



## One minute guide



# Relationships really matter: reducing conflict in parental communication

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### What do we mean by 'parental conflict'?

Being a parent or carer can be difficult and most people will have disagreements from time to time. This could be about different things like parenting styles, chores, money or about family time arrangements. Disagreements are a normal part of parenting, whether parenting together or apart, but when these disagreements become frequent, intense and more difficult to resolve, our children can be impacted.

### What is the impact of parental conflict?

Conflict is difficult for everyone, but when children hear or see it, or are aware of it between their parents or carers, they can feel upset, scared, worried or angry. This can impact on their mental health and emotional and physical wellbeing, and they can often become involved in the conflict or feel responsible for it. Conflict can also impact on a child's ability to form their own positive, healthy relationships with friends and schoolmates as well as future intimate relationships.

### How will addressing parental conflict help?

Children who observe positive, well-managed communication between parents or carers and who see disagreements being negotiated and resolved will feel more secure, stable and happier. Their mental health and physical wellbeing will be improved and they will learn skills to manage conflict within their own relationships and develop their own positive communication skills.

### Is parental conflict the same as domestic abuse?

Parental conflict is distinctly different to domestic abuse and so the type of advice and support offered should be carefully considered if it is suspected or known that there is domestic abuse historically or currently within a relationship.

- Parent carers can access support from the 24 hour Domestic Abuse telephone helpline 0808 800 0340.
- If you are in immediate danger call 999.

## What resources are available to practitioners, partners or services supporting families?

All practitioners, services and partnerships within Nottinghamshire who are working with families should be aware of the effects of parental conflict, and should have those conversations about healthy relationships and communication as part of their routine involvement.

A free multi-agency and multi-disciplinary training programme is available for all practitioners, services and partners working with children and families within Nottinghamshire.

Free access is provided to resources and toolkits to support working with families around parental conflict .

Information and guidance is available in the 'Practitioner Section' (section 8) of the Relationships Really Matter website [www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter](http://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter).

## What support is available for parents and carers?

Free support is available in Nottinghamshire to all parents/carers whether parenting together or apart.

The **Relationships Really Matter website** has information for parents on how to communicate in a positive and healthy way for their children. Further information about the support available can be found by visiting [www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter](http://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter).

There is a free online programme from 'oneplusone' that can be completed independently. This is broken down into three different programmes for strengthening communication at different stages of parenting relationships:

- Me you and baby too – for new and expectant parents
- Arguing better - for parents managing stress
- Getting it right for the children - for separating / separated parents

Relationships Really Matter parent/carer group is a four-session facilitated programme for all parents and carers which supports them to understand what conflict is, how it impacts their children and how to strengthen positive communication.

## Where can I get further information and support?

For further information or support visit [www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter](http://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/relationshipsreallymatter).

You can also contact the Reducing Parental Conflict team by emailing [ReduceParentalConflict@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:ReduceParentalConflict@nottsc.gov.uk).



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