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## Advice for getting through a divorce

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*Divorce Coach*

*What can I do to stop my ex-husband from telling lies about me to anyone who will listen? I'm losing friends left and right.*

All I can say is that they weren't really your friends.

Those that know you will know to turn a deaf ear. Shakespeare was a wise man when he said, "The lady doth protest too much!" Don't lose your credibility by defending yourself. Spend that time making new friends. An attorney friend of mine told me once that the friends you make after your divorce are the friends that you will have for a long time. I hope you find comfort in that.

*My daughter comes home from her dad's wearing makeup and clothes that my ex-husband's live-in gives her. They are clearly not age appropriate. I have tried talking to both of them, but they are smug and tell me they will do what they wish "on their watch."*

Just a wild guess here, but I would bet you felt like jumping through the phone and strangling them? No doubt this is tough. You feel walked over as a mother by the live-in, feel powerless with your ex and the bad guy with your daughter. Have no fear, your inner strength is here! Simply put, you are going to take back the power. Send an email to your ex in a very professional way outlining why you feel these are inappropriate (this is for documentation purposes). After that, no need to say another word. When your daughter comes home dressed that way, calmly explain to her that you understand how she might find the make up and clothes "cool", but that it is not age appropriate. Again, you understand she is allowed to wear them at her dad's, but not here. Ask her to change and tone down the make up. Don't bad mouth the dad or the live in, just be matter-of-fact. Don't get into a dis-

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cussion with her, as this is not up for debate. You might not be able to control what goes on at his house, but you certainly can take back the power in your home. I have also known a time or two when the clothes goblins come at night and whisk those clothes to the netherworld, never to be seen again.

*When my children come back from their dad's, all I hear about is the girlfriend and what fun they had. I'm sick of hearing it. What can I say to them without sounding bitter?*

I will assume they are "filling you in", not to be mean. That assumption in place, understand that they are viewing this as sharing with you. As painful as it might be, you want to keep open communication with them. Try steering the conversation in the direction you would like it to go. When you feel enough time has passed, perhaps guide them to do homework or get settled in. Let me acknowledge your feelings here for a minute. I know it's really hard to have your children gone, only to come home and extol how great the weekend at dad's was, especially if you have spent your weekend organizing closets with your cat. So, let me leave you with this thought. Would you rather have your children spending an entire weekend where they are unhappy? The depth of a mother's love knows no bounds, even when it adds to her own unhappiness.

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