

- This phase includes the legal steps of filing for dissolution of the marriage and, usually, the departure of the father from the home.
- This phase lasts from several months to more than a year and is accompanied by familial stress and a chaotic atmosphere.

Transitional Phase

- The adults and children assume unfamiliar roles and relationships within a new family structure.
- This phase is often accompanied by a change of residence, a reduced standard of living and altered lifestyle, a larger share of the economic responsibility being shouldered by the mother, and radically altered parent-child relationships.

Stabilizing Phase

- The post-divorce family reestablishes a stable, functioning family unit.
- Remarriage frequently occurs with concomitant changes in all areas of family life.

Modified from Wallerstein JS: Children of divorce: stress and developmental tasks. In Garnezy N, Rutter M, editors: *Stress, coping, and development in children*, New York, 1988, McGraw-Hill.