

THE AMAZING INVISIBLE WOMAN

One of my single mom friends has kids involved in sports and, as it often happens, she finds herself transporting other kids to and from practices as well, which she does happily and willingly. But she relayed that, while picking her son up from a play date recently, some of the other sports parents she knew—whose children she had tended to, provided snacks for and transported to events—started arriving at the very same home with items for a potluck...to which she and her son clearly had not been invited. My heart broke for her, as I've been in that exact situation: You're desperately trying to keep those stinging tears from showing and protect your kid's heart while getting the unwanted but absolute confirmation that your little family is somehow less-than.

Of the many challenges we discuss as single parents, this is perhaps one of the hardest: There are no tools, tips or techniques to garnering invitations or being included. For me, this has been one of the more painful things to accept. I joke that, for a woman of my size, there's no way I could be invisible. But, mostly, I am; after all these years, we have but a precious few families who continue to invite and include us. Somehow, single parents are largely invisible to the greater population. To me, this is heartbreaking because it occurs at the time when we most desperately need to be seen, when loss and change have rocked our foundations.

It is so easy as a single parent to just put your head down and work away, feeling alone, alienated, forgotten, dismissed. Invisible. But within a community of single parents, with something as simple as sharing a meal along with our hearts, we get to see and be seen for the most beautiful reasons.

There are times it still hurts my heart (even after 15 years of single momdom) that I am not included or invited to events given by people who would say they are my friends. I've come to believe that you can't really understand unless you are suddenly single yourself. But that shouldn't preclude us from creating and celebrating in a community of our own making. We need each other, and we need to *see* each other.

What can you do to foster single parent community?

How can you help your kids plug in and feel included?

One Verse for Thought:

Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! -Hebrews 13:2, NLT

