

Levels of need: Separation related to the threshold model for safeguarding children

| If you see this: | It equates to: | And might need: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children appear reasonably settled with no obvious changes in mood or behaviour • Child centred co-operation between parents - conflict is occasional, and not usually heard or witnessed by children • Residence and contact arrangements are agreed in advance and include substantial contact with both parents and some flexibility • Both parents share information about the child • Parents discuss the development and needs of the child and both are involved in decisions | <p>Level 1</p> <p>Needs can be met by universal services</p> | <p>Childcare providers Children's Centres Schools Health services Play and youth services</p> <p>Occasional short term practical or emotional support from practitioners for children, mothers and fathers, for example connected to a change in circumstances or a new relationship Play and entertainment resources for contact including at weekends for working parents</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children express feelings of insecurity, guilt or anger and their behavior and mood is uncharacteristic • One or both parents find it difficult to put the child's needs first • Conflict between parents flares up at particular times or about particular issues and is sometimes heard or witnessed by children • Hand-overs are often stressful • No settled or reliable contact arrangements providing substantial contact with both parents • Arrangements that are made are often broken by one or both parents • Information about the child is not shared by parents • Emotional relationship issues are confused with parenting | <p>Level 2</p> <p>Additional needs which need at least one more agency to prevent deterioration</p> | <p>As above plus: Parenting courses with separation content Family Mediation Service Relate relationship counselling Individual counselling to manage emotions Child mentors and parent workers CAFCASS and the family Courts Specialist voluntary sector organisations such as Families Need Fathers, Centre for Separated Families, One Parent Families etc.</p> <p>More in-depth, targetted support from practitioners for children, fathers, mothers and extended family Possible CAF assessment, with a lead professional if involving several agencies Child and young people's counselling Legal information and advice</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child is expressing a lot of anger and aggression, or depression and self-harming, or risk-taking behaviour. Their mood and behaviour has significantly deteriorated • Long-term high conflict between parents that is general, regardless of the situation - children see and hear it often • One or both parents attempts to alienate the child from the other parent • The resident parent obstructs contact without good reason • The child is asked to take sides, act as a go-between or spy on the other parent • The child is effectively the carer of one or both parents • Multiple changes eg of step parent or location | <p>Level 3</p> <p>Complex and enduring needs requiring multi-agency working to help return to lower levels</p> | <p>As above plus: Family support services Youth Offending Team Connexions CAMHS Mental health services Supervised or supported contact Informal contact Adult services eg addiction,</p> <p>CAF assessment or safeguarding referral In-depth work by a number of agencies sharing information and careful risk-management Supporting and challenging parents to understand the needs of children and consequences</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children showing evidence of, or talking about: neglect, emotional or sexual abuse, or violence; from at least one parent or a step parent or sibling • Long-term high conflict - implacable hostility from one or both parents towards the other • High level of manipulation of children's emotions • Violence between parents witnessed by the child • Violence to the child by any family member • Severe addiction or mental health issues in at least one parent/carer which renders them unable to safely provide for or care for the child. | <p>Level 4</p> <p>High risk or actual harm to children needing statutory services to help return to lower levels</p> | <p>As above, plus: Statutory services including Social Care Services, Police, psychiatric services MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) for domestic violence</p> <p>Child protection referral processes and services Intensive work integrating statutory, universal and voluntary agencies Involvement of all positive family support Careful assessment and differentiation of each parent and step family member Temporary fostering if both parents have complex issues</p> |