



# Court ordered parenting courses in family law

**Date: Sunday March 2, 2025**

While many parenting matters settle after initial negotiations post-separation or at mediation, some matters proceed to Court because of urgency, [family violence](#) or if negotiations are unsuccessful. In the event your parenting dispute proceeds to Court, sometimes the Court will make an order providing for you and/or the other parent to complete a parenting course if you have not completed one previously.

## The purpose of parenting courses in family law?

Parenting courses are varied and are ordered by the Court to assist you co-parent with your ex-partner for the benefit of your children or to assist one parent improve their parenting skills and/or communication.

Parents can also agree to complete these courses as part of their parenting plan at mediation. You can read more about these options in our earlier articles:

- [Parenting Plan or Parenting Consent Order](#)

- [How does mediation work?](#)

When considering a parenting course, we recommend you consider the course's goals and aims, the length of the course and the institutions where they are available. Some courses are only in person, and some are offered remotely. Parenting courses often have a fee, which is usually paid by the parent who is undertaking the course.

Courses are undertaken by the parents either together or individually and some also might involve the children attending part or all of the course.

# The different types of parenting courses available in family law

## “Post-Separation Parenting” course

A Post-Separation Parenting course and courses like this are designed to focus on recently separated parents or parents who have recently finalised Court proceedings.

The course is aimed at repairing the parent’s relationship with the other parent by:

- improving communication skills;
- learning to act in a more child-focused manner; and
- improving co-parenting skills for the benefit of the children.

The aim of the course is also to improve the parent’s confidence in their parenting skills for the benefit of their parenting relationship and care of the children.

These courses are offered at various institutions and usually require a fee and an intake appointment to take place before the course can proceed. It is likely the parent will receive a certificate of completion when they finish the course, which might then be provided to the other parent, particularly if Court proceedings are ongoing.

[Relationships Australia offer a range of parenting courses](#) designed to improve the well-being and safety of children and young people, providing strategies for communication and emotional development.

## Parenting Orders Program

A Parenting Orders Program can also be undertaken by parents who have either been ordered to complete the course as part of their Court proceedings or they might agree to complete it to improve their parenting relationship and communication for the benefit of their children.

This course is aimed at improving a parent’s ability to reduce conflict so that co-parenting is easier and takes less of an emotional toll on the post-separation family. Like the Post-Separation Parenting course, this course also assists parents communicate more effectively.

This course’s length can be varied but will likely require an initial assessment before the parent begins. There is also likely to be a fee for the course, which is offered at various institutions, including [Family Life](#).

## “Tuning into Kids” course

While the Post-Separation Parenting Course and the Parenting Orders Program are primarily focused on improving the co-parenting relationship for the benefit of the children, Tuning into Kids focuses on the importance of being emotionally connected to children going through a separation.

The course also assists parents to become more in touch with their own emotions so they are more emotionally robust, allowing them to identify emotional irregularities in their children. These courses will also sometimes include children attending the sessions.

These courses are offered at various institutions, including [Relationships Australia](#) and [Better Place](#). Often, they will comprise of approximately six sessions and require a fee to be paid and possibly an intake appointment.

### “Men’s Behaviour Change” course

The Men’s Behaviour Change course is specifically designed for male-identifying parents. This court might be ordered by the Court as part of parenting proceedings, particularly if there are allegations regarding the improvement of certain behaviours, including a need to control anger or issues with parenting styles and discipline.

The course also focuses on assisting with conflict resolution and better communication skills, which might be linked to certain behaviours that need to change, such as anger management.

These courses are also offered at various institutions, including Anglicare (see link below), and tend to run for a longer length than some of the other courses. They also will usually require a fee to be paid, and it is likely there will be an intake appointment.

## How a family lawyer can help

The above courses are just a few available to separating parents and their children. In the event you are considering undertaking a course (or you’ve been ordered by the Court to attend a parenting course) and have some questions about your rights and obligations or have any questions regarding parenting matters in general, contact one of our family lawyers for advice and assistance.

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*This blog is of a general nature and should not be relied upon as legal advice. If you require further information, advice or assistance for your specific circumstances, please contact us.*