

Tips for Women Attending Family Dispute Resolution

Make Family Dispute Resolution work for you

Think positively about your upcoming Family Dispute Resolution. It can be a good opportunity to have your say, and to make arrangements with the other parent which will work for your child and you.

Are there safety issues for you and/or your child?

Make sure that the mediator knows in advance if you have concerns about your safety because your ex-partner has made threats or been violent in the past. FDR can be done as a “shuttle” where you sit in a separate room from your ex-partner.

Write a list of the issues that matter to you

What are the most important issues about your child that you want to discuss?

What are the things that you won't accept?

Think about what is in the “best interests” of your child.

What are the different options you are prepared to consider in order to reach agreement with the other parent? Think about how you will respond to proposals made by the other parent.

Also, consider how your proposals may impact on the other parent.

Think practically

What arrangements will work for your child and for you? What will not work?

How much travelling will your child have to do?

Are the arrangements practical?

How do you want your agreement recorded?

Do you want a parenting plan to record your agreement? Or court orders?

If possible get some legal advice, before your FDR, about the different types of agreement, and what would work best for you.

Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Talk to the Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner/Mediator

At your intake interview, ask the Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner/Mediator what will happen at the mediation, what time you need to be there, whether you will be in the same or separate rooms, and what the process will be.

Talk to the FDRP about any concerns you may have for your safety when you attend the FDR.