

## Useful organisations and information sources:

Below you will find a referral organisation for specialist advice on most issues. Do email us ([mail@fatherhoodinstitute.org](mailto:mail@fatherhoodinstitute.org)) if you think any of our information is wrong or needs updating (organisations can change their details day to day, and they don't usually inform us when they do!) or if you feel we have missed out or misrepresented an important service

### **Advice Now**

An independent, not-for-profit website providing accurate, up-to-date information on rights and legal issues. Its information service brings together information on the law and rights from over 200 UK websites, summarised by experts.

<http://www.advicenow.org.uk/advicenow-guides/family/divorce-a-survival-toolkit/>

However, no individual advice is given and they can't respond to email queries

### **Association of Shared Parenting**

A volunteer-staffed organisation that offers grass roots support (mainly in the Midlands) for separated and divorced fathers. Their website is quite old but keeps you up-to-date with the most recent local groups and activities, but you can also contact them by phone on 01789 750891 to be directed to a group. <http://www.sharedparenting.org.uk/>

### **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy**

Many separating and divorcing men find a counsellor is a life-line: sessions with a trained listener can really help you think through the options open to you, to obtain the outcome you want. You need a reputable counsellor who is in 'supervision' (that is, who has a more senior counsellor monitoring their work). For the best list contact the BACP. You can find counsellors local to you via their website- or you can telephone them. BACP House, 15 St Johns Business Park, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 4HB Tel: 01455 883300 II Fax: 01455 550243 II [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)

### **CAFCASS (Children's and Family Court Advisory and Support Service)**

They've attracted a lot of criticism, but they are the organisation likely to write reports on your family if you go to court. There are also good and expert people working for this organisation. Their website [www.cafcass.gov.uk](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk) gives you regional phone numbers. The National Office is on the 6th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street. London, SW1P 3BT. Tel: 0844 353 3350 Fax: 0844 353 3351 Email: [webenquiries@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:webenquiries@cafcass.gov.uk)

### **Centre for Separated Families.**

This organisation which is based in York offers whole-family face to face support to fathers, mothers and children grappling with issues around separation. The organisational also offers a national email advice service [advice@separeatedfamilies.org.uk](mailto:advice@separeatedfamilies.org.uk)

### **Childcare Link**

Free government information service about childcare options in your district and factsheets on your childcare option, contact Freephone 08000 96 02 96 [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

### **Childline**

A safe listening ear for children and young people in the UK who want to talk through anything- including worries about their parents' separating. Free 24 hour helpline 0800 1111. Remember- however 'brave' your children appear, they do need to talk to someone. To talk to someone outside the family can be great. Encourage them to phone.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **Child Support Agency now called the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (also see Child Maintenance Options)**

Child support (maintenance) is undergoing big changes in the UK. Here are some useful websites:

- Tel: 0800 988 0988 <http://www.cmoptions.org/>
- The *Sorting out Separation* web app is the main government-sponsored information hub for separating parents. It is embedded in a number of websites that parents already use. Click here to see it in action on the Child Maintenance Options website: [www.cmoptions.org/en/sortingoutseparation](http://www.cmoptions.org/en/sortingoutseparation)
- <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ChildMaintenance/index.htm>
- <https://www2.dwp.gov.uk/csa/v2/en/contact/index.asp>

### **Children's Legal Centre**

Leading experts on laws affecting children- the CLC is found at the University of Essex Wivenhoe Park Colchester Essex C04 3SQ. Freephone: 08088 020 008 Tel: 01206 877910 Fax 01206 877963. Email: [clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk) or look on the website [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

### **Citizens' Advice (formerly Citizens Advice Bureaux)**

Love them. Great advice centres with constantly updated information. There'll be one local to you, but you may need to join the queue. Head Office 020 7833 2181 (for referral to local branches and to answer basic questions). Also look at their website:

[www.nacab.org.uk](http://www.nacab.org.uk) which has a link through to good information and advice on family matters after separation and divorce on [http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/relationships\\_e/relationships\\_relationship\\_problems\\_e.htm](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/relationships_e/relationships_relationship_problems_e.htm) and which also has a great section on state benefits, tax credits and so on: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

### **Community Legal Service Direct**

Helps people get information about their legal rights and to understand how to enforce them, and who can help them do this. Helpline number is: 0845 345 4345 and their website is good, too: <http://www.clsdirect.org.uk>

### **Daycare Trust**

Everything you ever wanted to know about childcare <http://www.sharedparenting.org.uk/> and becoming a partner in your children's learning. Email [info@daycaretrust.org.uk](mailto:info@daycaretrust.org.uk) for childcare enquiries.

### **Department of Work and Pensions**

This Government Department is responsible for a range of benefits and services for families, and provides a pretty user-friendly list from which you can pick an area that relates to you and check if you are able to get any of the benefits and services. Go to: [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) and also try the Direct Gov website <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm>

### **Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)**

This service is for individuals who think they may have experienced discrimination. EASS can provide advice and information on discrimination and human rights issues, explain what the law says and how this applies to the individual in the country they live in and explain how a situation can be resolved. Its initial focus will be on encouraging informal resolution, but where this is not possible, can assist in referral to mediation or conciliation services. They can also support an individual who is representing themselves in a discrimination claim, provide information and support with preparing a claim but not legal advice or representation ("pre claim support").

Tel : 0800 444 205, Text phone users can dial 0808 8000082.  
[www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)

### **4Children**

A campaigning children's charity <http://www.4children.org.uk> which also provides information for parents about family and children's services. Information helpline for advice or support on any aspect of services for children, young people or families: 020 7512 2100 (8.00 am – 3.00 p, or leave a message) or email:

[information@4Children.org.uk](mailto:information@4Children.org.uk)

### **Families Need Fathers**

The leading UK self-help charity offering volunteer-based help for non-resident parents and grandparents during and after separation. Variable quality (as with most volunteer-manned organisations) but huge experience of family courts and family breakdown. FNF offers local advice/support meeting. Helpline: 0300 0300 363 (24 hours a day). Email [fnf@fnf.org.uk](mailto:fnf@fnf.org.uk) Useful publications and website [www.fnf.org.uk](http://www.fnf.org.uk)

### **Family Division Principal Registry**

The people you need to contact if you are an unmarried father and want to take the first steps to obtaining legal 'parental responsibility' for your child. Unless your child was born after December 2003 and your name is on that child's birth certificate, you will not have legal parental responsibility. If your child's mother agrees that you can have Parental Responsibility, you both complete a Parental Responsibility Agreement Form which you can download from [http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/courtfinder/forms/c\(pra1\)-eng.pdf](http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/courtfinder/forms/c(pra1)-eng.pdf). If your child's mother does not agree to your having Parental Responsibility you will have to get a Parental Responsibility Order through the courts. For more information about PR go to: <http://www.advicenow.org.uk/living-together/children/parental-responsibility,10266,FP.html>.

If you have a general enquiry which is not related to a specific matter you can e-mail [PRFD.Familygeneralenquiries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PRFD.Familygeneralenquiries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk).

### **Family Lives (formally Parentline Plus)**

Family Lives is a national charity providing help and support in all aspects of family life. Offers help and information to over 85,000 parents and families each year. Free telephone helpline 0808 800 2222. Free email advice service: [parentsupport@familylives.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@familylives.org.uk). Informative website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>. They also have free downloads on parenting issues from bullying to separation <http://familylives.org.uk//free-downloads>

### **Family Mediation Services**

Family mediation is a process by which couples who are considering separation or divorce are assisted to make arrangements, communicate better and to reduce the conflict between them to reach their own agreed joint decisions. Mediation is not advised where there are ongoing issues of domestic violence, but otherwise it is the cheapest and usually the best method of sorting out differences. Mediation is shown to result in higher father child contact, much greater satisfaction by fathers - and satisfaction by mothers equal to (and less expensive than) the satisfaction they'd get from court process. So find your local mediation service NOW. Your family court or solicitor may recommend a service. You can also find mediation via <http://www.nfm.org.uk/> and <http://www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk/find-service.php> See a brilliant video about how family mediation works at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21BVczueiOI> and also at [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Governmentcitizensandrights/Divorceseperationandrelationsh  
ipbreakdown/Endingamarriageorcivilpartnership/Planningadivorce/DG\\_181195](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Governmentcitizensandrights/Divorceseperationandrelationsh<br/>ipbreakdown/Endingamarriageorcivilpartnership/Planningadivorce/DG_181195)

### **Family Rights Group**

Free advice for families when social services are involved with a child in the family. Also know a lot about rules in private law cases. Advice line 0808 801 0366 is open: Mon to Fri: 9.30am-3.30pm. Or email [advice@frg.org.uk](mailto:advice@frg.org.uk) or write: The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London, E8 3DL.Tel 020 7923 2628. Fax 020 7923 2683

### **Gingerbread**

Gingerbread offers lone mothers and fathers (that is, parents who are considered main carers because they hold the Child Benefit book for their child) and their children practical and emotional support, including benefits, education, housing. [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk)  
Freephone helpline: 0808 802 0925

### **Grandparents' Association**

Works to improve the lives of children by working with grandparents. Tel Helpline: 0845 4349585 Mon-Fri 10am-4pm Wednesday evening 6.30pm-8pm. [www.grandparents-association.org.uk](http://www.grandparents-association.org.uk) or [advice@grandparents-association.org.uk](mailto:advice@grandparents-association.org.uk)

### **Grandparents Plus**

Grandparents Plus is the national charity (England and Wales) which champions the vital role of grandparents and the wider family in children's lives – especially when they take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances. Helpline: 0300 123 7015  
[advice@grandparentsplus.org.uk](mailto:advice@grandparentsplus.org.uk)

## Mental health and wellbeing

**PARENTS:** It's normal for many separated and separating mothers and fathers to experience depression, anxiety and/or stress, and also other mental health issues. Sometimes these were present before the breakup. It's important to get help - for your children's sake. Your GP should be your starting point, but independent national organisations like MIND - the leading mental health charity in England and Wales - provide networks and useful information. Tel: 0300 123 3393. Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk) [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk).

Other useful contacts include:

- <http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk>
- <http://www.sane.org.uk>
- <http://www.rethink.org/>
- <http://www.together-uk.org/>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/emotional\\_health/mental\\_health/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/emotional_health/mental_health/index.shtml) See also SAMARITANS (below, in this listing)

**CHILDREN:** CHILDLINE (see above in this listing) and also Young Minds <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/> Parents' helpline: **0808 802 5544**

### National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC)

Child Contact Centres are places where children who do not live with a parent (or parents) can spend time with them or other family members. There's now an excellent network, with some great support. NACCC <http://www.naccc.org.uk/> can be reached on 0845 4500 280 Email: [contact@naccc.org.uk](mailto:contact@naccc.org.uk)

### National Association for Child Support Action (NACSA)

Grassroots agency that can help sort out problems with the child support system for a low cost. Very good website **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**No telephone helpline service, but you can enquire at 01384 572525 or via [enquiries@nacsa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nacsa.co.uk) or write to NACSA , Po Box 4454, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 9AN

### National Childminding Association

Everything you need to know about finding- or becoming- a childminder. FREE information line 0845 880 0044. [www.ncma.org.uk](http://www.ncma.org.uk)

### National Debtline

Free confidential advice on any debt issues. 0808 808 4000 [www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

### National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Worried about your child or children? Fear (or know) they are being neglected or abused - and you feel powerless to do anything about it? The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) is the UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children. The NSPCC operates 180 community-based teams and projects throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as a FREE 24-hour Child Protection Helpline that provides information, advice and counselling to anyone concerned about a child's safety. The NSPCC also runs a bilingual Welsh helpline, an Asian helpline in five Asian languages, and a textphone service for people who are deaf

or hard of hearing. Call the FREE 24-hour NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000.  
<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/home.htm>

### **NHS Direct**

Separated dads need to keep themselves and their children healthy. The NHS has an excellent National health information service – NHS Direct <http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk> - which you can phone at any time for advice, perhaps with worries about symptoms: 0845 46 47. For other health support see <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx> and for healthy living see <http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx>

### **Relate**

The leading provider of couple counselling in the UK. Fees on a sliding scale. Sometimes there's a bit of a wait but put your name down a.s.a.p. And don't assume your child's other parent won't go: get the appointment sorted, and you may find they'll attend. Tel: 0300 100 1234 [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk). Alternatively email the administrator of the email counselling service [relateonline@relate.org.uk](mailto:relateonline@relate.org.uk)

### **Resolution (formerly known as the Solicitors Family Law Association)**

Provides lists of local solicitors experienced in family law work. Look on website: [http://www.resolution.org.uk/landing-two-cols.asp?page\\_id=21](http://www.resolution.org.uk/landing-two-cols.asp?page_id=21) or write to P.O. Box 302, Orpington, Kent BR6 BOX (enclose a stamped addressed envelope). Tel: 01689 820272,) or email: [info@resolution.org.uk](mailto:info@resolution.org.uk) or look in Yellow Pages under 'Solicitors' for box listing local SFLA solicitors.

### **Re-unite**

This UK charity specialises in international parental child abduction and provides advice, information and support to parents, family members and guardians who have had a child abducted or who fear child abduction. Reunite also provides advice to parents who may have abducted their child as well as advising on international contact issues. Advice line: 0116 2556 234 (from abroad: +44 (0)); email: [reunite@dircon.co.uk](mailto:reunite@dircon.co.uk); address: P.O. Box 7124 Leicester LE1 7XX

### **Samaritans**

Twenty-four hour telephone and face to face support service for anyone feeling sad or desperate: <http://www.samaritans.org/> Remember that the impact of suicide is felt down the generations - one of the risk factors for suicide is to have a close relative who committed it. So don't kill yourself or you may condemn your children to a similar fate. Get help now: 08457909090 (UK) 1850 609090 (Republic of Ireland)  
Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**

### **Shelter**

Free 24-hour advice line 0808 800 4444 on homelessness issues. Also has an online advice service ([www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)) and runs Housing Aid Centres and publishes information, including on housing rights after relationship breakdown. It has really helpful sections on finding yourself a home, with all the implications for benefits carefully set out.

### **'Sorting out Separation'**

The *Sorting out Separation* web app is the main government-sponsored information hub for separating parents. It is embedded in a number of websites that parents already use. Click here to see it in action on the Child Maintenance Options website: [www.cmoptions.org/en/sortingoutseparation](http://www.cmoptions.org/en/sortingoutseparation)

**Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships (TCCR)**

Excellent support for couples – helping them work through differences or separate well – and also provides specialist support through their Parenting Together programme for parents, including separated parents, who are struggling with parenting a child  
[www.tccr.org.uk](http://www.tccr.org.uk) Tel: 0207380 1960 Email: [appointments@tccr.org.uk](mailto:appointments@tccr.org.uk)

**Working Families**

Working Families <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/> is the UK's leading work-life balance organisation. The charity helps working parents, including separated parents and carers and their employers, with work-life balance issues. Has a helpline 0300 012 0312 or email [advice@workingfamilies.org.uk](mailto:advice@workingfamilies.org.uk)