



CAFCASS FACTSHEET

Separated Parents Information Programme (Contact Activity)



The programme is designed to help parents learn more about the challenges of post-separation parenting, including the effects on children of ongoing conflict. It also aims to provide advice and support about how best to help children in this situation, and seeks to enable parents to take steps towards their own solutions. Most parents that go on the course say they find it very helpful.



The Separated Parents Information Programme (PIP)

- * It is usually delivered to mixed groups of applicants (parents applying for contact with their children) and respondents (parents responding to an application for contact) in two, two-hour sessions or one four-hour session. You must be there for the whole course.
- * Separated couples do not go on the same course, but it is important that both parents go on a course.

- * Parent communication - we will ask you to discuss a prepared scenario and to look at it from the viewpoint of the mother, father and children.
- * Emotions - finally you will look at the emotional effect divorce and separation can have and the options for moving forward.

A PIP might be appropriate for parents (or other parties) when:

- * you may have difficulty focussing on your children's needs due to ongoing conflict; and/or,
- * you find that your feelings and reactions to the separation are affecting your ability to communicate about your children; and/or,
- * you are preparing for mediation and,
- * there are no safeguarding concerns about children or parents.



Feedback

The provider only reports back to Cafcass about attendance and does not assess your responses to the various parts of the programme. Some providers also seek feedback through an evaluation form.

To take part in a course:

Courts have the power, by making a court order, to 'direct' parents to go to contact activities that are aimed at promoting safe contact with children.

You can be ordered to go to a parenting information programme and/or to a mediation information meeting. Cafcass is usually asked to advise the court if it is suitable for you.

There is now no charge to Cafcass service users for the Separated Parents Information Programme.

The course

- * The divorce and separation process - this is where we encourage you to think about finding solutions to your situation.
- * What children need - you will watch a powerful DVD made by young people that follows a family over a six month period, as the parents separate.



Notes



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