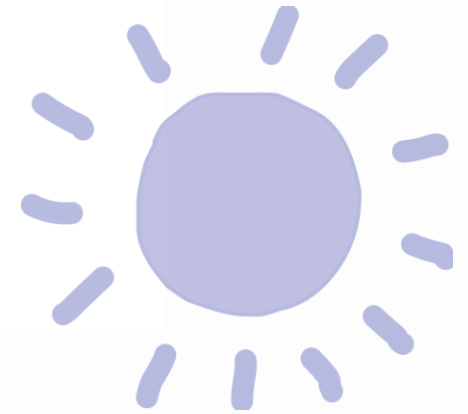


Digital Resources for Reducing Parental Conflict



Practitioner workshop
London Borough of Merton



What is the programme about?

There are three digital resources available for parents aimed at reducing parental conflict:

Me, You and Baby Too (MYBT)

Arguing better

Getting it Right for Children (GIRFC)



Me, you, and
baby too



**Arguing
better**



**Getting it right
for children**

Digital resources learning programme

Workshop agenda

Welcome and introductions
Programme outline – setting the scene
What do I need to know?

Exploring the digital resources (independent study)
Question and answers
Framework for working with parents
Next steps

Learning programme aims and outcomes

This learning programme aims to enhance your knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence to work with parents to reduce parental conflict using a variety of digital resources.

By the end of the programme you will be able to:

Raise parents' awareness of the issue of parental conflict



Use digital resources to help parents recognise conflict and destructive behaviour patterns



Enable parents to develop positive communication skills and helpful conflict behaviours



Introductions



- What I do
- How I work with parents

Part 1

Introduction to parental conflict

Defining parent couple relationships

Couple
relationship



Co-parenting
relationship



Relationship quality
over status



What does the evidence show?

		True	False
1.	40-70% of parents report a decline in relationship satisfaction after the birth of a baby	T	
2.	Conflict has an adverse effect on children of all ages	T	
3.	By the age of 16, 47 % of children do not live with both biological parents	T	
4.	Conflict doesn't affect children if they don't see (or hear) it happening		F
5.	Children living in workless families are three times more likely to experience parental conflict than families where both parents work	T	
6.	Every child experiencing parental conflict show signs of distress		F
7.	Arguing between parents indicates a level of relationship distress	T	F
8.	Children who experience relationship breakdown are five times more likely to be in trouble with the police		F
9.	Divorce or separation is always detrimental to the well-being of the child		F
10.	Mental health problems are more prevalent in people experiencing relationship distress	T	

Parent relationships matter to children

Children exposed to frequent destructive conflict are more likely to:

- Experience depression or anxiety.
- Have physical health problems.
- Develop behaviour problems.
- Do worse at school.
- Struggle with peer relationship
- Be prone to substance misuse, criminality, homelessness, self-harm and suicidality



There is a knock-on effect in later life:

- Adult relationships.
- Psychological wellbeing.
- Employment.

These adverse outcomes are seen whether parents are living together or apart, and whether they are biologically related to the child or not.

Impact of parental conflict

Film clip 1: Kids talk

How do children feel when their parents argue?

What happens when they make up?



Parental conflict – effects on children



Internalising behaviour

A child withdraws and is quiet.



A parent child

A child takes on the role of a parent in trying to sort out the problem. This is often a sign that they feel responsible for their parents' conflict.



Externalising behaviour

A child may become aggressive and difficult.

Conflict in action

What conflict behaviours do you see the mum and dad using in this film clip?



Parental Conflict / Domestic Abuse

Support for parents in conflict differs from support for parents experiencing domestic abuse.

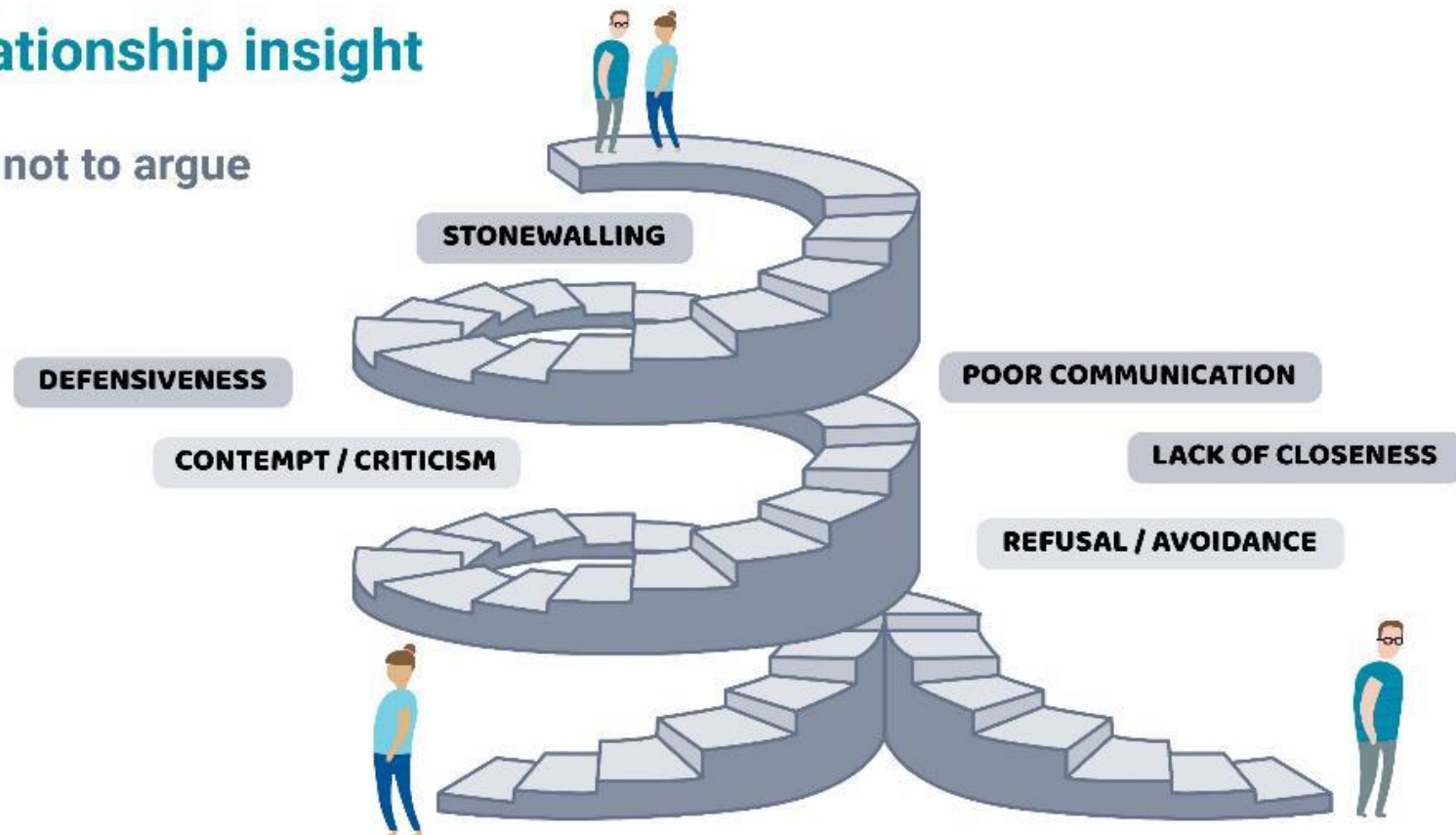
Where there is domestic abuse there will usually be an imbalance of power and one parent will most likely feel fearful of the other.

If you suspect domestic abuse, you should follow your organizational/ local safeguarding procedures

Relationship insight –

Relationship insight

How not to argue



Destructive (unhelpful) conflict

Relationship damaging

- x Intense arguments
- x Regular arguments
- x Not listening / understanding others perspective
- x Personally insulting
- x Verbal aggression
- x The silent treatment
- x Arguments about or involving the children

Constructive (helpful) conflict

Relationship enhancing

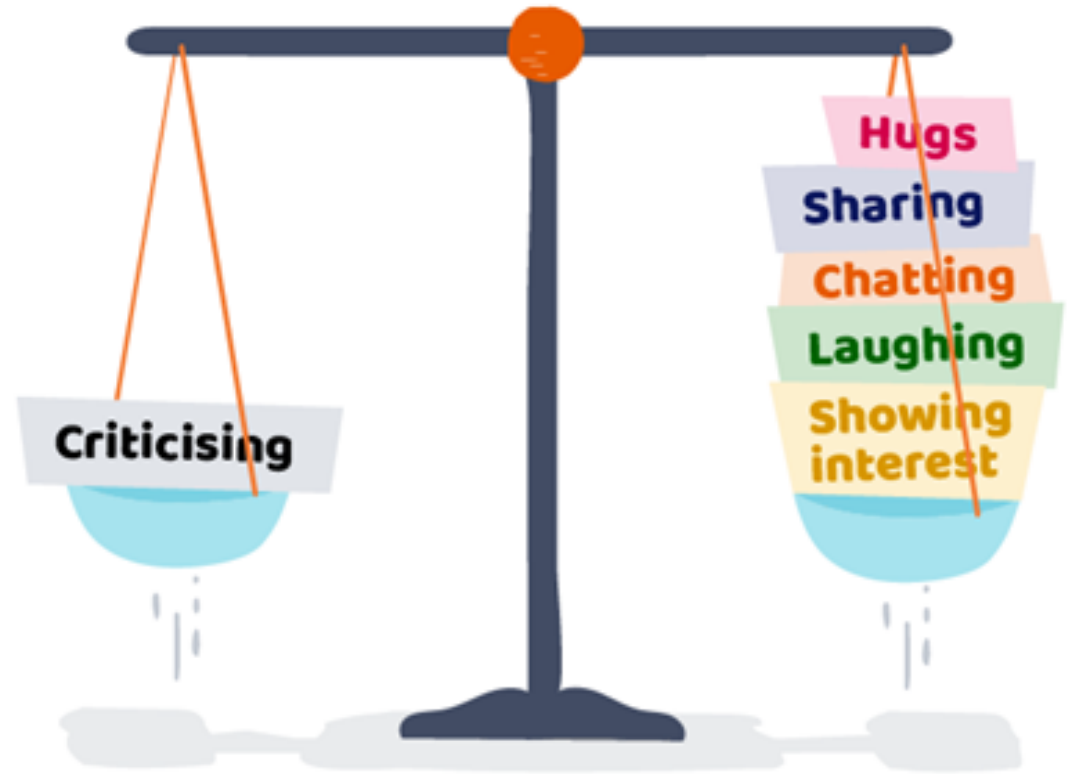
- ✓ Stay calm
- ✓ Listen and try to understand a different perspective
- ✓ Seek compromise
- ✓ Demonstrate warmth
- ✓ Use humour and negotiation
- ✓ Discussion without resolution

For a child, the best ending to an argument between parents is a meaningful **resolution** with **apologies**.

A magic ratio

Gottman (1994) found that couples have better relationships when their **POSITIVE MOMENTS** outweigh their **NEGATIVE MOMENTS**.

For every **NEGATIVE MOMENT** between you and your partner, you need **FIVE POSITIVE MOMENTS** to balance it out



Part 2

Digital Recourses

Three evidence-based interventions (programmes)



**Me, you, and
baby too**

- expectant and new parents



**Arguing
better**

- couples in a relationship experiencing conflict

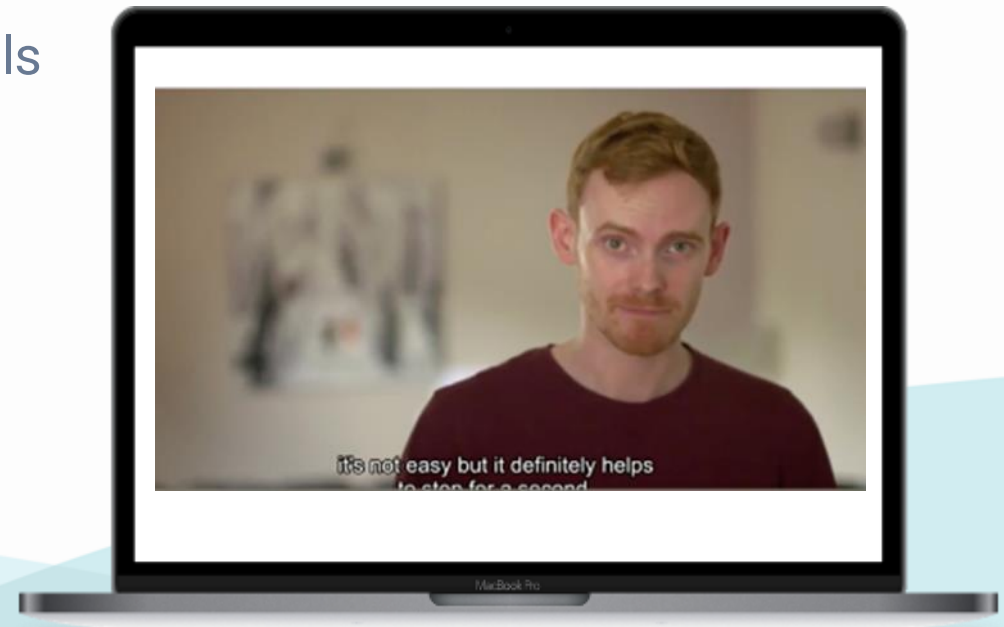


**Getting it right
for children**

- separating or separated parents experiencing conflict

Behaviour modelling training

- **Attentional**
Involves observing ideal behaviours from least difficult to most difficult
- **Retentional**
Involves the use of symbols to memorise the new skills
- **Reproduction**
Practicing the new skill
- **Motivational**
Positive reinforcements for demonstrating the newly learned skills



Outcome measures

Parent surveys consisting of demographic questions and standardised measures are embedded in the digital resources:

- Couple coping, stress, and relationship satisfaction (MYBT)
- Couple coping and stress (AB)
- Co-parenting co-operation and emotional adaptation to relationship breakdown (GIFRC)

Does it work? Key findings

Statistically significant reductions in levels of conflict.

Significant improvements in relationship satisfaction amongst users.

A good visual tool reflecting real life experiences

Supported parents to identify how conflict impacts their child

Parents take ownership

How do I engage parents with the digital resources?

Self-
directed

Semi-
supported

Fully-
supported

Group
session

Practitioner guide

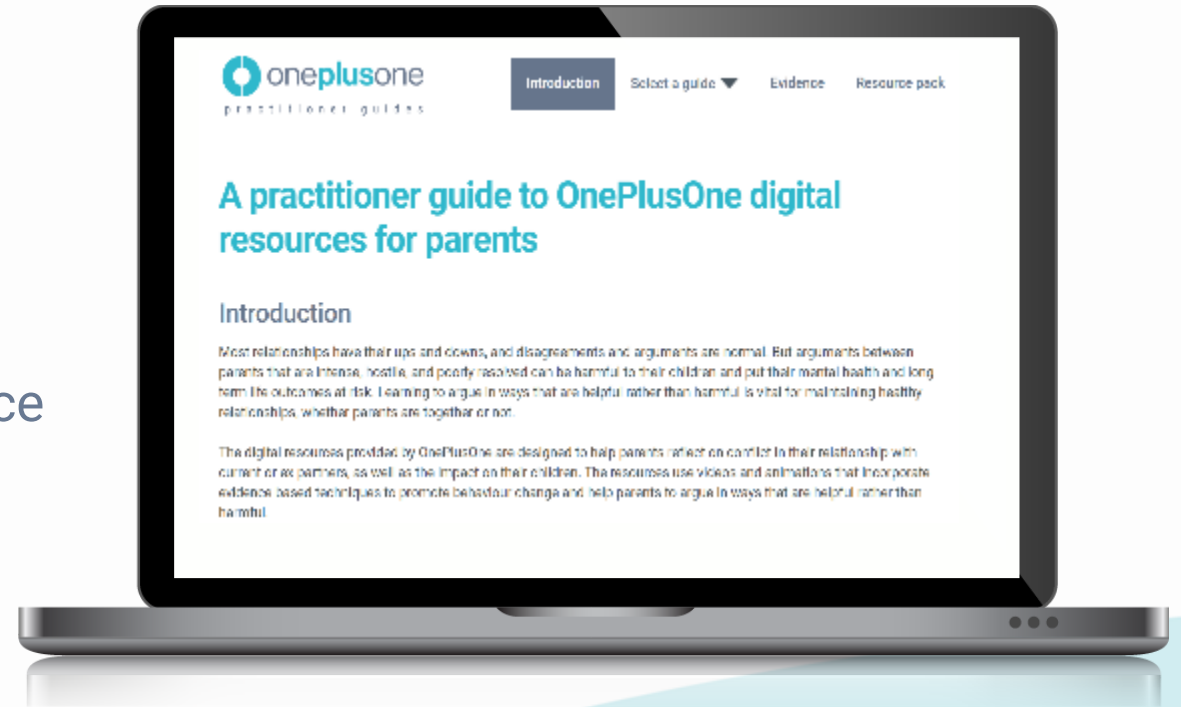
Each digital resource has an online practitioner guide to help you to work alongside parents.

The guide includes evidence-base, tips and guidance for practitioners and key messages for parents.

This is only for use within your local authority.

Create account:

<https://www.oneplusone.org.uk/practitioners>



Parent resources

How parents register and get started with the digital courses.

This is where you will direct parents to access the three digital resources.

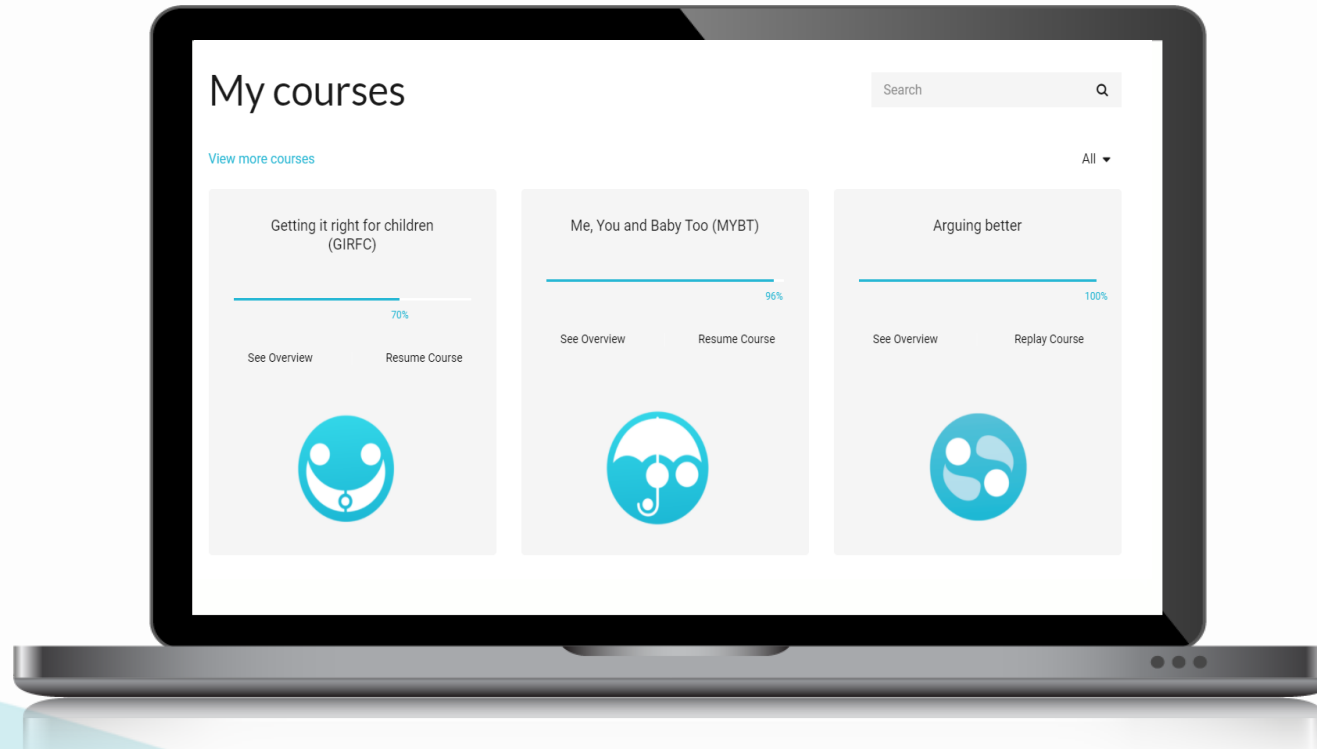
Please choose your local authority from the map.

How to register:

<https://www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents>



One Plus One digital resources for parents



Exploring OnePlusOne Digital Resources



Independently explore the digital resources

Return for Q and A

Question and answers

What did you find the most useful?

Was there anything in the content that didn't make sense?

What might be the challenges for you in using these resources with parents?

Create account: <https://www.oneplusone.org.uk/practitioner-guides-england/introduction>

Self Directed Learning

Please register your account

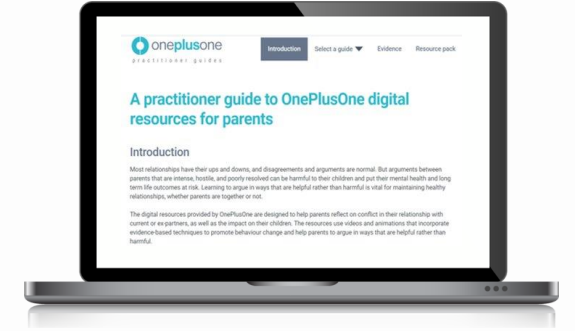
<https://www.oneplusone.org.uk/practitioner-guides-england/introduction>

Exploring OnePlusOne Digital Resources

Independently explore the digital resources

Return for Q and A

- What did you like about the resources?
- Was there anything that you didn't like / understand?
- Do you think you could use the resources in your practice?



Getting on Better / Getting it Right for Children - cards

Getting on Better (2022)
Stages and changes of relationships

Relationships change over time.
What stage are you at? What could this mean for your relationship?
Flip the card to find out.

1 Attraction
2 Rejection
3 Power struggle
4 Making yourself vulnerable
5 Mutual respect, love and understanding

Getting on Better (2022)
Arguments are like fire

The LOGS: What makes do you argue about?
The MATCH: What usually starts an argument?
The FUEL: What makes it worse? Are you taking in fuel?
The WATER: What helps calm things down?

Getting on Better (2022)
Conflict styles

Things that people commonly do during an argument.

1 I get on well
2 I avoid
3 I get on well and then I fight
4 I speak harshly

I look off
I raise my voice a bit
I look at my feet
I speak harshly

When you can recognize these, you can change the way your arguments play out. Flip the card to find out how.

Getting on Better (2022)
The magic scale

How many positive moments does it take to balance each negative moment?
Flip the card to find out.

Getting on Better (2022)
Better communication

The downward spiral.
Some types of behaviour can increase the risk of relationship difficulties.
Flip the card to learn more.

Go negative only
Communication
Conflict
Lack of diversity
Mutual avoidance

Getting on Better (2022)
Harmful and helpful arguments

HARMFUL arguments can be BAD for your relationship.
HELPFUL arguments can be GOOD for your relationship.

Trying to win
Saying ones thing
Name-calling
Blaming
Being repetitive

Working together
Considering each other's feelings
Being open to finding solutions

Getting on Better (2022)
Childhood for separated parents

When parents separate, children can often feel like they're being put into these different roles. Can you guess what they are? Flip the card to find out more.

a) b) c) d)

Getting on Better (2022)
Parent roles for separated parents

When parents separate, they sometimes do things that can put their children in difficult positions. Do you recognise any of these behaviours? Flip the card to find out more.

a) b) c) d)

Getting it right for children 2022

If you need to have a difficult conversation with your ex, the first step is to STAY CALM.
Staying calm makes it easier to listen and to be listened to. This can help you to find solutions without the conversation getting out of hand.

1 of 5
KEEP CALM

Getting it right for children 2022

There will be times when you and your ex need to put your differences aside and look at things from your child's point of view. This can be hard, but only takes one of you SEE IT DIFFERENTLY start making a change.

2 of 5
SEE IT DIFFERENTLY

Getting it right for children 2022

When you need to ask for something, it can be helpful to SPEAK FOR YOURSELF. This means saying how you feel and being clear about what you need, rather than what you wish the other person would do.

3 of 5
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF

Getting it right for children 2022

When you can see things differently and speak for yourself, it becomes easier to NEGOTIATE. It's important to remember that this isn't about getting what you want - it's about finding a compromise that works for your child.

4 of 5
NEGOTIATE

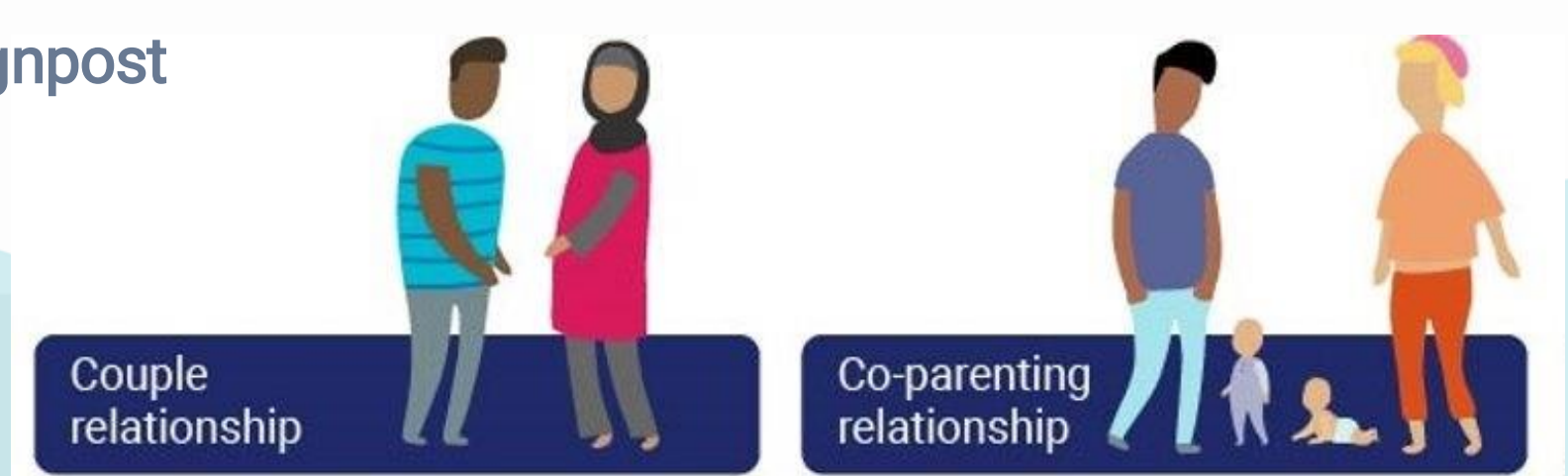
Getting it right for children 2022

When you're able to speak for yourself and negotiate, you may find it becomes possible to WORK IT OUT and find solutions together. Once you've agreed on a solution, you'll need to try it a few times to see if it works.

5 of 5
WORK IT OUT

How do I talk about relationships?

- Why we should and why we don't
- A framework for practice
- Relational skills in action
- Know where to signpost



Why we don't talk about relationships

- It's none of my business.
- I don't have time.
- It might open a can of worms.
- I don't have the skills.
- I'm not a relationship counsellor.
- I'm scared.

Why we should talk about relationships

- To practice with appropriate professional curiosity and respect
- To reduce the effect of destructive parental conflict on child outcomes
- To work from an early intervention approach
- To acknowledge a key area of stress for many parents
- To effect positive change in family dynamics, helping to improve the lived experience of the child
- To be part of good systemic practice

A framework for practice

RECOGNISE

Signs of interparental conflict:
Active listening

RESPOND

Empathetic responding:
Open questions, clarifying, summarising
Solution-focused questions:
Reframing and identifying what needs to change

REVIEW

Action planning for change:
Collaborative based on need and shared agenda

Relational skills in action

Relational skills – an approach to working with parents in conflict



Can you identify the skills being used by the practitioner?

TOP TIPS

DO	DON'T
✓ Do normalise what is normal	x Don't provide a solution
✓ Do empathise	x Don't sympathise
✓ Do acknowledge what is happening	x Don't assume you know what's going on
✓ Do offer to listen with compassion	x Don't present yourself as having all the answers
✓ Do maintain neutrality, transparency and curiosity	x Don't take sides
✓ Do explore the lived experience of the child	x Don't forget the child's perspective
✓ Do be sensitive to cultural differences and explore cultural norms in relationships	x Don't make assumptions based on culture or ethnicity
✓ Do tune into their lived experience	x Don't make assumptions based on your lived experience

We are here to help...

Click is a unique service providing evidence-based relationship support from a mobile-friendly platform. It is available 24/7 to help parents understand more about their relationship and how they can improve it.

clickrelationships.org

See it Differently is a collection of videos and animations that helps parents see family arguments from their children's point of view and offers alternative ways of handling disagreements.

seeitdifferently.org





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