

South West Family Services, Suite 3 Gandy Street Chambers, 11 Gandy Street, Exeter, Devon, EX43LS
email: office@southwestfamilyservices.com phone: 07961671514

Prepare For Family Time Sessions

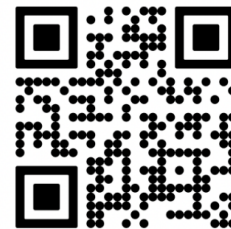
Please ensure you understand the meeting place, and what time you should arrive from confirmation with the team. If you are not sure please email or text the office.

We set separate times for each parent to help the session run smoothly and help ensure parents do not bump into each other before the session, if required. Please ensure you are not late, otherwise you risk the session being cancelled!

- Please ensure you know **where to meet** and **what time**.
- Please don't leave it until the last minute to check! **Any changes** or alternative arrangements should be emailed to the office no less than 5 days before each session.
- You **MUST** arrive at the time we ask you to.
- You need to bring a **drink**, we do not provide refreshments.
- You need to **bring things** for you and your child to do if we are inside, or a child appropriate plan if we are in the community. Please check with the team if you are unsure.
- If you or the child are **unwell**, please email the office as soon as you can.
- If you are **running late**, please do not phone or text the office as the Family Support Worker allocated to working with you will phone you if you do not arrive when you should. Usually, we will help manage this and wait up to 10 minutes before the session is then cancelled.

Please note, the office is not open or on duty 24/7 but we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Email, text, WhatsApp message or arrange a time to speak with the team to ask whatever questions or worries you have. We are here to help make it easier for everyone.



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Here's some introductory information and details to help you prepare.

Most children and young people say they still want to see both parents after the separation. Those that do not sometimes have proportionate reasons or have overriding loyalty or a worry about the future or change. Children who keep in contact with both parents after a divorce or separation can adapt better than those children who lose contact with the parent they do not live with. This does not mean that contact is safe for all children but in most cases, it can be and the court and Cafcass worker has assessed this and consider your child(ren) should be spending meaningful time with their other parent.

At first it may seem impossible to put aside the strong feelings you might have about your ex-partner so you can both cooperate over your children. The important thing to remember is that you don't have to be friends! Your children will be shaped very much by how their parents behave towards them about the loss and how they behave towards each other. Important decisions such as where your child or children will live and how often they see each parent will of course affect them and so will the level of conflict between you and your ex-partner.

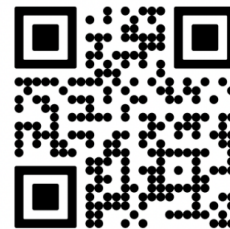
For resident parents it may feel like you are excluded because we are spending a lot of time with the child/children and the other parent but that is the nature of it and gives you an insight into how difficult it may be for the other parent who isn't having a meaningful relationship with the other parent.

Children need...

- To be told what is happening and how their lives will change
- To know that the breakup is not their fault
- To know that it is OK to feel angry and sad
- To know that it's fine to talk and ask questions
- To be listened to
- To know that their parents understand how they feel and still love them
- To feel good about loving both parents
- To know that it is all right to have different family rules in different houses.

Children do not need...

- To hear or see their parents complaining about or blaming each other
- To hear adult information about the reasons for the separation or details about child support.



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- To feel that they may be asked to choose one parent over the other
- To pass messages from one parent to the other.
- To feel like an outsider in one parent's home.

To get familiar and feel prepared please do the following:

- Take a look at our website to get familiar. Showing pictures will help your child know what to expect.
- Have a read about the services on our website.
- Make sure you've had a good read of the service agreement and ask any questions.
- Use the resources on the NACCC website to help you and the child/children prepare. The links are on our website.
- There is a long list of helpful links on our website for you and for your children to help you all feel prepared.