

Getting involved: A guide to Family Mediation Week 17th – 21st January 2022



What is Family Mediation Week?

Organised by the Family Mediation Council (FMC), Family Mediation Week (17th – 21st January 2022) is an opportunity to raise awareness of family mediation and its benefits to separating families. Our aim is to let more people know about the benefits of family mediation and encourage separating couples to think about family mediation as a way of helping them take control, make decisions together and build a positive future for their family.



Family Mediation Week focuses on working collectively to help raise awareness of family mediation among members of the public, solicitors and other professionals working with separated families. The week allows us to create and promote family mediation-specific information.

We have chosen these dates because January is the month in which the media especially focuses on separated families and relationship breakdown, which means that all the media outlets are likely to be especially receptive then to the stories we produce.

What will happen during Family Mediation Week?

Over the course of the week itself, we will be hosting webinars, publishing resources, information, blog posts, engaging in social media activity and issuing news stories to local, regional and national media explaining the benefits of mediation for clients.

We have planned the following to take place each day throughout Family Mediation Week which we hope you can take part in. Each webinar will also be available on the Family Mediation Council website to watch.

Events are still being added – this document is accurate as at 9/12/21 – check <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/fmw> for updates.

Day 1 – Domestic Violence

Many professionals see domestic violence as a bar to mediation taking place. With the aid of online mediation taking place, this allows many people who have fallen victim to domestic violence to feel safe and able to engage in the mediation process. Mediation is not suitable for all cases but raising awareness of the importance of the Mediation Information Assessment Meeting (MIAM) for the mediator to carry out their own assessment is essential.

09:30am - 10:00am

Aimed at mediators

Join the FMC at the launch of Family Week to hear from Lord Wolfson, the minister with responsibility for mediation, and John Taylor, the FMC Chair.

Register here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8441111111>

10:30am - 11:00am

Aimed at lawyers and mediators

Adrienne Cox, Mediator and Liza Thompson from MADAN will be discussing whether mediations is suitable when domestic violence has been identified.

Register here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8441111111>

<p>11:45am - 12:45pm</p> <p>Aimed at lawyers and mediators</p>	<p>Karin Walker and Dr Supriya McKenna are hosting a webinar to discuss dealing with a narcissistic personality within the mediation process.</p> <p>Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9300774DChiq</p>
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<p>Day 2 – Conversations about other mediation models available</p> <p>The MIAM is important to consider other mediation models that may be suitable to the individual parties. But what different methods are available?</p>	
<p>9:30am - 10:00am</p> <p>Aimed at mediators, family lawyers, judges, CAFCASS, and all involved in the development of Supporting Separated Families Alliances</p>	<p>“Is there anything mediators can’t do?” A pre-recorded half-hour conversation and presentation by Philippa Johnson and Neil Robinson mediators, PPCs and trainers.</p> <p>If, as Dominic Raab says, “mediation is the default,” and if the future of mediation is as part of an integrated Family Solutions System, family mediators will need to demonstrate their ability to respond collaboratively and flexibly to a wide range of challenges. Are mediators sufficiently ready for this challenge, and do current models and practices suffice? Do mediators need additional training to engage in “lawyer-supported mediation” or when working in separate spaces? Is there a need for mediators to be more ambitious and confident in what they provide, both to prospective clients and to referrers? Is there a need for a new offering of Integrated Family Mediation?</p>
<p>11:00am - 11.45am</p> <p>Aimed at all professionals working with separating families</p>	<p>Emma Heptonstall, a divorce coach, discussing how she can assist clients within the mediation process. This webinar is hosted by Clarion.</p> <p>Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/hA6c12UwdB71</p>
<p>13:00pm - 14:00pm</p> <p>Aimed at lawyers (para- legal through to Partner level)</p>	<p>Louisa Whitney, an accredited and child inclusive trained family mediator and PPC presents ‘Supporting clients in the family mediation process’, explaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what happens in the family mediation process and how it is set up; • how you as a lawyer can best support that process to help your client achieve the best outcome; • how to deal with common problems that crop up in a constructive way <p>There will also be time for a Q&A.</p> <p>Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/fjvh5llvKPX</p>
<p>14:30pm - 15:30pm</p> <p>Aimed at mediators, lawyers, CAFCASS and other professionals</p>	<p>Sara Collins, Bord Member from FMA, presents ‘A mindful self-care session for professionals supporting families in crisis’</p> <p>A moment to pause in the busyness of the day and take a little time for yourself. An experiential opportunity to learn some self-care techniques that you can weave into your professional day to support your own health whilst you are busy supporting your clients.</p> <p>Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/FLZaLG9a</p>

Day 3 - Conversations About Children

The welfare of children is the paramount consideration for mediators and solicitors when dealing with separated families. It is helpful to have these conversations and work together as professionals to ensure that this is the case.

The FMA have created their own mock mediation of child inclusive mediation and this will be available on the website on Day 3. In addition, we also have the following speakers lined up:

10:00am - 11:00am Aimed at anyone working with separated families or going through their own separation	Sue Atkins, ITV 'This Morning', BBC Radio and Disney Jnr UK's Parenting Expert is guest speaker with Sarah Manning, Solicitor, Mediator from Clarion to discuss the effect of conflicting parents on children and how mediation can assist families going through separation. There will also be time for a Q&A. This webinar is hosted and sponsored by Clarion. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NF7fNoCGQ-2v5SmWz0K5wg
11:30am - 12:30am Aimed at lawyers, mediators and other professionals working with separated families	Sheila Turner presents a webinar to discuss the importance of a child's voice within the mediation process. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwvf6urjksGtEVbPRNzqwnCQmy-ROsI9uS
13:30pm - 14:30pm Aimed at lawyers, mediators and professionals working with separated families	Allan Blake, Chair of the FMC Voucher Working Party to discuss 'what is happening with the voucher scheme and where are we now?' There will also be time for a Q&A. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0ocOGupjwvGtWE--aeL6zcEjI2H-cPD055F
15:00 pm - 15:45pm Aimed at mediators	Karen Barham presents "Enhance your mediation practice by becoming a Parenting Coordinator (PC) PC is an established form of DR used widely across America, Canada and South Africa to assist parents to implement a final child arrangements order, arbitration award or parenting plan. The PC uses mediation skills to help parents resolve issues but if a consensus cannot be reached, the PC has authority to make a binding decision on the dispute. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwudO-rrz0uH9Y10BE9FyBEOCn-1wAw-cXAX

Day 4 –Resources

Resources are fundamental to the work we do as solicitors and mediators, which we need to call upon from time to time. There has been lost of emphasis on working collaboratively and we felt it would be helpful for professionals to share the resources with others that they use.

We are pleased to announce the following speakers to discuss key resources for any professionals working with separated families:

09:30am - 10:30am Aimed at mediators, lawyers, CAFCASS and other professionals	Tracey Gore, Operational Coordinator for SPIP at Family Action presents the CAFCASS Separated Parents Information Programme (SPIP) explaining: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the SPIP Programme? Aims and outcomes;• Who is the target audience – court ordered and self-referred participants;• DVD shown during the programme made by children and young people;• The referral process – how to refer a participant who does not have a court order to attend. There will also be time for a Q&A Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAtcOiprT0iEtz2m-84maHO_RKELjPPNcRIV
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10:45am - 11:45am Aimed at professionals working with separated families	James Evans from Our Family Wizard and Elaine Richardson, Elaine Richardson, child-inclusive mediator, consultant family solicitor, PPC, Resolution DR committee member, presents a talk 'Improve communication and keep parents accountable in moderate and high conflict cases: How to best use OurFamilyWizard in Mediation Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctf-GurzgqH9PPMi5DHhfzVkrDH-VhvqHgn
13:00pm - 14:00pm Aimed at professionals working with separated families	FMA presenting an interactive seminar on resources. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0lcOuqrTMsHtcCDNf1F6Le0WRlVzP9jhr1
14:30pm Aimed at mediators	Thinking of becoming a PPC? A video from FMA will be made available on the website.
15:45pm - 16:45 Aimed at anybody considering training as a mediator	Abigail Kirk, FMC Accredited Mediator & trainer for an approved FMC Foundation Course presents 'Thinking of becoming a mediator?' This presentation will walk you through the training and accreditation process, discuss the range of the FMC's Member Organisations and approved FMC Training Providers, introduce you resources available to support you and how you can find out more about becoming a mediator. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A with Abigail and a recently accredited mediator. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIpfumqpkjrH9VcXtJMg-27ZpbfSHdRt3vEn

Day 5 - Conversations about financial matters	
With the court under immense pressure, many separating families dealing with the financial aspects of their divorce and seeking alternative methods to resolve their dispute, we are pleased to have the following events taking place:	
09:30am - 10:00am Aimed at professional working with separated families	Mary Marvel from Law for Life explains the range of resources Advicenow have to help clients using family mediation after relationship breakdown, why not including pensions in a financial settlement can be a disaster, and what you can do to support your clients to avoid that pitfall, and find affordable advice. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEscOiqrzIqG9TPknyfUJ1yKqFvnpv-Aew1B
10:15am - 11:15am Aimed at lawyers and mediators	Elaine Richardson, child-inclusive mediator, consultant family solicitor, PPC, Resolution DR committee member, presents 'Hybrid Mediation', explaining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what it is; • how Hybrid mediation is different to other family mediation; • the benefits; • when it is appropriate; and • how it works in practice. There will also be time for Q&A. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMldeivqzsuGtTCHNJp5mOkHAe-zwRu4s68J
11:30am - 12:30pm Aimed at lawyers and mediators	This discussion will be led by Caroline Fell, partner at Stone King LLP, an experienced family practitioner in both mediation and complex financial legal work.

	The discussion will focus on how mediation can assist where significant assets or complex financial issues are involved for example, business interests, overseas assets and high value pensions. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qduGhrDwsdwlT95G-pd2jX2lPjh-nZFJ4
13:30pm - 14:15pm Aimed at lawyers and mediators	Tamsin Caine a chartered financial planner from Smart Divorce, Sarah Manning, Solicitor, Mediator and Justine Osmotherley Solicitor from Clarion will be discussing the use of a financial neutral within the mediation process to assist parties to reach a financial settlement. There will also be time for Q&A. This webinar is hosted by Clarion. Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsceCsqz0sEtVMaoPCU13fcUue2x-YDP_Gi
From 16:00pm	Drinks reception to encourage collaboration with professionals in your local area. To find out if there is an event running near you, please contact us or if you want to host your own we would love to hear from you.

What else is taking place?

National Family Mediation (NFM) is delivering presentations to and answering questions from CAFCASS staff and those involved with the Department of Work and Pensions' (DWP) reducing parental conflict network, including family hubs.

Sally Clark and Alexis Walker both accredited Family and Child Inclusive Mediators have prepared a presentation aimed at the judiciary to educate them about the role of the mediator and how a child's voice can be heard. This presentation is available on request and we encourage people to contact their local judiciary and offer to present to them about the benefits of mediation. We can also provide details of how to contact your Local Family Justice Board.

We have developed a number of resources that we will be distributing via different channels over the course of the week. We will be engaging with the national and local media too, to help put family mediation in the news.

Information about all of these materials will be made available to mediators during Family Mediation Week, so that they can use them in marketing activity during the week itself, and beyond.

How can I get involved?

There are many ways in which you can get involved with Family Mediation Week, which will all help to promote your own service, as well as raising awareness of mediation as a whole.

Even if you do just one thing every day during the week 17th to 21st January 2022, you will be helping to create a bigger wave of awareness and momentum that will ultimately benefit your service by encouraging more people to choose mediation.

Send us some of the positive things your clients have said about family mediation – this can be anonymous if your clients would prefer that. Post what has been said on [@FamilyMedWeek](#) and Facebook as well. This is a really good way to let people know how life-changing family mediation can be.

Host an event – it doesn't have to be a big event. A drop-in session at your premises, or somewhere more central in your town or city, where people can come to find out more about family mediation, can help create awareness. Holding an event also gives you an opportunity to send a story out to the media in your area. **If you decide to do something, remember to let people know by using [@FamilyMedWeek](#) and Facebook.**

Offer something for free – offering information or advice free of charge can really help people engage with you and your service. Consider offering a free half-hour consultation during Family Mediation Week, promote it on your website, mention it on any social networks you use, and let the local media know that local people can access expert advice, free of charge, during Family Mediation Week. **If you decide to do something remember to let people know by using [@FamilyMedWeek](#) and Facebook.**

Send an email – you might have a potential client who is considering mediation. Sending them an email with a link to one of the videos, for example mock mediation it might just help them decide whether mediation is right for them.

Engage with us on social media – if you use Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter, please 'like' our page, or follow us on Twitter (see links below), and keep a lookout during Family Mediation Week for content that you can like, share or retweet to your followers. Even if all you do is retweet, like or share the content we put out during Family Mediation Week, this would help us reach thousands more people with information about the benefits of mediation. If you use LinkedIn, why not post links to the Family Mediation Week videos, blogs and news stories on your LinkedIn profile? Again, this will help spread the word, raising your own profile and also that of mediation.

Change your profile photo – this Family Mediation Week image is available to use as your LinkedIn Facebook or Twitter profile photo for the week. This alone will help put family mediation in the spotlight and encourage more people to Google Family Mediation Week in order to find out more.

Use and share the content we create – we will be posting new content every day during Family Mediation Week on the [Family Mediation Week website](#). Please share this content with clients and contacts in whatever ways you feel are appropriate.

Please do get in touch with us (sarah.manning@clarionsolicitors.com) if you have anything of your own that you would like to contribute and we can add you to the schedule.

Key contacts

Sarah Manning
Chair
E: sarah.manning@clarionsolicitors.com

Helen Anthony
E: executive@familymediationcouncil.org.uk

Louisa Whitney
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Useful websites & social media links

Family Mediation Week website: <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/fmw/>

FMW Twitter handle: @FamilyMedWeek

FMW Twitter hashtag: #familymediationweek

FMC Twitter feed: <https://twitter.com/fammedcouncil>

(or, if you are searching in Twitter itself, @FamilyMedCouncil)

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FamilyMediationCouncil/>

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