

Are the consultations and feedback sessions confidential?

Yes, as with the rest of the Family Dispute Resolution process. Confidentiality in relation to this process is outlined in the Family Law Act. Information gathered in Family Dispute Resolution may be confidential unless authorised by both parties or required by law, such as to protect someone from harm.

What are the qualifications of the child consultant?

All our child consultants are trained and qualified to work with children in family separation.

Are there any costs?

Child Informed Practice does incur some fees and your Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner will discuss these with you prior to commencing the process.

Is there going to be a review?

The child consultant may book a review appointment with the parents and/or children as appropriate.

Contact Us

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region provides services at a number of locations. Please contact us to make an appointment or find out more about our services.

Canberra: (02) 6122 7100

Riverina: (02) 6923 9100

Bega and Moruya: (02) 6122 7100

Cooma and Goulburn: (02) 6122 7100

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region is proud to be a Human Rights compliant organisation



www.racr.relationships.org.au

Child Informed Practice in Family Dispute Resolution



Hearing your child's voice in Family Dispute Resolution

Relationships Australia
CANBERRA & REGION



About Us

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region is an independent not-for-profit organisation that has been a leading provider of relationship support services for over 50 years. We are part of a national network of Relationships Australia organisations operating out of 200 centres nationwide.

Our programs are for everyone, regardless of religious belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle choice, cultural background or economic circumstances.

What is Child Informed Practice?

Child Informed Practice brings children's views, perspectives and issues related to their wellbeing into the Family Dispute Resolution process.

In Child Informed Practice children have an independent interview with a child consultant. Children have found it can be very helpful to talk on their own to a person trained to understand their feelings and views.

The child consultant advocates for the needs of the child and gives feedback to parents. Hearing how children are experiencing the changes in their family and life allows parents to think about arrangements that will work for their children.

In this model, the Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner and child consultant work together to assist parents to establish an effective co-parenting relationship. This can support their children through the process of family separation and related changes in their lives.

How does the process begin?

Your Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner may refer your case for Child Informed Practice if it is identified as beneficial.

During your interview with the Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner there will be an opportunity to discuss whether you want your children to be interviewed by a child consultant and if this would be helpful. Any decision involving children at any stage needs to be made with your practitioner. To go ahead consent must be given by both parents.

The child consultant will then contact each parent to discuss the process and address any concerns raised.

What happens in a child interview?

Depending on age and the individual child, they may express themselves through drawing, playing, talking, stories or other activities. If there

is more than one child in the family, each is seen separately.

Children are never asked to make decisions- that's their parents' job.

It can be a relief for a child to be able to express their views to a person who is not involved in the conflict. However, the consultation is not to be confused with child counselling. Its purpose is to allow the child to share what it is like for them, and to help parents in their decision making in Family Dispute Resolution.

What happens after the child interview?

On a separate occasion very soon after seeing the children, parents are invited to a feedback session with the child consultant who has seen their children to learn:

- + What the situation is like for the children
- + What is going well
- + What the children would like to see change