

THE STEPMOTHERS' ROLE IN THE FAMILY AND THEIR QUALITIES

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Abstract

This article is about the stepmothers' role in the family, their challenges, qualities and attitudes to their stepchildren. The image of the evil stepmother, a trope ingrained in our cultural consciousness, often overshadows the reality of what it means to be a stepmother. While the challenges are undeniable, the role of a stepmother is far more nuanced and multifaceted than the stereotypical portrayal suggests. They are often thrust into a pre-existing family dynamic, navigating a complex web of relationships and expectations. They are expected to instantly love and care for children who may not welcome them with open arms. The pressure to be a perfect mother figure, while simultaneously respecting the biological mother's role, can be overwhelming. They have to overcome some challenges in a new family, firstly, establishing a bond with stepchildren can be challenging. It takes time, patience, and understanding to earn their trust and respect. They must find a delicate balance between being involved and respecting the biological mother's role. Establishing clear boundaries is crucial to avoid conflict and ensure everyone feels comfortable. And also, stepmothers often face unrealistic expectations from both their partners and stepchildren. They are expected to be the perfect parent, without the benefit of years of shared history. Stepmothers are often judged by society, facing stereotypes and misconceptions. They may be seen as intruders or rivals, even if they are genuinely trying to build a loving family.

Keywords: Stepmother, challenges, their role, society, family.

Introduction

The role of a stepmother in a family is multifaceted and complex, evolving beyond a simple "replacement" for the biological mother. Stepmothers play a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging for all members of the blended family. This involves fostering a supportive and loving environment where everyone feels accepted and valued. They must navigate a complex web of relationships, including their relationship with their partner, stepchildren, and sometimes the biological mother. And also, they can help establish new family traditions and rituals that create shared experiences and strengthen family bonds. There are like these kind stepmothers who can support their stepchildren by listening their problems, keeping their secrets and allowing to express their feelings.

The guidance and discipline of stepmothers can be very important for their stepchildren, working alongside their partners to establish clear rules and expectations. However, this requires careful consideration of the children's needs and the existing family dynamics.

Because the stepchildren can learn a lot of actions or character of their stepmothers by their demonstrating values like kindness, empathy, and resilience.

Another positive quality of stepmothers is that, they always should respect the biological mother of children, even if she is not present in the children's lives and avoid negative comments about the mother and respect the children's relationship with her. That's why stepmothers need to find a balance between being involved in their stepchildren's lives and respecting their need for space and autonomy. This involves setting healthy boundaries and allowing the children to maintain their own relationships with their biological parents.

Stepmothers often face the challenges like dealing with conflicting expectations, managing difficult emotions, and navigating complex family dynamics. It's important to seek support from other stepmothers, therapists, or support groups to navigate these challenges.

The role of a stepmother is evolving beyond the traditional "wicked" stereotype. Modern stepmothers are often seen as strong, supportive figures who contribute significantly to the well-being of their blended families. It's important for each stepmother to define her own role within the family, based on her individual strengths, the needs of her stepchildren, and the dynamics of the blended family.

Being a stepmother is so a rewarding and hard experience that they can face the following set of challenges. Stepchildren may be grieving the loss of their biological family or have negative experiences with previous relationships, making them resistant to accepting a new figure in their lives. But some stepchildren may feel threatened by the stepmother's presence, leading to competition for their partner's attention and affection. And some stepchildren may have experienced trauma in their past, making it difficult for them to trust new adults, especially those entering their family structure.

There are like these stepmothers, they often struggle to find the right balance between being involved and respecting the biological mother's role. This can lead to conflict and resentment from both sides. Some stepmothers often face unrealistic expectations from both their partners and stepchildren. They are expected to be the perfect parent, without the benefit of years of shared history. But some of them and their partners may have different parenting styles, leading to disagreements and confusion for the children. They may experience grief related to the loss of their partner's previous relationship, especially if it was a painful or sudden separation and feel like outsiders in their own family, especially if they are not fully accepted by their stepchildren. As a result, the demands of being a stepmother can be overwhelming, leading to stress, burnout, and feelings of inadequacy and often face negative stereotypes and misconceptions, being portrayed as "wicked" or "intruders" in popular culture. Society often places unrealistic expectations on stepmothers, judging them for their perceived failures or perceived lack of "motherly" instincts. Some stepmothers often suffer from the lack of the social support networks available to biological mothers, making it difficult to find understanding and guidance.

Some stepmothers may face challenges related to financial arrangements, custody agreements, and legal matters, especially if the biological mother is involved. In this situations it is difficult to deal with extended family members who may have their own opinions and expectations which can add to the complexity of the situation. But these challenges are not insurmountable.



Open communication, patience, understanding, and a willingness to seek support can help stepmothers navigate these difficulties and build strong, loving relationships with their stepchildren and partners.

Stepmothers need to be able to talk to their partners and stepchildren about their feelings and needs. Open and honest communication plays an essential role for creating a healthy stepfamily. Building strong relationships in a new family, takes time and patience. Stepmothers should not expect to be instantly accepted or loved.

Stepmothers need to prioritize their own well-being. Taking time for themselves to relax and recharge is crucial for managing stress and maintaining a positive outlook. They can benefit from seeking support from other stepmothers, therapists, or support groups. Sharing experiences and learning from others can be invaluable. Despite the challenges, being a stepmother can be incredibly rewarding. It offers the opportunity to build a new family, experience the joy of parenting, and create lasting bonds with stepchildren.

Stepmothers can develop deep and meaningful relationships with their stepchildren, offering unconditional love and support. They can create new family traditions and experiences, forging memories that strengthen family bonds. The role of a stepmother can be a journey of personal growth, fostering empathy, patience, and resilience.

In our society we cannot refuse there is the stereotypical image of the evil stepmother. Stepmothers are individuals with their own unique experiences, motivations, and challenges. They are often unsung heroes, working tirelessly to create a loving and supportive family environment. Recognizing the complexities of being a stepmother is crucial. We must offer understanding, support, and appreciation for the difficult yet rewarding role they play. By acknowledging their challenges and celebrating their achievements, we can help dismantle harmful stereotypes and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for stepfamilies. Stepmothers should try to understand their stepchildren's feelings and experiences. They need to recognize that the children might be dealing with grief, anger, or confusion about the changes in their lives. In some situations, stepmothers need to be able to put themselves in their stepchildren's shoes and understand their perspectives. This allows them to respond with compassion and sensitivity. Stepmothers should show genuine care and concern for their stepchildren. They should be willing to listen to their problems and offer support when needed. Stepmothers need to be able to communicate openly and honestly with their partners, stepchildren, and other family members. This helps to build trust and avoid misunderstandings and also they should be good listeners, paying attention to what their stepchildren are saying, both verbally and nonverbally. This shows that they care and are willing to understand. Stepmothers need to be flexible and adaptable, open to new experiences and traditions, embracing the unique aspects of their blended family, as family dynamics can change quickly. They should be willing to adjust their approach based on the needs of their stepchildren and the changing situation. And also stepmothers need to establish clear boundaries with their stepchildren, partners, and other family members. This helps to ensure that everyone feels respected and their needs are met.

Stepmothers need to be aware of their own feelings and emotions, and how they might impact their interactions with their stepchildren.



In conclusion, being a stepmother is a complex and rewarding role. It requires patience, understanding, and a willingness to embrace the challenges and celebrate the joys. Ultimately, the role of a stepmother is about building a loving and supportive family environment where everyone feels valued and connected. It requires patience, understanding, and a willingness to embrace the complexities and rewards of this unique family dynamic. Stepmothers need to prioritize their own well-being. They should take time for themselves to relax, recharge, and maintain a positive outlook. These are just some of the qualities that can contribute to a successful stepmother-stepchild relationship. Every family is unique, and what works for one family might not work for another. The most important thing is to be open, honest, and willing to learn and grow together.

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