

## **MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR CHILDREN**

---

Bringing up children involves making lots of joint, often difficult, decisions. If you don't live together, it can become harder to make these decisions. Conflict about issues to do with children is commonplace. When emotions run high there is a danger that children can get caught in the middle of parental conflict. However, research shows that children benefit from cooperative parenting following separation or divorce.

Family Mediation helps you to focus on the needs and wishes of your children and put your children first. It is a process which provides a safe space for you to have a conversation about co-parenting and agree the details of a Parenting Plan. We will help you develop the skills that you need to parent co-operatively and work together for the benefit of your children.

### **We can help you make a parenting plan**

A Parenting Plan is a written plan worked out between separated parents which covers all aspects of co-parenting. It records how you will share the care of your children now and in the future. It requires you to put your children's interests first and to think about their needs and wishes. The Parenting Plan gives you a structure in which you can make decisions about your children. It will prompt you to think about all the arrangements you need to put in place regarding:-

- living arrangements
- education
- health care
- emotional well-being
- communication, dealing with differences and conflict
- money

### **We Offer Child Inclusive Mediation**

Research highlights that a high proportion of children say that no-one spoke to them before, during or after their parents' separation. One of the important decisions that parents have to make is how and what they will tell their children about what is happening.

It is important to recognise that every child is an individual and experiences of parental separation will vary from child to child, family to family. Not all children will want to talk. For some children, Child Inclusive Mediation offers the opportunity for them to meet face to face with a Family Mediator who is specially trained as a Child Consultant. The Government has suggested that children aged 10 and above should generally have access to a mediator when questions about their future are being discussed and arrangements are being made in mediation.