

Handling the “Kids” Question On a Date



By Sheila Blagg for GalTime.com

The kids-or-no-kids debate is an issue for many couples. But, bring a child into a new dating relationship and the issue becomes even more complex. As people move from one relationship into the dating realm, they often wonder, “Does he want kids?,” Will she still want to date me?”

When both parties are on the same page in regard to the kids question (either in favor of kids or not), the new relationship experiences fewer bumps. But if one wants kids and the other doesn't, the debate may result in a huge rift that not many couples survive.

When to talk about kids

It is my opinion that the do-you-want-(more)-children question should be tackled within the first couple of dates. Why continue to date someone who doesn't have the same goals and desires as you do? Sure, there are some cases where, along the way, someone changes his or her mind, and everyone lives happily ever after, but there are more cases that end in heartbreak and anger.

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Are you willing to take that chance? Does it make sense to invest so much time in a relationship that may never work?

Most people know whether or not they want children by the time they reach adulthood. Personally, I have five children, and three of them already know that they definitely want to have kids of their own. One of my kids is a no go, and one is still on the fence (which is fine since he's only 14!). My point is that, even though my kids are still relatively young, they already have a picture of what they want their family lives to look like.

I can change his/her mind

I've heard so many stories of heartbreak resulting from one person trying to change a potential partner's mind about having or not having children. The bottom line is, if someone you're dating does not want children (and vice versa), don't try to talk him/her into it. It's important to respect the vision of what that individual has in mind for his/her future.

Stop trying to change the other person and accept that you may need to change how you deal with the situation.

When I began dating after my divorce, I decided that I wanted to date only men who wanted children. I felt that the desire

for kids was one common ground on which we could relate to one another.

But, one of my very best friends approached the kid debate in a completely different way. She decided that she had no interest in dating a man with kids. She didn't feel that she was cut out to manage someone else's kids and the ex-wife that would inevitably come as part of the package.

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Know what you want

What it boils down to is that you must first decide what your goals are for the future. Do you want (more) kids? Do you want to date someone who already has kids? Know your limits, set boundaries and stick to them. It has been my experience – and the research will back me up – that it's never a good idea to try to “change his/her mind” on something as important as having a family.

Although there are always exceptions to every rule, dating someone who is like-minded – especially when it comes to children – makes for a less complicated relationship.