



**Family Court and Federal Circuit Court**  
**CHILD INCLUSIVE CONFERENCE INFORMATION SHEET**

**Child Dispute Services**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Commonwealth Law Courts Building**  
**Corner Tank Street and North Quay**

**What is a Child Inclusive Conference?**

- The Conference is a Court ordered assessment by a family consultant of the issues in the dispute about the children.
- The Family Consultant interviews each party and the child(ren) and then assists the Court by making suggestions about what needs to be considered for the children in the next step of the process.
- During the conference the family consultant will briefly explore each party's perspective but the focus will be on how the issues impact on the children.
- The Conference is also an opportunity for parties to discuss arrangements for the children and negotiate their own agreement.
- The discussions held in the Conference are reportable to the Court.

**Who should attend?**

- Each party in the Court matter.
- The children who are the subject of the dispute.
- Other family members and parent's partners are not required to attend.

**What happens on the day?**

- The Family Consultant will usually start by talking to the adults. They might ask some questions about relevant family history however the focus will be on the current situation and the children's needs.
- The Family Consultant will talk to older children and/or observe children's interactions with the parties. The purpose of talking to children is to find out from their perspective what has been happening and what is important to them. After seeing the children the Family Consultant may give feedback to the adults about this.
- It is important to remember that there is limited time for a Child Inclusive Conference. It is not a full family assessment, and the focus of the Family Consultant will be to provide information to parents and the Court to assist with the next stage in the process.
- After seeing everyone, the Family Consultant will either give an oral report to the Court or write a Memorandum to Court. This Memorandum becomes evidence before the court, and so you or your solicitor (if you have one) will receive a copy.
- There are limited child care facilities at the Court so you may need to bring a friend or family member to care for the children while you are being interviewed by the family consultant.

**What should you tell the children?**

- The Family Consultant's job is help kids and Mums and Dads to solve problems and work things out..
- The Family Consultant will spend some time with the child and their brothers and sisters and see them by themselves.
- The Family Consultant will answer their questions, listen to what they think and tell the judge about this.
- The children do not have to say anything they do not want to and will not have to choose between their mum and their dad.

**Personal Safety**

*If you have any concerns about your safety while attending court, please call 1300 352 000 before the day of the conference. Options for your safety at the court will be discussed and arrangements put in place to support you.*