



CHILD INCLUSIVE MEDIATION FACTSHEET

Why choose child inclusive mediation?

When parents (or others with parental responsibility) separate, they are often concerned about the potential impact on their children. Accommodating the feelings and needs of children and young people at a time when parents themselves are facing a range of difficult decisions can be very challenging. Children often feel torn between their two parents (divided loyalties) and may struggle to have honest conversations with their parents while emotions are running high. Mediation is a process that helps parents to work co-operatively to make joint decisions about their children's future before, during and after separation. Mediation encourages parents to keep their children's needs at the centre of any new arrangements.

How can child inclusive mediation help?

- Child inclusive mediation is a special mediation session with only the children and the mediator present.
- Children often benefit from having their own arena to express their views to someone neutral.
- Children appreciate being invited to give their opinion without having to make any decisions.
- Parents feel that their children are being supported and that they have someone to talk to.
- Child inclusive mediation encourages parents to listen their children's ideas and to make good decisions.



CHILD INCLUSIVE MEDIATION FACTSHEET CONT'D

Preparing for the session:

- The mediator will discuss arrangements with parents before organising a confidential meeting with the children where neither parent is present.
- Parents are advised not to pressurise, brief or ask searching questions of their children prior to or immediately after their meeting with the mediator.

What happens during and after the session?

- Children will have the opportunity to voice their point of view about their family situation and changes.
- Children's views will be respected, no pressure added and the meeting will be friendly and informal.
- Children will not be asked to make decisions about future child arrangements.
- Children choose with the mediator what, if anything, they wish the mediator to tell their parents.
- The session(s) are confidential (subject to safety exceptions).
- No written reports are provided to the parents or to any other body.
- The mediator may suggest other support services for the children e.g. counselling, useful reading material.