

Mums and Dads Forever

Family Law Services offers a range of services to assist separated parents and their children to come to terms with a different family situation.

The themes covered in the eight week Mums and Dads Forever program:

Week 1 **Introductions and the concept of co-parenting**

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

In this session the idea of Post Separation Co-Parenting is introduced.

Week 2 **Knowledge of self**

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

In this 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 **Understanding our own grief and accepting change**

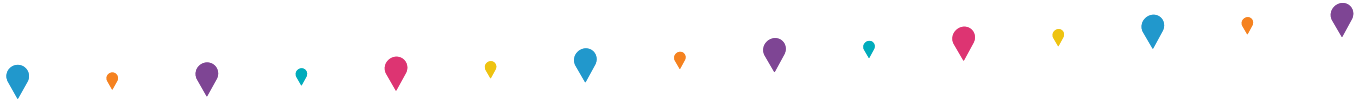
Message: The way in which we manage our grief and life changes can impact on our children's well-being.

In this 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 parental separation**

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

In this session we watch a video of families in conflict and how the conflict affects the children. We brainstorm ways to support our children in their separated family situation.



Week 5 **Communication**

Message: Greater levels of positive communication between parents can lead to more effective outcomes for yourself, the other parent, and especially the children.

In this session we examine different styles of communication, from aggressive to passive to passive-aggressive to assertive, and how they manifest in verbal and non-verbal communication. We also look at a model that presents interpersonal behaviour in terms of Parent, Child, and Adult ego states. The goal is to raise awareness of our own ego-state and how to remain in the most functional Adult ego state.

Week 6 **Managing disputes and high emotions**

Message: Disputes occur in all relationships, sometimes producing strong emotions. A greater understanding of how disputes develop and the underlying feelings leading to anger, aggression, blame and dismissal can assist us to change our ways of behaving and provide positive role models for our children.

Two models are presented in this session: The Pursuer-Distancer, and Steven Stosny's Core Hurts Core Value model. Both models 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, self responsibility and boundaries**

Message: 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.

In this 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**

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

This is a wind-up session in which we often engage the group in role plays to rehearse and consolidate the information learned over the last eight sessions.

Get in touch with us

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