

Family Is Forever

Family Law Services are funded by the Australian Government's Department of Social Services.

Family Law Services offers a range of services to assist separated parents and their children to come to terms with a different family situation. [Family Is Forever themes over eight weeks:](#)

Week 1 Introduction & co-parent concept

Children need nurturing and love from both parents. Parents have a responsibility to care appropriately for them.

SESSION: Post Separation Co-Parenting concept.

Week 2 Knowledge of self

When parents are aware of their actions, motives, experiences and influences they are more ready to resolve conflict and manage new roles and relationships.

SESSION: We look at our own Family of Origin and how this influences the parent we are today and how we respond to conflict. We also look at the DISC personality profile model and how it can be used to manage conflict with the other parent.

Week 3 Grief & accepting change

The way we manage our grief and life changes can impact on our children's well-being.

SESSION: We examine grief in its various levels and how it can influence our behaviour, feelings, and body. We then look at a model of grief recovery and brainstorm ways we can keep ourselves on a healthy life path after separation.

Week 4 Children's reactions to separation

Children respond to parents' grief and also experience grief in their own right. We may not always identify our children's behaviours and emotional reactions as expressions of grief.

SESSION: We watch a video of families in conflict and how the conflict affects the children, and brainstorm ways to support our children.

Week 5 Communication

Greater levels of positive communication between parents can lead to more effective outcomes for

yourself, the other parent, and especially the child.

SESSION: We examine styles of communication, from aggressive to passive to passive-aggressive to assertive, and how they manifest in verbal and non-verbal communication. We look at a model that presents interpersonal behaviour of Parent, Child and Adult ego states. We raise awareness of our own ego-state and how to remain in the most functional Adult ego state.

Week 6 Managing disputes & high emotions

Disputes occur in all relationships, often with strong emotions. Understanding how disputes develop and the underlying feelings leading to anger, aggression, blame and dismissal can assist us to change ways of behaving and provide positive role models for children.

SESSION: The Pursuer-Distancer, and Steven Stosny's Core Hurts Core Value model each present anger as a function of hurt. Understanding this hurt-anger connection can help us manage our own anger and respond assertively to the anger of others.

Week 7 Self esteem, responsibility/boundaries

Focusing on our self esteem, self responsibility and boundaries helps us to avoid the victim position in relationships so we can continue to be active and positive parents for our children.

SESSION: We present a Cognitive Behavioural model demonstrating the benefits of evaluating our own thinking and consciously choosing positive thoughts over negative ones.

Week 8 The future

When parents share a vision for a more positive post separation parenting relationship, the lives of all family members can be improved.

SESSION: We engage the group in role plays to rehearse and consolidate the information learned over the last eight sessions.