



Separated families policy

1. Purpose

Our primary focus is the support and wellbeing of the families and children.

Amongst the children and young people that attend our clinic, many come from separated families. The purpose of this policy is to outline Sprout Psychology Centre's obligations to our families, ensuring that the best interests of our clients are always prioritised, as well as abiding by our legal and ethical requirements.

2. Policy

Please read carefully

- It is the parents' obligation to advise us of the current family situation accurately and honestly, including the scope of engagement the other parent will have during the assessment process.
- It is our expectation that separated parents work together, respectfully, cooperatively and communicate effectively, to support the assessment process and the care of the child. Where both parents are present in the child's life, it is best practice for the psychologist to gather information from both parents during the assessment, before drawing any diagnostic conclusions.
- We generally require the consent of both parents before commencing with an assessment for your child*. It is the responsibility of the parent engaging our services to ensure the other parent has consented to the process.
- It is the parents' obligation to provide us a copy of any relevant legal documents or court orders, if in place. These need to be either brought with you or provided prior to your child's first appointment with us.
- Regardless of which parent is the primary carer, or has engaged our services, either parent or legal guardian can**
 - Schedule an appointment with their child,
 - Be present at their appointment
 - Request copies of notes and assessment report(s)
 - If an appointment is made by one parent, it is the responsibility of this parent to inform the other parent, invite them to attend, and provide feedback to them.



- Assessment reports will be sent to the parent who has engaged our services and attends the appointment(s). It is the responsibility of that parent to forward to the other parent.
- We do not have the capacity to provide separate feedback appointments to each parent. We will provide an email summary which will be sent to both parents.
- Payment for the appointments must be made on the day, as a minimum requirement, and it is the parent's responsibility to ascertain who will be attending the appointment and making the payment(s). We can send invoices for part/split payments as per case by case negotiations.
- Where there is significant conflict, we reserve the right to request the court orders, obtain signed consent from both parents, or halt our services until dispute has been resolved. If necessary, we may discharge a family from the clinic if the conflict is disruptive to the clinic or impedes the care of the child.
- We do not take referrals where the purpose of the assessment is to generate information for legal decision making around custody issues of parental separation.

**There may be certain circumstances where both parents' consent is not required. Some examples may include, the other parent is deceased, lives overseas and is non-contactable, or has never been present in the child's life. These will be assessed on a case by case basis. Please note that both parents consenting to the assessment is not necessarily a legal requirement but due to the often-complex nature of supporting separated families, it is Sprout Psychology Centre's policy.*

***Unless there is a court order specifically restricting their involvement in their child's care. If this is the case, please ensure you provide these court orders prior to or at your first visit to the clinic.*

3. Policy Updates

This Policy may change from time to time and is available on our website.

4. Complaints and Enquiries

If you have any queries or complaints about our Separated Families Policy please contact us via phone, email or in person to discuss this further.