



Accredited Specialist Family Law
Accredited Family Dispute Resolution
Provider (Mediator)

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Surviving Separation

RELATIONSHIP breakdown is one of the most emotional experiences that anyone can face and it can be confusing and difficult for all. However, it is possible to navigate your way through this process with professional help that will enable you and your children not only to survive but thrive.

Key factors in ensuring both parents and children survive and thrive following a separation:

- Get to a place of acceptance about what has occurred and your new reality which usually involves single parenting. Once a separation has occurred nothing is usually

the same as it was previously. There will need to be many adjustments in relation to practical arrangements and finances and this can be stressful. It is important to organise your finances, collate any relevant documents and take stock of what may need to be adjusted to make the new arrangement work.

- Where at all possible try to ensure that your children are able to spend quality time with each parent and each parent maintain a parenting role. What arrangements are appropriate will be different for all families and will also depend upon the age of the children.

- Support the children. A parent's most important role following separation is to help the children cope with the situation. The key to making sure children adjust is to minimise conflict with your former partner. Do not involve children in the dispute, fight in front of them or criticize the other parent to the children and reassure the children they are loved by both parents. This may seem obvious but it can be difficult where the parent is also suffering their own hurt and distress.

- Look after your own wellbeing. Many parents are reluctant to seek help as they feel it makes them look weak or will reflect badly upon them in Court. This is simply not true. There are occasions in every person's life where they will need emotional help and consulting with a counsellor or psychologist is no different from consulting with a doctor for other medical ailments.

- Use support networks for emotional and practical assistance but rely on professional advice about legal matters. When you separate many people will give you their

opinion about the situation, the process and what you are entitled to. Unfortunately, the information provided is often incorrect and can lead to confusion and unnecessary conflict.

- Obtain quality advice and assistance in negotiating arrangements for your children and your property settlement. Take time to find an experienced family lawyer that is right for you, ask questions and make sure that you understand the process and all options available to you in negotiation, mediation and litigation.

Even in the most amicable separations it can be very difficult to discuss and negotiate agreements. Further, private arrangements can often be too vague to work successfully or when tested by changes in arrangements or practical difficulties, the arrangement can fall apart and never recover. In this case you may end up having to re-negotiate with your former partner again in very difficult circumstances or worse, in Court.

Getting advice from a lawyer specialising in family law will ensure you end up with an agreement or an order that will work for you and your children and allow you to move forward with peace of mind.



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