

# 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,**

*My son and daughter-in-law have been having marital problems. They have two children ages 10 and 13. I have a good relationship with the entire family. This has been a difficult time for them.*

*The children are being exposed to a lot of arguing and hostility between their mother and father. While I know that this is not good for them, I wonder if a divorce would be any better.*

*The children are scared about their mother and father not being together.*

*Should I try to convince my son and daughter-in-law to stay together for the children?*

**Worried Grandmother**

## **A. Dear Worried Grandmother,**

You can't change the problems between your son and daughter-in-law, and you can't know if a marriage is salvageable or should end. There are, however, several things you can do.

First, if your children have not sought professional help, urge them to do that. Even if a couple does not stay together, there are constructive ways to get divorced particularly when children are involved.

Second, don't allow yourself to be used by either your son or daughter-in-law to validate their issues against the other.

You can let them know that your concern and role at this time is to give the children a safe and supportive person in their lives. You represent the family continuity for your grandchildren and this is an extremely important role.



**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@jfsneny.org](mailto:madler@jfsneny.org) or call 518-482-8856.**