



Making parenting arrangements

After a separation or change in family situation, it can be hard to figure out how parents, guardians and whānau (family and friends) can continue to be part of their child's life.

It helps if everyone can come to an agreement. This is usually quicker, cheaper, and less stressful than going to court. It also means your child doesn't need to go through the court process.

Resources and services to help you

Important:

If you or your child are experiencing family violence some of these services might not be right for you.

Parenting Plan Workbook

This is for parents, guardians* and whānau who are involved in the day-to-day care of a child, after a change in parenting arrangements or separation. It helps you think about how your child will be looked after and what decisions you'll need to make.

*A guardian is an adult who is responsible for the upbringing and care of a child.

- Download the workbook for free: justice.govt.nz/parenting-plan-workbook
- Have a copy sent to you: freephone the Ministry of Justice on 0800 224 733

Parenting Through Separation course

This free course helps parents, guardians and whānau understand their child's best interests after a separation.

You'll learn how:

- Sharing child care will work for your whānau
- To write a parenting plan
- Conflict during separation can affect children, so you can help your child cope with changes
- To get help.

You can go to this course any time. It's usually held in small groups. You won't have to go to the same group as your ex-partner (or anyone else involved in the separation).

To find out more about this course:

- Visit justice.govt.nz/parenting-through-separation
- Freephone the Ministry of Justice on 0800 224 733



Family Dispute Resolution mediation service

An independent person or family mediator works with parents, guardians and whānau to help reach an agreement about a child's care after separation.

It's a useful way to work through issues whānau disagree on, while focusing on the child. The family mediator won't force you to agree to anything or make any decisions for you. They are trained to help you reach an agreement yourselves, and not take sides.

You can bring a support person to your session if everyone taking part agrees. You should ask the family mediator before the session.



To find out more about this service:

- Visit justice.govt.nz/family-dispute-resolution

Cost

This service is free if you qualify for funding. This depends on your income and how many people rely on you for financial support. If you don't qualify for funding, you'll need to pay \$448.50 per person.

To find out if you qualify for funding:

- Visit justice.govt.nz/family-dispute-resolution-funding

You can get legal advice at any time

It may be helpful to talk to a lawyer when you're working through a separation or change in family situation. If you're not sure where to start, visit your local Community Law Centre or communitylaw.org.nz

Applying to the Family Court

If you want to apply to the Family Court for a court order, you'll usually need to have gone to a 'Parenting Through Separation' course in the last two years and tried 'Family Dispute Resolution' in the last 12 months.

You have the right to feel safe

You can get help if you or someone else feels unsafe:

- If you or someone else is in immediate danger call 111
- Visit justice.govt.nz/family-violence
- Visit areyouok.org.nz
- Freephone 'Are You OK' on 0800 456 450

Where to get support

In your community

Kaiārahi (Family Court Navigators), Family Court Co-ordinators and court staff can guide you when sorting out parenting arrangements but cannot give you legal advice. Kaiārahi can also connect you with community support services in your area.

Contact:

- Visit your local court
- Email kaiarahi@justice.govt.nz
- Freephone the Ministry of Justice on 0800 224 733

Organisations to help you

Citizens Advice Bureau

They help you understand your rights and fill out forms.

- Freephone 0800 367 222
- Visit cab.org.nz

Community Law Centre

They offer free, confidential one-on-one legal help for people across Aotearoa New Zealand/

- Visit communitylaw.org.nz

Family Services Directory

They have a list of support services that help whānau (family and friends) across Aotearoa New Zealand. These services range from housing to counselling.

- Freephone 0800 211 211
- Visit familyservices.govt.nz/directory/

CCS Disability Action

They provide information and support to people with disabilities and their whānau (family and friends)

- Freephone 0800 227 200
- Email info@ccsDisabilityAction.org.nz

Counselling

For professional support for mental health, or other personal issues, contact:

- Need to Talk – Freephone or text 1737 or visit 1737.org.nz
- Lifeline – Freephone 0800 543 354 or text 4357
- Skylight – Freephone 0800 299 100 or visit skylight.org.nz

For children and young people

- What's Up – Freephone 0800 942 8787
- Youthline – Freephone 0800 376 633 or text 234

If you feel unsafe

- Visit areyouok.org.nz
- Freephone 'Are You OK' on 0800 456 450