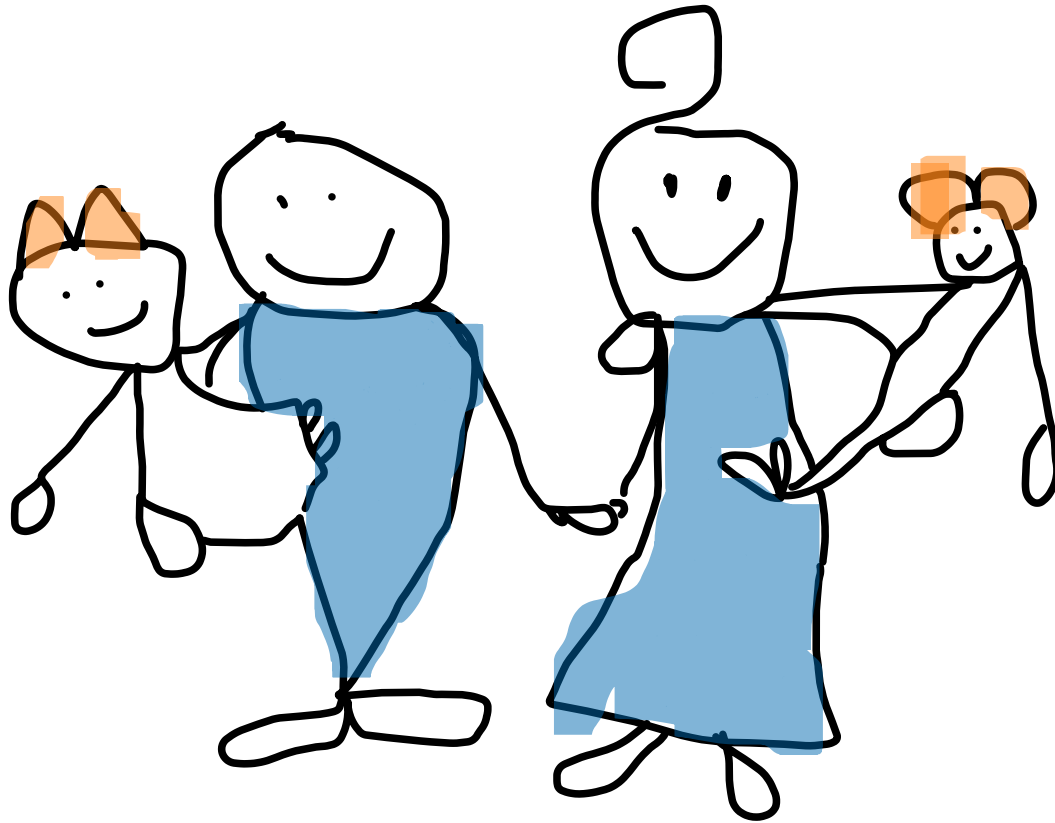


Reducing Parental Conflict Newsletter 8



Bristol Relationships Matter
Mailing List Sign-up Form



Hello and welcome
to the eighth
newsletter for the
Bristol area, focusing
on Reducing Parental
Conflict compiled by
the Relationships
Matter team:

Introduction

1. The Relationships Matter Team – What can we do to support you?

NEW resources for practitioners

2. Supporting Perinatal Healthy Relationships: A Practical Guide - a summary by Katie Cheyne

Map showing pathways to support for parents

3. Pathways to Support for Bristol Parents in Relationship Distress (updated version)

Training

4. Introducing oneplusone Digital Resources online workshop 3rd May 3.45pm (90 min) - [Click here to join the meeting](#)

5. Understanding Parental Couple Conflict and Pathways to Support on-line for education-based staff 10th May 3.45pm (90 min) [Click here to join the meeting](#)

6. Supporting Families Experiencing Persistent Parental Conflict – full day in person [Click here to book](#)

7. E-learning for practitioners and managers in 45 min modules

NEW Digital interventions for parents

8. Arguing Better, Getting it Right for Children, Me, You and Baby Too

9. Communicating about Debt – oneplusone bonus material for parental couples in relationship distress with regards to financial stress

1. The Relationships Matter Team

– What can we do to support you?

The Relationships Matter Team offers free inter-parental relationship support and training to staff who come into contact with children and parents in Bristol. Our work is to develop approaches to Reduce Parental Conflict thereby improving outcomes for children.

We support practitioners to

- understand what the evidence says about harmful parental conflict on children and young people
- to increase confidence to begin conversations with parental couples (separated or together) about the quality of their relationships
- to be able to identify parental conflict and distinguish it from domestic abuse
- to provide support that leads to improved outcomes for children and their families

If you would like to find out more on how we can support you please don't hesitate to email us at relationshipsmatter@bristol.gov.uk



2. Supporting Healthy Relationships - New Parents: A Practical Guide

What Works for Early Intervention and Children's Social Care (WWEICC) - March 2023

Evidence from international studies suggests that parenting stress during the prenatal period and the first few years after birth predicts depression and declining marriage satisfaction, which in turn were associated with increased parental conflict and lower coparenting cooperation.

Further studies have found that parental conflict among new parents can influence parental mental health, which in turn influences child outcomes, both in the short and long term. With that in mind, this guide has been developed for local leads, commissioners and practitioners to provide:

- An overview of the research evidence on the factors that can increase the risk of parental conflict among new parents, and the impact of parental conflict on child outcomes
- Advice on how research evidence can be put into practice to inform your local strategy recommendations on how to engage new parents
- A summary of evidence-based healthy relationship and parenting interventions that can be used to support new parents

The impact of becoming a new parent on parental relationships

New parents show increased conflict levels, decreased relationship satisfaction, decreased quality of interactions and issues relating to sexual intimacy

A UK-based study found mothers and fathers both experienced a similar decline in relationship satisfaction across the transition to parenthood

The factors that impact new parents' relationships

- Financial stress
- Parenting stress
- Parental depression
- Anxious adult attachment (characterised by uncertainty and insecurity) or avoidant adult attachment style (characterised by difficulty with trust and intimacy) of at least one parent
- Shorter infant sleep duration
- Reduced time spent with partner
- Low social support
- Low father engagement
- Increase in housework and childcare impacts on family functioning

The links between new parents' mental health and parental conflict

A systematic review of 17 studies suggests that parental conflict during pregnancy is linked to a higher risk of both the mother and father developing postnatal depression. Postnatal depression has been linked to a breakdown of interpersonal relationships characterised by emotions such as anger, mistrust, emotional detachment, reduced nurturance and intimate partner violence.

2. Supporting Healthy Relationships - New Parents: A Practical Guide continued...

What Works for Early Intervention and Children's Social Care (WWEICC) - March 2023

The impact of parental conflict and low relationship satisfaction on new parents

Parental conflict or negative couple interactions at the prenatal stage or over the transition to parenthood are associated with parenting behaviours such as:

- Decreased parental efficacy
- Low breastfeeding self-efficacy among new mothers
- Greater emotionally withdrawn behaviour in parent–infant interactions
- Father's lowered cooperative coparenting (the extent to which parents respect and support each other's parenting efforts)
- Mother's lowered support for father's parenting
- Higher competitive coparenting
- Lower father involvement in parenting

Engaging new parents

Supporting new parents depends on whether services can engage well with families and identify what support can meet their needs. Engagement should consider:

- Recruitment: how families are approached to take part in an intervention/service
- Retention: how well an intervention or service keeps families involved and avoids drop-out
- Involvement: how families take part in an intervention or service, as well as how their lived experience informs local planning and delivery.

Strategies to recruit and retain new parents in relationship support services: what local experts say


- Support practitioners to build confidence in establishing rapport and navigating conversations about relationship difficulties with parents.
- Collaborate with professionals who have already built rapport.
- Consider initiatives to raise public awareness about parental conflict and the support available.
- Tailor delivery arrangements to accommodate the needs of new parents
- Offer parents a wide variety of communication channels and delivery formats.
- Engage new fathers at the earliest opportunity.
- Seek the input of different groups of families to tailor healthy relationship support provision.

This guide goes on to identify eight evidence-based healthy relationship and parenting interventions that may be helpful as part of local support pathways for new parents.

Read the full report <https://www.eif.org.uk/public/resource/supporting-healthy-relationships-among-new-parents-a-practical-guide>

3. Pathways to Support for Bristol Parents in Relationship Distress

Parent asks for support for their relationship



Parental conflict and domestic abuse are two separate things, and it can be difficult to work out if the relationship is abusive or just in a bad place. This tool can support the conversation:

[Parental Relationship Spectrum](#)

If domestic abuse is identified, follow safeguarding procedures:

First Response: 0117 903 6444

Next Link: 0800 4700 280

For support with Parental Relationship Distress please see following information:

For separating/separated parents

For expectant parents

For parents that are together

Online Resources:

[Getting It Right For Children](#)

[Parent's Access](#)

[Practitioner's Access](#)

Work through the course with practitioner support- around 1 hour 15 min or at your own pace independently

- To help you to develop positive communication skills, co-operate and work out solutions together.
- To raise your awareness and understanding of how to respond to your child's needs and protect them from relationship distress

[Parenting After Separation \(familycourses.org\)](#)

Self-directed online course if you are going through separation following a breakdown of relationship with the other parent of your child.

[Parenting When Separated](#)

A practical and positive 6 week course to support and empower you to find solutions to common challenges during and post separation Find the next course available [here](#)

[Parenting Plan - Cafcass - Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service](#)

An online template for a written agreement worked out between co-parents that covers the practical issues of parenting.

Online Resources

[Me, You Baby Too](#)

[Parent's Access](#)

[Practitioner's Access](#)

Work through the course with practitioner support 30/40 minutes or work at your own pace independently

- To support you to adapt to the changes that parenthood can have on your relationship and to develop skills to manage conflict constructively.

Parents with an 8 -14 year old child

Support for Inter-Parental Conflict Project (SIPCo)

Do you work with parents (separated or together) of a child aged between 8 and 14 who may be locked in conflict due to the pressures they are facing? SIPCo aims to raise parents' awareness of the impact of their conflict on their children and teaches parents strategies to reduce their conflict.

For more information and a referral form please contact relationshipsmatter@bristol.gov.uk or call Gina on or 07721 635 376

Online Resources

[How To Argue Better](#)

[Parent's Access](#)

[Practitioner's Access](#)

Work through the course with practitioner support – 30/40 minutes or at your own pace independently

- To increase your capacity to cope with stress together and support you to develop skills to manage your arguments more constructively.
- To raise awareness of harmful arguments and its impact on children.

[Between Us App](#)

- Designed to help couples have a better relationship. It can help couples to better understand what's going wrong in their relationship and do something about it.

All resources listed are free of charge.

For further information on any of the resources mentioned here please contact

relationshipsmatter@bristol.gov.uk

Our website also contains lots of helpful resources including **Getting on Better Cards Relationship support for parents and co-parents** (bristol.gov.uk)

4. Introducing Digital Resources: Getting it Right for Children and Arguing Better

Wednesday 3rd May 3.45-4.45pm

A workshop for those working directly with children and families

Workshop Aims:

- Raise awareness of parental conflict and the impact this has on children's education, well-being and lifelong outcomes.
- Provide strategies and tools to support initiating conversations with parents about relationship quality and of the harmful effects of inter-parental conflict on children.
- Introduce two oneplusone free digital resources including how to use with parents, how to log in as a practitioner and a parent.
- Provide details of pathways to support.

This workshop will be delivered online using Microsoft Teams. The presentation, together with additional course materials, will be sent to attendees by email after the event.



[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 371 416 612 784

Passcode: QMPXjb



5. Understanding Parental Couple Conflict and Pathways to Support Wednesday 10th May 3.45 – 5.15pm

This is an online training the Relationships Matter Team will be facilitating for **education settings based staff** in Bristol which aims to:

- Refresh understanding of the evidence, parental couple conflict research, established and new
- Support understanding of the nature and impact on the child of parental conflict, parental gatekeeping, the child who is trying to manage relationships with separated parents
- Support starting the conversation about relationship quality with parents
- Increase knowledge about pathways to support and introduce to helpful resources



[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 388 277 834 695

Passcode: 8q7rwa

6. Supporting Families Experiencing Persistent Parental Conflict

Wednesday 24th May 9.30 – 4pm St Paul's Children's Centre

This multiagency in-person training will support practitioners to identify parental conflict, start a conversation and provide support and comes with a handy toolkit.

It is suitable for Bristol practitioners supporting children and their families and particularly those working within children's social-care, health, education and voluntary sector when their role supports early identification of harmful inter-parental conflict.

It aims to:

- improve understanding about parental conflict, it's impact on children and young people
- help practitioners distinguish between parental conflict and domestic abuse
- help practitioners to identify relationship distress
- provide initial support and help
- Introduce a toolkit packed full of resources to support parents



Book here: [Supporting Families Experiencing Persistent Parental Conflict Tickets, Wed 24 May 2023 at 09:30 | Eventbrite](#)

7. Practitioner and manager training modules

For BCC staff please access [here](#)



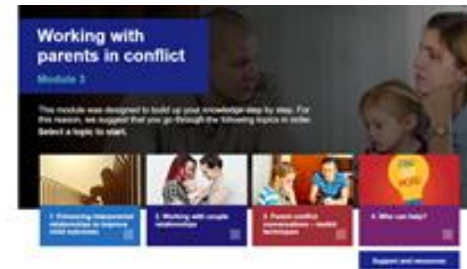
Module 1 – Understanding Parental Conflict and its impacts on child outcomes

https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module1/story_html5.html



Module 2 – Recognising and supporting parents in parental conflict

https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module2/story_html5.html



Module 3 – Working with parents in conflict

https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module3/story_html5.html



Module 4 – Role of the supervisor

https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/sscp-training/module4/story_html5.html

8. Digital Interventions from oneplusone



If you want to understand the impact of parental arguments on children, try this **Arguing Better** online course. Knowing how to argue in a constructive way can make all the difference to your relationships.

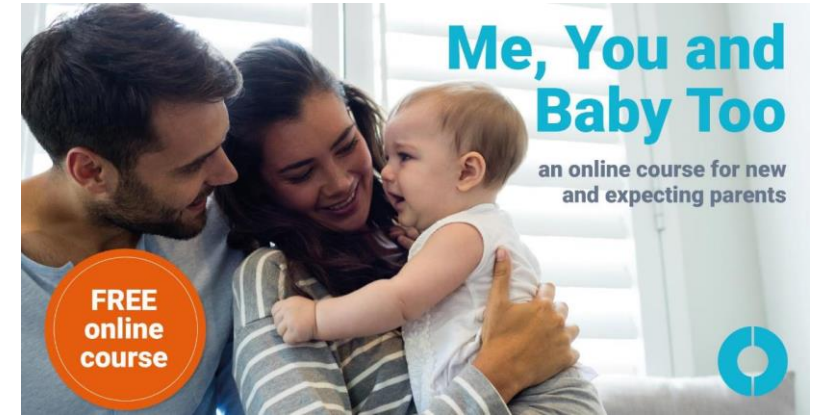
[Parent's Access](#)

[Practitioner's Access](#)

These digital interventions can be completed independently by parents or as blended learning where parents are supported by a practitioner. Practitioners have access to guidance booklets for support. For further information or to arrange practitioner training on how to support families with these interventions please contact: relationshipsmatter@bristol.gov.uk



Separating can be difficult for everyone involved. **Getting it Right for Children** helps parents develop effective ways to co-operate after separation. When parents separate, it's easy for children to get caught in the middle of their disagreements. Getting it Right for Children is a free online course for parents in Bristol designed to help them parent co-operatively after parting.



Becoming parents can change your relationship. Tiredness and stress associated with parenthood can lead to you and your partner misunderstanding each other. This **Me, You and Baby Too** online course, available for free to parents in Bristol can help you improve communication skills and manage conflict better.

9. Communicating about Debt

The oneplusone digital interventions come with bonus material on debt that supports parents to communicate more effectively about financial stress.

There are 4 short animations on different scenarios – The Rollercoaster, The Tycoon, The Breadwinner and The Paycut. The videos feature real couples telling their stories of being in debt, the impact this had on their relationships, and the steps they took to get things back on track.

They are a great resource for creating a safe, non-judgemental space for reflection and thinking about new ways of communicating.

Parents can access this through creating an account [here](#)

