



Relationship Matters is a new partnership between 14 Local Authorities across Yorkshire and the Humber Region helping families who may be having relationship difficulties. A new website is being launched to offer families information, tips and help and what better time as the coronavirus is leading to big changes in the way we live our everyday lives.

As you may be contacted by a parent or carer the purpose of this briefing paper is to provide helpful information to you as professionals helping children and families to reduce the impact of parental conflict on them. Whether couples are together or separated, disagreements are completely normal. But evidence shows that **regular conflict** has a big impact on children. What matters is how the conflict is dealt with.

All relationships have tricky moments it is how they are experienced and resolved that matters especially now for getting us through enforced self- isolation, lock down and social distancing. We are all spending longer periods of time with our loved ones and this is bound to bring about some added challenges.

Whether couples together or separated the way they communicate can impact on their relationship and their children.

- Relationship Matters can help everyone recognise the sign such as: Arguing, rows, shouting all the time with each other about things like, money, how you parent, housework
- Are they worried about splitting up?
- Is there sulking, silent treatment, slamming doors or walking away from each other
- Are they anxious or worried which gets in the way of managing everyday life?
- Are they not able to say sorry after an argument and move on?
- Are they using hurtful texts, emails or Social Media against each other?

The website www.relationshipmatters.org.uk , which will be launched on the 11th May, 2020, can give everyone tips, information and help to:

- Stay calm
- Work it out
- How to get some help with links to national websites and contact details of your Local Authority. To access the website, go to:<https://www.safernel.co.uk/staying-safe-and-prevention/prevention-early-intervention/>

Domestic Abuse

Parental conflict is not the same as domestic abuse – If you are afraid of your partner or feeling that they control your life then this is more likely to be domestic abuse, please seek help. In Women's Aid can support you:

Website: <https://www.womensaidnel.org/>

Tel: 01472 575757

You will have within your service questions & prompts you will be required to ask, the following are generic ones you may find useful.

Tips and Questions, you may want to ask when a parent / carer telephones your service

- Have you seen our Relationship Matters website?
- Tell me a little about what made you contact us today and how may I help you?
- How long has this issue been going on...
- What other parts of your life is the problem affecting you and how does it play out?
- Have you tried anything to solve this problem...
- What was the result?
- What would your life be like, if the problem were somehow solved?
- Do you know anyone else that has had an issue or problem like this?
- How has it felt to talk about the problem today?

You may need to find out or know about what services are available in your area, below are a few national websites such as:

Early Intervention Foundation – Reducing Parental Conflict Hub

The hub is for local leaders, commissioners, practitioners and researchers who are looking to reduce the impact of parental conflict on children. It provides a central repository of key 'what works' evidence and tools, including why parental conflict matters for children's outcomes, and guidance on how to take action. The hub will continue to grow as new evidence and tools are created.

www.reducingparentalconflict.eif.org.uk

Relate highly trained counsellors to support everyone's relationships. Their service offers the following: [Live Chat, telephone and webcam counselling services](#) can be accessed from their website www.relate.org.uk

Cafcass stands for Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. Their website offers advice to parents, carers and professionals on the following:

- divorce and separation, sometimes called 'private law', where parents or carers can't agree on arrangements for their children
- care proceedings, sometimes called 'public law', where social services have serious concerns about the safety or welfare of a child
- adoption, which can be either public or private law
- Tools for professionals to use with families

To access their website go to: www.cafcass.gov.uk

Action for Children Their vision is that every child and young person in the UK has a safe and happy childhood, and the foundations they need to thrive. They work closely with children and their families, from before they're born until their twenties. Their work is split into three main areas: Best start in life, Good mental health and a safe and loving home. They have lots of advice, information and resources available to support you and you can also [Talk to their parenting coaches](#) online. www.actionforchildren.org.uk

A range of different services have agreed to support families to reduce parental conflict through the Relationship Matters campaign in North East Lincolnshire, and have trained practitioners to be able to support families to reduce conflict in their relationships, including;

- Health Visitors
- Early Help Families First Practitioners
- School Nurses
- Grimsby Full Families
- NSPCC
- Doorstep (for young parents aged 16-25 years old)

Please direct parents/carers that are experiencing relationship difficulties which are directly impacting on the children to any one of these services for advice, and strategies to help overcome these difficulties.