

Relationship Advice: Making Sure You Do What's Best for the Kids



By Jane Greer, PhD

for GalTime.com

Denise Richards, ex-wife of Charlie Sheen and the mother of two of his children, now has temporary custody of Sheen's sons with his *other* ex-wife Brooke Mueller. Brooke and Charlie have both struggled publically with substance abuse for many years. Though Brooke is not making comments at this time, US Weekly confirmed that the removal of the children from her home was due to an "unsafe environment" caused by "[her] ongoing alleged drug use." The children, four-year-old twin boys Bob and Max, have moved in with Denise and are living with their sisters, Denise's children with Charlie, Sam and Lola, and Denise's adopted daughter, Eloise. Denise, who has

not remarried since her divorce from Sheen in 2005, is now a single mom to all five kids under the age of 12. She has cared for the twins before, saying the boys are “family” and she would, “do anything for them.” It has been reported that Charlie is supportive of the idea.

Taking the children in is an impressive choice on Denise’s part; with all the turmoil and strife that she and Charlie clearly shared in their marriage and then in their divorce, her ability to do this is a terrific example of putting the children first. His acceptance of it is equally positive. It isn’t easy to put all those negative feelings to the side so the children involved can be properly and well taken care of. Bad marriages that then lead into bad divorces are often a tough place to be for the kids who are a product of that relationship because so often they are used as pawns or even weapons in the fight. But Denise isn’t letting that happen. She is managing to maintain the family unit and step up to the plate, keeping the priorities where they should be. It is commendable because it is such a difficult road to travel.

When moving toward or out of a divorce, people tend to be in reactive mode and aren’t always able to think things through as Denise seems to be doing. Instead of just getting angry, she was able to respond to the situation and handle it. While it is easy to get caught up in competitive and rivalrous feelings toward the new wife, in this case Charlie’s third ex-wife Brooke, Denise didn’t let that get in the way. Being able to move beyond that is an act of maturity.

For anyone in this situation, those feelings that follow the aftermath of a divorce are real and often quite overpowering. But you don’t have to let them interfere with doing the right thing on behalf of the children. Denise is adult enough to know when it’s time to put her differences aside for the sake of the children involved. Kudos to her.