

What is the Reducing Parental Conflict Programme?

The Reducing Parental Conflict Programme has been designed to **upskill practitioners in supporting parents to reduce conflict within their relationship**, whether they are together or separated. In turn, they can then improve outcomes for their children.

What is 'parental conflict'? Some level of arguing and conflict between parents is often a normal part of every-day life. However, there is strong evidence to show how inter-parental conflict that is frequent, intense and poorly resolved can have a significant negative impact on children's mental health and long-term life chances.

The Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) programme is aimed at conflict below the threshold of domestic abuse. Damaging conflict (below this threshold) between parents can be expressed in many ways such as:

- aggression
- silence
- lack of respect
- lack of resolution

Conflict can affect children in all types of parental relationships, including:

- parents who are in a relationship, whether married or not
- parents who have separated or divorced
- biological and stepparents
- other family members playing a parenting role
- foster and adoptive parents
- same-sex couples

The RPC programme focuses on the ways that a couple behave, rather than the status of the relationship.

Read a report on the key evidence on [what works to enhance inter-parental relationships](#).

Find out more about parental conflict in Section 2.1 of the [RPC Commissioner Guide](#).

Further research and resources on parental conflict are available on the [Early Intervention Foundation \(EIF\) RPC hub](#). The EIF provides a repository of key evidence, tools and guidance on reducing parental conflict.

Parental conflict and domestic abuse

Parental conflict is very different to domestic abuse. When addressing parental conflict in a relationship, practitioners should continue to be vigilant and confident there are no indicators of domestic abuse, including fear, imbalance of power and controlling behaviour. If there are signs of controlling behaviour that adversely affects one person in a relationship, this can be an indicator of an abusive relationship.

Find out more about the [different forms of domestic abuse](#).

The RPC programme seeks to address conflict below the threshold of domestic abuse. In cases where domestic abuse is a concern, at any stage, Ealing policies and procedures must be followed to manage any potential risk of harm.

Why is it important for Practitioners to be aware of Reducing Parental Conflict?

When parents are in conflict, research suggests that this reduces the effectiveness of other interventions for the family. Addressing parental conflict and the quality of interparental relationships is a critical component of improving child outcomes.

In Ealing we are working across services on reducing family conflict and supporting families earlier so conflict does not lead to lasting damage for children, young people and parents. Offering support to address other issues in families is likely to be ineffective where the conflict between parents is not acknowledged and addressed.

Watch the video below to find out more about why reducing parental conflict matters to children and to services:

[Why reducing parental conflict matters to children and to services](#)

Impact of parental conflict on children – the voice of the child

Watch this short video on the Child's Perspective: [Relationships Really Matter: Parental Conflict](#)

There are many forms of conflict in relationships, some are healthy. As adults, we are role models for our children so if we are able to remain calm and respectful whilst addressing any disagreements we have, it provides our children with important life skills for future interactions with others. Children who experience relationships which are positive and productive are more likely to feel more settled and have good social and emotional wellbeing.

Unfortunately, conflict can sometimes be quite damaging; when children witness adults who shout loudly, argue a lot or perhaps ignore one another frequently or for long periods of time, it can have a negative impact on children's self-esteem, mental and physical health, behaviour and academic achievements and future relationships with others.

Research suggests if there is long term conflict between parents, it can affect multiple outcomes for children, including emotional, behavioural, social and academic development.

Please read more in the research from the Early Intervention Foundation [What works to enhance interparental relationships and improve outcomes for children?](#)

Find out more about the impact of parental conflict on children with these videos from the Anna Freud Centre

[The Impact of Parental Conflict on Children](#)

[In conflict: Child Triangulation](#)

Ealing Offer to all Practitioners working with children and families

Tavistock Introduction to Reducing Parental Conflict webinar

Please click here for the [Tavistock Reducing Parental Conflict Webinar](#)

This is an introduction to the principles of parental conflict and how it affects children. This will be followed up with training courses available via CPD Online.

It is important for us to evaluate the effectiveness of each of the courses run, so that we can ensure we are commissioning the right programmes for you. As such your feedback is vital.

Please complete this short survey after attending any Reducing Parental Conflict courses:

[RPC evaluation](#)

OnePlusOne Tools for Families

OnePlusOne has over 50 years' experience in creating evidence-based resources to support the development of healthy relationships. They offer accessible online resources help parents to understand the impact of their arguments on their children, and learn techniques to communicate better, handle stress, and manage conflict more constructively.

Ealing have free access for families to three evidence-based digital courses:

- [Me, You and Baby Too](#)
- [Arguing better](#)
- [Getting it right for children](#)

Please see the linked flyers for more information about each module, and to decide which module is best for parents to access. To access the modules parents can click on the following link and register for free

Please ask parents to register and sign into the courses at [OnePlusOne Courses](#)

OnePlusOne Getting It Right cards that can be used when working with families:

1. [Stages and Changes](#)
2. [Logs and Fire](#)
3. [Conflict Styles](#)
4. [Magic 5:1 ratio](#)
5. [Communicate Better](#)
6. [Harmful and Helpful](#)
7. [Child Roles](#)
8. [Parent Roles](#)

Ealing Parenting Services Programmes

The Ealing Parenting Service run regular workshops that offer practical tips to support parents in conflict. Please click here for more information:

[Parenting Programmes in Ealing | Ealing Directory \(ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk\)](#)

You will also be aware of the Ealing Parenting Service emails that are sent on a regular basis. Please refer parents to the support and workshops that they offer.

Reducing Parental Conflict training courses

Training courses available via CPD Online prefixed RPC www.ealingcpd.org.uk