

## New Ways for Families® Training in Scotland



**New Ways for Families®** is an exciting new parenting skills course developed in the USA, and now being rolled out in Australia, Canada, China and Scotland for parents who are separating.

It is intended to:

- Reduce the negative impact of conflict on children in family breakup
- Reduce stress levels
- Calm potentially high-conflict separation and avoid taking court action

The course includes online training modules supported by coaching sessions. Parents practice skills learnt on the online course with their coach and integrate them into real life circumstances.

See <https://www.sharedparenting.scot/new-ways-for-families>

## Why New Ways for Families®

Shared Parenting Scotland is currently piloting this approach in Scotland and the response to the programme has been extremely positive.

Children are at the centre of the New Ways for Families® approach. It's about putting them first, improving co-parenting and making decisions together out of court. When parents make their own decisions they are more likely to follow the agreements and protect their children from the detrimental effects of conflict.

## How to use the New Ways for Families®

The online programme is very flexible and can be completed at the pace of the learner. It is supported by one-to-one coaching sessions (on zoom or by phone) at the beginning, middle and end of the course.

Coaching times are flexible too. The coaches are experienced professionals with legal/therapeutic backgrounds. The more the learner puts into the programme the more they get out of it. On completion of the course a certificate is issued to the learner.



## Scottish Quotes

*"I really wish I did the New Ways for Families course before we got into the court process. However, better late than never. Thanks for your help getting me on this course."* **Parent on the New Ways for Families® SPS Pilot**

*"Excellent rationale as to why this New Ways for Families course is being run. It has a good range of material which is presented in a comprehensive way. A nice selection of material in different formats - video clips, role plays, journal and reflective exercises and quizzes".* **Coach feedback on the New Ways for Families® SPS Pilot**



## Four Key Skills that the programme focuses on

### Managed Emotions

- Controlling anger, sadness, fear, and anxiety so as to not over-react
- Protecting the children from a parent's extreme emotions

### Flexible Thinking

- Acknowledging that there is more than one solution to every problem
- Turning complaints into proposals for future behaviour or future agreements

### Moderate Behaviours

- Avoiding extreme actions, language, and parenting requests
- Responding to hostile communications so as to avoid escalating the conflict

### Checking Yourself

- Reminding yourself to use these skills during times of stress
- Developing empathy, attention and respect

## Online Training Modules

- UNIT ONE** Coping with stress by managing your emotions
- UNIT TWO** Solving co-parenting problems through flexible thinking
- UNIT THREE** Avoiding over reacting using moderate behaviours
- UNIT FOUR** Checking yourself
- UNIT FIVE** Extreme behaviours and the effect on your child's brain
- UNIT SIX** Raising healthy children by making joint decisions
- UNIT SEVEN** Child development goals and milestones
- UNIT EIGHT** Parenting skills standards and plans
- UNIT NINE** Using professionals
- UNIT TEN** New partners, new families
- UNIT ELEVEN** Handling financial issues
- UNIT TWELVE** How to avoid becoming a "high conflict" case



**The New Ways for Families® (NWFF) training programme was evaluated in Medicine Hat, Canada.** Over the first 5 years of the Programme, NWFF completed 130 cases with an overall success rate of 53%.

Programme outcomes show that 54% of clients improved their parenting cooperation in areas such as willingness to accommodate changes in visiting arrangements, to act as a resource to the former spouse in raising the children, and improved day to day decision making about the children. In 75% of cases parents maintained or improved their joint decision making around major decisions for the children and their overall involvement with the children.

Outcomes for children included less acting out behaviours (40%); less symptoms of stress such as headaches, stomach aches; difficulty sleeping (33%); improved school performance (33%); and more interest in seeing the non-custodial parent (33%).

### **Social Value Created & Valuing Change**

Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis was used to capture the social value of the outcomes produced by investment in the NWFF program

In order to determine the total present social value created, outcomes were assigned financial proxy values to represent the social value associated with changes experienced by participants as a result of the program. These proxies included justice costs like court, police time, legal costs to both the system and the participant, mental health services, as well as costs related directly to the children such as Child Welfare interventions and personal impacts of stress and abuse.

**The Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of the NWFF programme found that for every dollar invested the programme created an average of \$8.95 in social value.**

## New Ways for Families® Training in Scotland



In Scotland the online training and coaching is provided by Shared Parenting Scotland

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Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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