

Other Services

Children & Young Person's Counselling

Counselling is available to children and young people (aged 5 – 18 years) who are experiencing difficulties in their lives due to parental separation, family disruption or change. It is a strictly confidential service offering the child one to one therapeutic support. The counsellor enables the youngsters to express their feelings around the separation issues and to better understand and come to terms with the changed family situation. This may involve them developing more positive and constructive coping mechanisms.

Support to Parents

Support is also offered to parents to talk through their concerns regarding the parenting of their children post separation / divorce particularly where children are too young or choose not to use the service.

Child Contact Centre

A safe, friendly, neutral, child-centred environment for children to meet with the parent they no longer live with, or with other family members. Trained staff are in attendance offering support as and when required. Staff facilitate the handover from one parent to the other without parents ever having to meet.

Handovers for contact outwith the centre can also be facilitated.

Opening Hours

Monday	09.00—17.00
Tuesday	09.00 - 17.00
Wednesday	09.00 - 17.00
Thursday	09.00 - 17.00
Friday	09.00 - 17.00
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

Contact us

Service & Development
Manager: Margret MacRae
Children & Young
Person's Counsellor: Tine Butterworth

Family Mediation Highland
46 Church Street
Inverness
IV1 1EH

Tel: 01463 712100
Email: info@fmhighland.org

Website:
www.relationships-scotland.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC013780
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Helping families
negotiate a better future

**Family
Mediation
Highland**

Tel: 01463 712100

What is Family Mediation?

Family mediation is a voluntary process in which a trained, impartial mediator helps family members to communicate more effectively, and to make their own arrangements for the future, particularly for their children. Mediation can benefit families by minimising conflict, improving family life and helping to avoid long, painful and expensive legal battles. Mediators do not take sides or make judgements, but rather support people to make their own decisions about the future. Family mediation supports parents, children and wider family members through change, particularly where this has occurred as a result of separation, divorce or family restructuring.

Who is it for?

The majority of the work we undertake is between separated parents, but mediation is for all sorts of people: married and unmarried, younger and older. Parents, grandparents, stepparents, children and young people can all participate in family mediation. Eg A youngster may wish to mediate with their separated parent to improve the communication between them.

When can you come?

Family mediation can be helpful at any time if communication becomes difficult or breaks down.



This may be:

- During, or some time after a relationship breakdown
- As a result of families re-forming, such as stepfamilies
- When parents, grandparents, stepparents or young people identify there are difficulties with communication or there are practical arrangements that need to be resolved

Family mediation can help them to negotiate or re-negotiate arrangements.

How does it work?

Each family member is offered an individual, confidential meeting, either in the office in Inverness or by telephone, where information is shared and options are discussed. If mediation is appropriate a joint meeting is arranged with the mediator where family members have the opportunity to talk about their concerns, explore options and agree an acceptable way forward. Families may attend several mediation appointments. Mediation takes place mostly at our office in Inverness although appointments can also be facilitated via skype. Disabled access can also be arranged with prior notice.

What about the children?



The focus of family mediation is on putting children and young people's needs first. Families can do this by listening to them, trying to understand them and taking their views and feelings into account. In some cases family mediation may offer the option, if appropriate, of a mediator meeting individually with children and young people to hear their views on issues which affect them. The mediator agrees with the child or young person what they would like to feed back into the mediation process for their parents to hear. This service is called 'Direct Consultation with Children'

Is it confidential?

Yes. Parents can talk freely and frankly in mediation. What occurs in mediation cannot be used in civil proceedings unless both parties want it to be, or if there are issues regarding criminal activities or children's safety. Mediators maintain confidentiality, unless circumstances suggest that the issues being discussed may pose a risk to clients or the wider community. Care is taken to protect confidentiality and no disclosure will be made without discussing the issues first, unless there is an urgent risk of harm.

Who are the mediators?

Family mediators are trained professionals who have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the complexity of family life and of separation, divorce and family restructuring. All mediators work to



professional standards and go through an annual renewal process to demonstrate that they have met the required standards of practice, supervision and Continuing Professional Development.

What about the courts?

In Scotland the courts will not become involved in the decisions families make following a separation unless they are asked to. Mediation can help families to make decisions about children without going to court. However, if families do go to court even at that stage the sheriff may refer them to their local family mediation service.

How much will it cost?

Initial, individual appointment - £17.50

Joint Mediation Session (1.5 hours) - £27.50 per person

Shuttle Mediation Session (2 mediators, parties are in two separate rooms) (3 hours) - £85.00 per person

For financial assistance please discuss this with our service, contact your solicitor or visit The Scottish Legal Aid Board website.

Equal Opportunities and Ethics

Relationships Scotland – Family Mediation Highland is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities in all its work. All our family mediators abide by the code of professional practice that it is in line with the Scottish Mediation Network's code of practice.