

Character Profile: Doug Anderson—Father

Demographics and Background

- You are a 30-year-old man and the father of nine-year-old daughter, Emily, and five-year-old daughter, Katie.
- You married Melissa Hastings one and a half years after your high school graduation. You and Melissa divorced two years ago after months of “constant” fighting. You two never seemed to be on the “same page” about anything—money, household chores, or disciplining the girls.
- None of your family, nor any of Melissa’s family, lives nearby.
- You live by yourself in an apartment not far from Melissa and the girls.
- You and Melissa share joint legal custody of Emily and Katie, but Melissa has primary physical custody. You agreed to this arrangement because you thought it was more important for the girls to have more contact with their mom.
- You have visitation every Wednesday night and every other weekend. You drop the girls off at school on the Monday mornings after their weekend visits.
- You and Melissa rarely see eye to eye about parenting issues. You think Melissa is “too soft” on them and “lets them get away with murder.”
- You are a much firmer disciplinarian than Melissa. You would never go overboard or really hurt the girls, but you believe that a lot of misbehavior can be avoided by liberal application of “The Board of Education,” a small paddle you keep in the kitchen.
- You work as a draftsman in an engineering consulting firm. You make a decent living, and you’ve never missed a child support payment.
- Your boss is pretty liberal with taking time off during the day as long as you make up the time during the week. It’s harder for Melissa to take time off from her job at the retail store, so you are usually the one who gets called if the girls need to be picked up from school.
- When the girls aren’t with you or Melissa, they are usually staying with Carrie Taylor, Melissa’s friend. They’ve been best friends since high school and your daughters call her “Aunt Carrie.”
- Katie and Emily attend your neighborhood school. Katie has the same kindergarten teacher that Emily did. Mx. Wilson is a good teachers.
- You’ve never really been concerned about the girls’ academic performances. Their report cards almost always have average or above average marks.
- During Katie’s last parent/teacher conference, Mx. Wilson noted that it was often hard to keep Katie on task. Katie seems to “space out” and be distracted a lot more than Emily was at this age.

Authority/Responsibilities

- Based on joint legal custody, you have the legal authority to make decisions for your children, including decisions related to education, religion, and health care.