

Parenting through separation

A FREE INFORMATION PROGRAMME FOR PARENTS





"I thoroughly enjoyed the programme and learnt a great deal"



Parenting through Separation is a free information programme to help you help your kids when you separate.

"I tried to do right for my kids but I just got lost in my own stuff."

"Looking back I wasn't making good decisions for my kids...I needed some help"

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PROGRAMME?

"I was reassured that I'm on the right track."

You will be in a small group with other parents (up to 16 people). A programme leader will provide you with information. It is not a support group or counselling session, but there are opportunities for you to ask questions and problem-solve parenting issues.

"It's an awesome course. The members were friendly and open."

"A real eye-opener, well worth the time."



You will be given brochures to take home and two free DVDs – one for yourself and one for your children. The DVDs have in-depth interviews of New Zealand parents and children who have experienced separation. The DVDs also have lots of helpful tips from a child psychologist and a counsellor.

WHAT INFORMATION IS IN THE PROGRAMME?

The programme content has been written by leading professionals who specialise in helping families when parents have separated.

"The information was great, it helped me find the best possible solution for my children."

The information and tips in the programme are highly rated by parents who have already attended. The content covers

- how separation affects children
- what children need during separation
- talking with children
- talking with ex-partners about arrangements for the children
- keeping children away from arguments
- how the Family Court works

"I got all the information I needed - plus more."

"I picked up little things from other parents that helped."



WHO ELSE WILL BE AT THE PROGRAMME?

"It's nice to be learning with others who are going through a similar experience."

Some parents who attend the programme have just separated and others have been apart for longer. Parents who are just thinking about separating attend as well.

Separation has been straightforward for some parents who attend and for others, there has been disagreement or major conflict. Sometimes they have been referred to the programme by professionals, or by the Family Court. Attendance is always voluntary.

The programme is only for adults, not children.

The programme leader makes sure the programme is welcoming and relaxed. You may be able to bring along a support person, ask your programme provider when you book in.

WILL MY EX-PARTNER BE THERE?

No. It is best for both parents to attend the programme, but at different times.

The programme is designed to help you with your children, it is not a forum for mediating disagreements between parents.

Free joint-counselling can be arranged by contacting a Family Court Coordinator listed under 'Justice Ministry – District Court'

"It's a fantastic programme."



in the Blue Pages of the phone book. Some counsellors suggest that parents should attend the Parenting through Separation programme, as well as counselling.

Let the programme provider know when you book in if you have a different family name from your ex-partner, so the provider can make sure you are not at the same session.

WHO ARE THE PROGRAMME LEADERS?

The leaders are all experienced in working with families. Some of them are independent professionals and others work for organisations. They have all been approved by, and work under a contract to the Ministry of Justice.

HOW MUCH TIME DOES THE PROGRAMME TAKE?

The programme usually takes place over two sessions of about two hours.

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO GO TO THE PROGRAMME?

The earlier in your separation you can get to a programme the better for you and your children. Remember, you can go to a programme even if you are just thinking of separating.

Even where parents have been separated for some time, they have still learnt things that make a positive difference.

"It's an excellent course, I wish I did it at the beginning of separation."





"It gives you such a good understanding of how your children think, and how you can make separation easier on them."



WILL THE PROGRAMME GIVE ME LEGAL ADVICE?

No, but it will give you useful information about the Family Court, and help you understand what to expect from a family lawyer.

"It is very informative as I'm going through the Family Court at the moment."

HOW DO I GET TO A PROGRAMME?

The programme is run in over 170 places around the country and in most areas there are one or two programmes running each month.

All you need to do is to ring up and book yourself in. The programme and all the resources you take home are free.

To find programme providers in your area: Call **0800 211 211** or

Visit **www.justice.govt.nz/family**

Provider Information