



# How To Determine Parenting Arrangements After Separating

## Description

Navigating the emotional intensity of [separating from your partner](https://aflas.com.au/separating-from-your-partner) is undeniably challenging, especially when children are involved. However, it's crucial to recognise that determining parenting arrangements post-separation is vital for minimising disruption in your child's life.

As [parents](https://aflas.com.au/parents), creating a stable environment becomes vital during such transitions, ensuring your child's well-being remains a top priority. Separation is new territory for any Australian, meaning understanding your next steps can be difficult. In this blog post, we'll outline the parenting arrangements available and learn how to collaborate effectively, so parents can provide their children with the stability and love they need during this time.

## Determining parenting arrangements after separation

While care arrangements for separated parents may look different for every family, every decision must be made in the best interests of the child or children. This means setting aside your own reservations and opinions and doing what is best for your children, from where they will live to how they will maintain a relationship with both grandparents.

In most cases, these arrangements for separated parents can be made through a [parenting agreement](https://aflas.com.au/parenting-agreement). This non-binding agreement can be oral or written and signed, stating how you and your partner will continue to raise the children post-separation. Parenting agreements may also be referred to as parenting plans and may include the following information:

- **The child's primary place of residence** — This establishes where and whom the child will live with most of the time. As it's best to attempt to minimise the disruption to your child's life as much as possible, it may be best to keep the child in the family home where they are close to school, friends and other family members.
- **Education** — This refers to where the child will attend school, how they will participate in

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extracurricular activities and how you and your partner will manage parent/teacher interviews.

- **Medical and health care** — Your agreement may also detail how you and your partner will manage medical issues or emergencies. Here, you may also want to include whether one party is responsible for any decisions regarding your child's health.
- **Financial obligations** — This section includes details of how you and your partner will share expenses related to your child, such as school fees, medical bills, extracurricular activities, clothes, shoes, toys and more.
- **Religious upbringing** — If religious faith is important to you or your partner, you may wish to include this in your parenting plan. This can include whether your child will be raised to follow a particular faith and if they will participate in religious events or ceremonies.
- **Holidays and special occasions** — From Christmas to birthdays and school holidays, your parenting agreement may also document how holidays and special occasions will be shared.
- **Methods of communication** — Regardless if you or your partner are separating amicably, the lines of communication must always remain open. Your agreement should include how you and your partner will communicate and the frequency of communication regarding your child's well-being.
- **The child's own view** — Depending on your child's age, you may also wish to include their view on the separation and what they feel comfortable with. This can ensure your child has a voice on matters that directly affect them.

## What happens when separating parents can't agree

Unfortunately, no matter how hard separating parents try, sometimes reaching an amicable resolution is not achievable. [Separation](#) is an emotionally intense experience, with both parties wanting to have their voices heard. If mediation has failed, a parenting order from the court may be required. This is a legally enforceable order that determines how the child will be cared for by both parents.

Like a parenting plan, a parenting order includes aspects such as the child's living arrangements, visitation schedule, religious upbringing and anything else parents wish to include. If one of the parties does not hold up their responsibility under the parenting order, the court may impose a penalty.

- **Obtaining legal representation**

Once the courts become involved, it's highly recommended that you seek legal counsel to help guide you through the process. These legal professionals will ensure you understand your rights and responsibilities regarding child custody. They will also assist you in preparing any documents and represent you in court to ensure your wishes and the best interests of your child are heard.

Family law lawyers deal with matters like these on a regular basis and have a firm understanding of the rules and regulations you and your partner will need to follow, making their expertise and guidance invaluable during this life transition period.

## Make smarter parenting arrangements post-separation with AFLAS

No one makes the decision to separate from their partner overnight. But it's important to recognise that

you are not alone. Australian Family Law Advisory Services (AFLAS) is your beacon of support, offering a wealth of practical and free resources to parents navigating the challenges of separation. We understand the importance of making informed decisions, not just for yourself but, more significantly, for your children. Our online resources serve as a guiding light, empowering you with the knowledge and tools to create a stable and nurturing environment for your children post-separation. To learn more about our compassionate team at AFLAS that can help you during your separation, [book a triage](#) or [get in touch](#) today.

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