

## HELPING OUR CHILD NAVIGATE OUR DIFFERENCES:

**We want to show up for our child & not put down our partner. Putting down our partner can also be hurtful for our child to witness.**

Here are some examples with some scripts to give the overall idea:

- When our partner yells at our child:

**"Wow, I heard some loud voices. Are you okay?"**

Listen to how they are feeling, offer empathy & validation. This sounds like: **"I understand you feel that way, being yelled at doesn't feel good"**. We can also ask them to share how they feel with our partner if we feel this will be beneficial. So saying something like: **"Do you want to share how you feel & discuss this with your father/mother?"**

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This one is important to clarify & discuss with our partners beforehand.

- When our partner puts our child in a time-out & **we are present:**

**"I'm going to stay right here with you in your room (or wherever child is sent to stay for a time-out)"**

Listen to whatever they share with us, offer empathy & validation. This sounds like: **"I hear you, I'm right here with you."** We can also ask them to share how they feel with our partner if we feel this will be beneficial. So saying something like: **"Do you want to share how you feel & discuss this with your father/mother?"**

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- When our partner physically abuses our child:  
**"Can I give you a hug?"** Listen to whatever they share with us, offer empathy & validation. This sounds like:  
**"How you feel makes sense. You are not worthy of being hurt in any way"**. We can also ask them to share how they feel with our partner if we feel this will be beneficial. So saying something like: **"Do you want to share how you feel & discuss this with your father/mother?"**

**\*\*\* Actively discuss with your partner that this will not be acceptable & share that it's unfair to our child that they are treated this way.\*\*\***

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Ways we can gently enter conversations (we overhear our partner & child having) where we want to add how we feel about a situation:

- "I heard you say XYZ, **can I share how I feel about that?** We each can feel so differently towards that and I want to share my thoughts too."
- We can tell our partner, "**I'd love to discuss that privately before sharing** our decision with (child's name), would that be okay with you?"
- "**Can I join your conversation?**"

## HELPING OUR CHILD NAVIGATE OUR DIFFERENCES:

When our child comes to complain about something between them & our partner. Here are some possible responses that we might find helpful:

- "That does sound tough."
- "I wonder what you can do about that?"
- "I hear you. How you feel makes sense."
- "What do you think about discussing this with **your father/mother?**" If they don't feel safe doing this on their own, we can propose to have a conversation as a family.