

Family mediators help parents by:

- helping them to be aware, or more aware, of what their children may be experiencing and needing ;
- helping them to focus on each child as an individual with his or her own needs, which vary according to age and stage of development, temperament, attachments and many other factors;
- increasing parental co-operation and reducing competition over the children
- encouraging parents to accept each other's continuing role in the children's lives
- helping them to consider different areas of parenting and how far these can be shared or entrusted mainly to one parent
- helping parents to work out arrangements that free the children from conflicts of loyalty or other pressures
- helping parents to work out child support payments and commitment to supporting the children financially
- discussing with parents how they plan to talk with the children and explain new arrangements to them
- considering with parents whether children and young people should be directly involved in mediation, if appropriate, to give them an opportunity to express their views and feelings, but without giving them responsibility for decisions. Some parents welcome the mediator's support in explaining their decisions and arrangements to their children in a family meeting, at the end of the mediation process.