



## SEPARATION? WHAT TO CONSIDER

Separation and the breakdown of a relationship can be a very difficult time. When children are involved this can be amplified and therefore careful planning and cooperation need to be exhibited for the benefit of the children. Parents will be faced with many difficult decisions relating to the children during this time including who the children will live with and how often they will spend with the other parent.

When contemplating these decisions the best interests of the children should be the paramount consideration. This is met by ensuring that the children have the benefit of both parents having a meaningful involvement in their lives and that children are protected from physical and psychological harm.

Every family is different when it comes to the day to day workings of the household including caring for the children. Post separation parenting plans need to be tailored to suit each families' differing circumstances and the individual needs of the children and parents. There is no right or wrong way to implement a post separation parenting regime so long as the best interests of the children are met.

Attempting to come to agreement over the issue of who the children will live with after separation may seem like a daunting task however it is always better if parents can come to agreement rather than resorting to going to Court and having a decision imposed upon them that may not be suitable to either parent.

In the event resolution of the parenting issues cannot be informally achieved then mediation or family dispute resolution should be attempted with an accredited family dispute resolution practitioner. An agreement can be formalised by way of parenting plan or Court Order without the need for protracted litigation which will of course save both parties time and money and provide peace of mind going forward.

Should you wish to discuss any of the matter raised in these articles on a confidential basis please do not hesitate to contact us.