



Parental Conflict in the First 1001 Days, it's More Common Than You'd Think

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Whether you are co-parenting while in a relationship or co-parenting after separating, it can be common for disputes and disagreements to arise while you are transitioning into parenthood with your new baby.

Dorset Parent Infant Partnership ([DorPIP](#)) is a specialist early intervention and preventative service that focuses on the relationship between parents and infants that develops in the first 1001 critical days of life and helps families struggling to form safe, secure relationships with their infants.

Parental conflict

Parental conflict refers to the disputes, disagreements, or conflicts that occur between parents or caregivers within a family setting. These conflicts can arise for various reasons and manifest in different ways, including verbal arguments, emotional tension, and even physical altercations in extreme cases. Parental conflict can significantly impact children and the overall family dynamic.

Common sources of parental conflict include:

- **Communication issues:** Poor communication between parents can lead to misunderstandings and disagreements.
- **Differences in parenting styles:** Parents may have differing beliefs and approaches to raising their children, which can lead to conflict.
- **Financial stress:** Money problems can be a major source of family tension, leading to parental conflicts.
- **Work-related stress:** Job-related stressors, such as long hours or workplace conflicts, can spill over into family life and contribute to parental conflicts.
- **Relationship problems:** Marital or relationship difficulties between parents can result in frequent

family conflicts.

- **Personal stressors:** Individual stressors, such as health problems, mental health issues, or substance abuse, can lead to parental conflicts.

The effects of parental conflict on children can be significant. Children may experience stress, anxiety, and emotional distress when they witness or are exposed to ongoing conflicts between their parents. This can affect their well-being, emotional development, and overall happiness. It's important for parents to address conflicts in a healthy and constructive manner, seek professional help if necessary, and create a supportive and stable environment for their children.

At Lester Aldridge, when parents have separated, we find that disputes can typically arise about the following issues:

- Who the child should live with;
- How often should the child spend time with the other parent or
- Other specific issues such as medical care, nursery/schooling, religion or if one parent wants to move and raise the child elsewhere (in the UK or abroad).

Lester Aldridge and DorPIP agree that no matter the issues at hand when parents are experiencing a conflict, the **parents' first consideration must be the child's welfare**. The family court's focus in any child-related dispute will be on the child's best interests.

Our team of [family lawyers](#) at Lester Aldridge are on hand to advise parents about parental conflict and provide parents with legal advice regarding their situation. We can advise on and assist with resolving contact and co-parenting disputes about children from birth through to 17 years old (before they turn 18).

When advising clients, we encourage parents to try to reach an agreement between themselves (where appropriate), although if this is not possible, then there are other pathways available to try to reach a resolution:-

- Discussing the issues together with an independent mediator;
- Negotiating and reaching an agreement through family lawyers, such as ourselves;
- If an agreement cannot be reached, either parent can apply to the court to determine the issue or

- We can signpost you both to try parenting programmes and courses

How can DorPIP help?

DorPIP is a Community Parent-Infant Relationship Service tailored to guide families through the crucial first 1001 days of parenthood. Their goal is to provide essential emotional support during this transformative phase. They aim to help you forge a secure, lasting connection with your little one, establishing a strong foundation for their future.

DorPIP offers a range of specialised services: [talking therapy](#) with parent-infant relationship experts, [infant massage courses](#) promoting positive touch and bonding, and both [online](#) and [in-person support groups](#) for new and expectant parents, including an exclusive group for fathers. They create nurturing spaces for sharing, learning, and developing that crucial bond. DorPIP offer courses and sessions to help parents build their relationship with their child, ease relationship difficulties in the early stage, and work to prevent unintentional harm to the child.

If you would like any more information about DorPIP, you can visit their website here: www.dorpip.org.uk

If you would like to get in touch with us at Lester Aldridge to discuss and obtain legal advice about your situation if you are experiencing a parental dispute, then you can contact our [family team](#) by emailing online.enquiries@LA-law.com or calling [01202 786181](tel:01202786181).

Remember, you're not alone in this journey; resources and professionals are ready to assist you in navigating the challenges of parenthood and parental conflicts. Your child's well-being remains the central focus, and with the right support, you can work toward providing them with a nurturing and stable environment, enabling your family to flourish.