

Contact a Family & Cafcass Survey

Are you the parent of a disabled child?

Have you ever had a disagreement with a former partner about contact and residence arrangements for your disabled child?

If the answer is yes to both these questions then please help us by taking a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to our freepost address: Contact a Family, Freepost Lon8801, London EC1B 1EE.

Your comments will remain entirely confidential.

Background to this survey

If you have a disabled child and separate from a partner, there may be a range of practical matters that impact on any agreements you come to about care arrangements for your child. These might include a difference of opinion with your former partner about treatments and therapies. It might be that transport problems make it difficult for contact arrangements to be sustained. Or perhaps there's a lack of suitable services or equipment to allow two separate households to adequately care for your disabled child.

Contact a Family is the leading UK charity advising and supporting all families with disabled children. Cafcass is the body responsible for ensuring the interests of children are taken into account in the family courts. Cafcass' professionally qualified social work staff, called Family Court Advisers (FCAs), work with families and children in the family courts. An example of a matter that may be decided by family courts is when parents who are separating or divorcing can't agree on residence or contact arrangements for their children.

The purpose of this survey

Contact a Family is working with Cafcass to produce guidance for Family Court Advisers. The aim of the guidance is to ensure that FCAs investigate and address any practical issues which may have an effect on contact and residence arrangements for a disabled child. If you are the parent of a disabled child who has been in contact with the family courts and Cafcass - or has had any disagreement with a former partner about the contact and residence arrangements for your child - then the information you provide here will be hugely valuable in developing this guidance.

1. I am (please tick as appropriate):

- the mother of a disabled child
- the father of a disabled child

2. Contact and residence arrangements concerning your disabled child (please tick as appropriate):

- He/she lives with me and has no contact with his/her other parent
- He/she lives with me and has some contact with other parent
- My former partner and I have shared-care of our disabled child
- My disabled child lives with my former partner and I have some contact
- My disabled child lives with my former partner and I have no contact

3. Was the disagreement with your former partner about:

- Arrangements for contact with your disabled child y/n
- With which parent your disabled child should live y/n

- Something else (please state briefly)

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4. How was this resolved?

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5. Were there any practical issues concerning your disabled child's needs that had an impact on contact or residence arrangements, for example transport or equipment issues?

y/n

If yes, please tell us a bit about what these practical issues involved:

Were these issues resolved? y/n/partly

If yes (or partly) how were these issues resolved?

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Who or what was helpful in resolving the practical difficulties?

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6. Any suggestions for how Cafcass services could be improved or any other comments?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. While your comments will remain entirely confidential, it may be helpful for us to contact you for further details or to better understand your comments. If you are happy for us to contact you please provide your name and a contact telephone number we can reach you at:

Name:.....

Tel:.....