

5 tips to help you co-parent after separation

Separation is an emotional time for families, especially when there are children involved. The Family Law Act 1975 sets out considerations with which the Court must have regard to when determining what is in a child's best interests.

One of these considerations is the benefit to the child to have a relationship with their parents, (which must be considered in conjunction with any history of family violence, abuse or neglect). This means that after the parties separate a relationship with both parents should be promoted if it is safe to do so.

This can be difficult as there is often tension between the parties and the reasons for the breakdown in the relationship are fresh in their minds. Although that may be the case, the Family Law Courts' stance is clear in that parents have an obligation to their children and regardless of the reasons behind the separation they need to put their personal differences aside and do what is best for the child.

When parents are able to effectively co-parent it is the child that ultimately benefits. By demonstrating a united front, the parents provide much needed stability to the child in a challenging

and confusing time in their life.

At Andersons we understand that putting aside your differences with your ex-partner after separation can be difficult, so we have compiled 5 tips to help you establish a healthy co-parenting relationship.

Remain child focused

Stop and think about your actions and what impact that will have on your child, not the impact it may have on your ex-partner.

Do not focus on what caused the breakdown of the relationship and what part the other party may have played in it. Focus on your child's welfare, stability and happiness and put your child's needs first.

Separation is not only an emotional time for parents but also for children. Minimising the disruption and impact for the child should be the main focus for both parents.

Constructive communication

It is crucial for separated parents to be able to communicate in a respectful and productive manner.

The parties need to be able to maintain some level of communication with one another to make important joint decisions about their child's future, including decisions about the child's education and health.

Do not involve the child in disputes

If there is a disagreement between the parties, they need to take a mature approach to resolving the dispute and not involve the child in the dispute.

The child should not be put in a position where they feel as though they need to take sides or make a decision to settle a dispute between their parents.

The parties should also be mindful not to insult or undermine the other parent in the presence of the child.

Undertake a parenting course

Many community services such as **Centacare, Relationships Australia** and **Anglicare** run parenting courses to assist families after separation.

These courses offer considerable benefits to the parents, which in turn has a flow on effect for the child.

In some cases, the Family Law Courts will make orders requiring parents to undertake specific parenting courses.

United parenting

When both parties can agree to parent with a uniform approach it provides consistency for the child with their routine, behaviour, standards and discipline. This can help minimise any disruption to the child during this time.

Although communication may be difficult with your ex-partner initially, the use of Parenting Applications may assist in this area for the benefit of the child.

How can Andersons help?

At Andersons, we have a highly experienced **family law** team who can help you through your separation or divorce. There are many considerations that need to be addressed including **parenting matters, property settlement** and even **updating your Will**. Our team of compassionate and knowledgeable family lawyers can assist you through the whole process.

At Andersons we work a little differently than many law firms in that we offer a 90 minute family ‘road map’ meeting tailored to your personal situation.

All your concerns and questions will be addressed in this appointment and your lawyer will explain the process and outline a plan for next steps. All for a set fee. There is no obligation to engage our team after this meeting but at the very least you will have a solid plan to progress through your separation.

For more information or to book your 90 minute “Family Road Map” appointment, please call 8238 6666 or email enquiry@andersons.com.au