

Family Mediation in Sussex

Direct Consultation with Children

The focus of family mediation is putting children's needs first. Research has shown that children like to be able to have their say about changes in the family and to be involved in planning for the future. FMIS offers the option, if appropriate, of the mediator meeting individually with children to hear their views on the things that their parents or guardians have been discussing in mediation. This service is called 'Direct Consultation with Children.'

Giving children of a suitable age the opportunity to talk to a mediator means they can express their feelings and ideas and be reassured that their parents are taking their views seriously. However decision making is for parents, and children do not wish to be responsible for that.

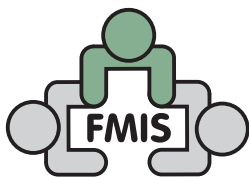
Key points about talking to children in mediation:

- Both parents, or all those with parental responsibility, must give consent for the child(ren) to be invited to meet a mediator.
- Children are free to decline the invitation.
- Children's confidentiality is respected at all times unless a serious risk of harm is shown to exist.
- Both parents must accept the privacy of the meeting.
- The mediator will agree with the children what views may be fed back to the parents at a separate meeting.

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Family Mediators'
Association





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Making future plans for children might include such topics as:

- Living arrangements
- Time with each parent
- Sharing information with each other
- Health
- Education / Out of school activities
- Religion and cultural practice
- Holidays / birthdays / special days
- Contact with friends and wider family
- House rules
- Making changes to these over time

Our mediators have specialist training in working with children and are all CRB checked. They will be happy to discuss with you in more detail the option of meeting the children.

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