult for children to deal with all the relationships in divorced and remade families.

Work together to clarify for the children the roles everyone in the new family arrangement plays.

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Miriam Adler, A.C.S.W., C.S.W., is assistant director of J.F.S. She answers most frequently asked questions. please send questions to "Ask Miriam," c/o Jewish Family Services of NENY, 877 Madison Ave., Albany, NY 12208 or e-mail madler@jfsne-ny.org or call 518-482-8856.