

## Information for Parents

### Training Courses for separating parents - a guide to accessing the service

**What is Parents Apart?** It is a course designed for parents who are in the process of separating and who are concerned about the impact this may have on their child(ren). It specifically focusses on the needs of your children so that the harmful effects of separation can be avoided. It is a four hour workshop, usually delivered in two sessions of two hours.

**Is the course a type of counselling or mediation?** No.

**Do Ex-partners attend together?** No, you will not be booked on the same course as your ex-partner.

**Who else is on the course?** Other parents in a similar situation will attend the course with you. Parents attend in groups with other parents so that there is an opportunity for one parent to see the impact of a mirror of their behaviour on a peer.

**Who delivers the course?** It is delivered by Relate professionals who have been specially trained. Courses are arranged for groups of parents with a trainer in a ratio of 1:6.

**How will the Parents Apart course help me?** The course is recommended for parents at the beginning of their separation process. It offers you help in achieving an amicable and peaceable separation with specialist guidance in how to help your child(ren) cope with the negative effects of separation.

The course will help you avoid a costly and distressing legal battle fought through the courts. Relate Certificates of Attendance will be issued to participants on completion of the course.

**How will the Parents Apart course help my children?** Your child(ren) will benefit from the improved communications and reduced conflict between their parents. You and your ex-partner will be better able to focus on what is “in the best interests of your child(ren)”.

**Does it work?** Since April 2009, when Relate Solent and Winchester began delivering these courses, we have received extremely positive feedback from parents regarding the benefits of this course. They have reported a significant improvement in family communication and a decrease in stress and conflict.

**What are the key objectives of the course?** The Parents Apart Course aims to:

- Help you to understand child development and the effect of separation on your child(ren).
- Help you to recognise the change in the relationship from partner to co-parent.
- Suggest ways to help protect your child(ren) from conflict.
- Suggest options and ideas about how to improve communication skills and promote workable solutions.
- Help you identify your own qualities as a good parent that can be used in the current situation.
- Look towards developing and maintaining the best relationship with your child(ren) even if there is reduced contact.

**Is the course suitable for parents with special needs?** If parents have special needs e.g. literacy issues, we will try to meet these. We can also work with parents individually if their needs dictate this.

We are unable to offer this course to parents with extreme mental health problems or issues with drugs, alcohol or violence as it is unlikely to have a positive effect.

**When does the Parents Apart course take place?** Relate Solent and Winchester offers several courses per month.

**Where does the Parents Apart course take place?** Relate Solent and Winchester delivers courses at locations in Eastleigh, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

**What does the Parents Apart course cost?** The cost of the course is £150 per person.

**For more information please contact:**

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