Separated Parents Information Programme

The Separated Parents Information Programme (SPIP) is designed to help separated parents, or those who have responsibility for children, to better understand and respond differently to conflict and communication.

* The programme encourages separated parents to behave in the best interests of their children and to become clearer about what their children need most from them.
* The programme also equips parents with skills to take steps for themselves; this may include developing agreements that do not need court intervention.
* The programme has been running nationally for over 10 years. Most parents who have attended a SPIP found the programme positive and all wished that they had attended much earlier.

When might a SPIP be a good idea?

* When parents have separated and want the best for their children.
* When the parents have difficulties focusing on their children's needs due to ongoing conflict.
* When feelings and reactions to the separation are affecting the parents' ability to communicate about children.
* When communication needs to improve.
* When there are no safeguarding concerns about children or parents.
* When mediation is being considered as an option.

What does the SPIP cover?

* It challenges parents to consider the emotional effect of separation and some positive options for moving forward.
* It considers what children need and the impact of conflict on children.
* It explores parent communication and how to react appropriately when under stress.

The programme links to:

* Parenting Plan - a written plan worked out between parents, covering the practical issues of parenting www.cafcass.gov.uk/parentingplan
* Getting it Right for Children - to help parents with the skills they need to parent after separation click.clickrelationships.org/home/parenting-apart

How is the SPIP delivered?

* The SPIP is delivered by a number of providers at different locations across the county, on behalf of Cafcass.
* The programme is usually delivered to mixed groups of parents in one four-hour session.
* Parents must attend for the whole duration of programme.
* Separated couples do not go on the same programme. However, both parents should attend a SPIP separately.
* Children are not permitted to attend.

Please note - contributions on the programme are confidential unless safeguarding concerns are raised.

How to take part in a SPIP

* Parents may be ordered or directed to attend a SPIP by a court. This could be alongside a Meditation Information and Assesment Meeting.
* Parents can self-refer for SPIP.
* The cost can vary depending on provider. However, if parents are court ordered it will usually be free.
* SPIP is delivered by a number of providers across the county and are listed at: www.cafcass.gov.uk/grown-ups/parents-and-carers/directory-of-providers

What do people say who have attended a SPIP?

“ I learnt a lot from this course today, this is a good thing to do. ”

“ The delivery of the course was excellent and I would recommend it to any parent going through separation regardless of whether they get along or not, as it would certainly prevent any issues that may arise.”

“ I think the exercises that gave examples of other families helped me to see my own situation more clearly as it took emotions away from my own situation and prompted an objective view. ”

“ Extremely useful, shame I didn’t attend two years ago at the start of everything. Nevertheless, this has been a timely reminder for me. Thank you! ”

Notes

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