

Agreements and Family Mediation

By Chris Myles

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A wealth of evidence exists suggesting children can be emotionally damaged by the breakdown in their parents' relationships; this does not have to be the case.

Increasingly separating parents are encouraged to devise parenting plans setting out arrangements for how the children will spend their time, including where the children live, how they will spend time with each parent, travel arrangements, how to deal with holidays, school events, birthdays etc. If these issues can be agreed it will help the children and indeed parents to adjust to separation.

If agreement is not possible then Family Mediation is available, where an independent third party Mediator will try to assist parents reach agreement, failing this Court remains an option.

Either parent can apply to Court for a Residence Order to state where the child lives or to seek a Defined Contact Order outlining the contact arrangements with the non-residential parent. When determining such issues the child's welfare is the Court's paramount consideration.

It is often helpful to obtain advice from a Family Law Specialist to discuss concerns about the above issues, frequently problems can be resolved by negotiation before people's views become entrenched.

If you feel you need to seek advice as to your current situation please contact the Family Team at Crombie Wilkinson on freephone 0800 0086658 or call into the York Office at 19 Clifford Street, Selby Office at 6 Park Street or Malton Office at Forsyth House Market Place to arrange an initial interview.