

After the contact has taken place



How might your children be feeling?

"We can cope and get on with our lives as long as you do too."

What can you do to help them?

- Please try to keep talking to each other about things that affect your children.

The resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"It's important for us to be able to relax and just be ourselves."

What can you do to help them?

Please remember this can be a difficult time for your children. They therefore need time to think about what has happened and to settle back with you.

The non-resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"That was good... when will we be coming again?"

What can you do to help them?

It is often helpful to think about what happened with your children during the contact. Is there anything you could say or do that would make the next contact better?

And finally...



Please remember that children always need to be put first and the majority... *"just want to be kids and need to be close to both of you"*.

National Association of Child Contact Centres

Promoting safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres

The National Association of Child Contact Centres is grateful for the valuable contribution to this leaflet by its member centres during the 'Reluctant Child' training programme.

If you would like to find out more about the National Association of Child Contact Centres please contact:



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Registered Charity Number: 1078636

Company Limited by Guarantee Number: 3886023
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Child Contact Centres...

putting your children first



Not heard of or used a Child Contact Centre?

This leaflet has been written to help you understand how your children might be feeling when they are using a Child Contact Centre.

Community
Legal Service



contact
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHILD CONTACT CENTRES

Promoting safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres

What is a Child Contact Centre?



A Child Contact Centre is a place where children of separated families can enjoy contact with one or both parents and sometimes other family members in a relaxed, comfortable and safe environment.

What will happen when you arrive?



The volunteers and staff responsible for running the centre will make you feel welcome and try to answer your questions. It is also important for you to know that the volunteers believe:

- Children have a right to know and maintain a relationship with both their parents.
- Everybody involved in the contact needs to work together to meet your children's needs.

This means that it is important for you to read on and find out about preparing for the contact and what to do whilst it is taking place and afterwards.

Preparing for contact

How might your children be feeling?

What can you do to help them?

It is often difficult coming to a new place and meeting new people, which is why we advise that you come and see the centre before your first arranged visit. This will help you and your children feel more comfortable and relaxed. If you are unable to come to the centre or will be late it is important that you let us know as soon as possible.

The resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"Where are we going?"

What can you do to help them?

- Talk to your children about the contact.
- Tell your children about where they will be going and the people they will be seeing.
- Answer any questions your children might have about the contact.
- Make the centre's volunteers aware of your children's needs and the toys they enjoy playing with.

All of this will help your children understand what is happening, feel relaxed and settle into the centre when they arrive.

The non-resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"Why has this happened to me?"

What can you do to help them?

Try to think about:

- How your children might be feeling about seeing you again.
- What your children might be interested in, want to play with and talk about.

This will help your children relax and get to know you again.

When the contact is taking place



How might your children be feeling?

"Please don't involve us in what went wrong or whose fault you think it is."

What can you do to help them?

Please consider your children's feelings by not asking them lots of questions or arguing in front of them.

The resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"I love my mum and my dad but don't want to get trapped between them"

What can you do to help them?

- Encourage your children to meet, spend time and play with the contact parent.
- Give your children time to settle into the centre.

Unless one of the volunteers asks for your assistance don't interrupt the contact once it has started.

The non-resident parent

How might your children be feeling?

"What should I be saying and doing?"

What can you do to help them?

- If your children have not seen you for some time please remember it may take time for them to settle and get to know you again.
- Try to find out what your children want to play with, are interested in, and want to talk about.