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in the paper about my father and mother getting a divorce.

"I didn't believe them.

"Then one day my father came to pick me up and take me for a ride. I'll never forget. We were out driving and we were right near the Lincoln Tunnel when I just put it to him straight.

"Dad, are you and Mom getting a divorce?" So he told me. What can I say about that day? I guess I really went bananas. I mean it really hit me. I just didn't know what to think or say.

"But I remember asking him if he'd still be my daddy. He said, 'Yes, of course.' He told me that I could come and see him and be with him whenever I wanted to, and just because my mother and he weren't going to be together anymore, it had nothing to do with our relationship. He would always be my father.

"That day when he took me home, I kept thinking about it. In fact I did a lot of wishful thinking. For a while, I used to hope my folks would get back together, get married again. I guess it was so hard to believe because I never remember my parents fighting in front of me, or arguing, or anything.

"Actually I realize now that they just didn't want to hurt me. But I was hurt. It's only natural for a kid to feel bad at a time like that . . .

"For a while I retreated into a shell of

my own. Still, I was totally aware of what was happening. I understood the whole scene—except for the fact that I still wasn't sure my father would always be my daddy.

"I know that now," David smiles. "I should never have doubted that."

Then came another transition for David. "My dad and Shirley were married in 1956. At first, I didn't see him too often because they moved to California. But he'd come back East a few times during the year and we'd be together then.

"One time, when Dad was East, he told me about Shirley's movie, *Oklahoma!* I hadn't met her yet. Dad wanted me to see her, so we stopped in at a movie theater and we saw the last ten minutes of her movie. When I saw her on that big screen, all I could think of was that she looked so young and so very beautiful."

Yes, David has gone through a lot of heartache in his short life, but today there's no place to go but up.

He says that he never disliked her or resented her. In fact, today he acts as older brother to Shirley and Jack's children and loves the part almost as much as Keith on *The Partridge Family*. ■

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SHIRLEY'S SONS

(Continued from page 23)

for a few hours a day . . .

But for every mother, the "to work or not to work" decision is a difficult one. For Shirley Jones, star of *The Partridge Family*, the choice was especially hard.

Shirley was an actress long before she was a mother, though after her marriage to Jack Cassidy and following the birth of her three sons, Shaun, 12, Patrick, 9, and Ryan, 5, Shirley took it easy as far as her career went. But she loved acting, and wanted to be free to pursue her career as an actress in addition to being a wife and mother. And things worked out fine—until a couple of years ago.

At the time, she was away from her sons a great deal. First she filmed *Happy Ending* in Nassau, then *The Cheyenne Social Club* in Santa Fe, then *Silent Night, Lonely Night* in Massachusetts. Finally, her children rebelled. "Look, Mom," son Shaun cried, "we know this is business, but can't you ever stay home for a while?"

Little Patrick chimed in, begging, "Take me with you, Mom! Why can't I go with you?"

"It's easier to leave them when they're little," Shirley explains. "But they have grown, they're aware, and it had gotten to