

Regional Family Dispute Resolution (RFDR)

This service has been provided by Community Connections since 2003.

FDR assists clients to reach agreements and resolve their disputes related to family law issues (separation and divorce) and improve post separation relationships. FDR is an alternative to litigation through the Family Court. The services provide early resolution to parenting arrangements (and property settlements) post separation, ensuring the safety of parties where violence is disclosed, and that agreements are in the best interest of the children involved. The service also deals with any ongoing changes to parenting agreements.

The target group includes separating and divorcing couples and their children.

Activities:

- Information
- Referral
- Education
- Skills Training
- Counselling
- Family Dispute Resolution (Mediation)
- Support
- Community Development

Family Relationship Centre

Family Relationship Centre's enable families to access information about family relationships at all stages – forming new relationships, overcoming relationship difficulties or dealing with separation. The FRC refers families to other services that help people deal with a wide range of family issues. It will assist grandparents and other extended family members affected by a family separation as well as other people who deal with families such as teachers and doctors. It will be a highly visible entry point or gateway to a whole service system.

Where families separate, the FRC provides information, advice and dispute resolution (such as mediation) to help parents focus on the needs of their children, resolve conflict and develop workable arrangements (including parenting plans) for their children without going to the courts. Information, referral and individual sessions are free of charge.

The FRC provides up to three hours of joint sessions free of charge, or up to six hours where an interpreter is required, but may charge fees after that depending on the client's circumstances. Parents are provided with information about alternate Dispute Resolution Services (in Warrnambool this would be the RFDR service and Centacare) and may choose to seek mediation elsewhere.

Activities:

- Information for families
- Helping families use other services
- Referral
- Help for separating families
 - Individual interviews
 - Group sessions for separating parents
 - Joint sessions for separating parents
- Community Education
- Family Dispute Resolution

Children's Contact Service (CCS)

CCS promote the safe and appropriate transfer of children between the parent with whom the children reside and the parent with whom the children spend time. It enables the children of separated parents who are unable to manage their own change-over, or will not agree to unsupervised visits because of perceived or actual risk to the child or vulnerable parent, to re-establish or maintain contact with the parent with whom they spend time with, where this is appropriate and possible.

The children are the primary client group and the children's best interests are kept at the centre of the contact process.

Activities:

- Information
- Referral
- Education
- Skills training
- Support
- Change Over
- Supervised Contact

Post Separation Cooperative Parenting (PSCP)

To assist highly conflicted separated parents to improve child focused parenting. It will provide a range of interventions that can help separated parents to understand the effect entrenched conflict has on children and help them develop strategies to deal more constructively with the other parent. It will also help separated parents to understand that their children need them to be supportive of their relationship with the other parent.

PSCP will primarily use a short educational workshop designed to evoke strong emotional reactions in parents. The workshop will aim to shift parents from conflictual focus on the other parent to being more aware of children's needs and to increase help-seeking behaviours and child focused parenting.

The target group is highly conflicted parents.

Activities:

- Information
- Referral
- Education
- Skills Training
- Counselling
- Support