

Court ordered parenting courses in family law matters

Author: Ben Smith
Email: ben@smithfamilylaw.com.au
Date: Sunday November 9, 2025

To help parents develop the tools and skills needed for parenting after separation, counselling and support organisations have created parenting courses that aim to promote the emotional connection between parent and child. In some cases, the Court may order one or both parents to complete a parenting course as the matter moves through the court system.

Can the Court order someone to complete a parenting course?

The Court may make an order for a parent to complete a parenting course:

- if a parent has not had substantial time with a child;
- if there are allegations of family violence; or
- to promote amicable co-parenting between the parties.

As all parenting orders are in the best interests of the child, an order to complete a parenting course is made primarily in consideration of what is best for the child.

You will receive a certificate or confirmation of completion once you have completed a parenting course, which you can then provide to the Court.

You and the other parent can also agree (between yourselves) to complete a parenting course without a court order as part of your broader agreed parenting arrangements. You and the other parent can formalise parenting arrangements with the Court by way of an Application for Consent Orders. If you would like to formalise your agreement with the Court, we recommend seeking legal advice to determine if this is the right path for you and your circumstances.

GET ADVICE FROM A FAMILY LAWYER: 03 8625 8957

Benefits of completing a parenting course

Parenting courses are designed to assist you and your child's other parent with maintaining a child-focused approach to parenting after separation. Enrolling and completing a course demonstrates to the Court and to the other parent that you are committed to building a positive environment and co-parenting relationship for your child.

Understanding your child's needs following separation and navigating shared care arrangements are key themes of any parenting course you may choose to complete or that you may be ordered to complete.

Who delivers parenting courses?

There are a number of service providers who offer parenting courses recognised by the Courts. The courses vary in terms of suitability for your specific requirements. For example, some courses are designed for parents with babies or very young children, while others focus on parenting teenagers and adolescents.

Types of parenting courses

Parenting courses typically have a key issue or area of focus that the program is centred around. Below are some examples of common courses that a parent may be ordered to complete.

Tuning into Kids

This course focuses on developing the emotional connection between parents and younger children, and navigating children's responses to separation and the significant changes to their routine as a result. The course is offered both in-person at various locations and online.

You can complete the course with providers such as Relationship Australia and Better Place, with Relationships Australia also providing more targeted versions of the course, such as Tuning into Kids for Multicultural Families.

Relationships Australia also provides a Tuning into Teens course, which covers the same areas as the Kids counterpart while also considering how developing emotional intelligence will support teens moving into adulthood.

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program

The Triple P course develops positive approaches to parenting that are designed to encourage your child to feel safe and confident. Setting boundaries, encouraging positive behaviour and reducing stress from dealing with misbehaviour are some of the key focus points.

Men’s Behaviour Change Program

This program is specifically designed to guide men in managing emotions and conflict in order to build better and safer relationships with their co-parent and children. The course is offered by providers including Relationship Matters and Anglicare. A Court may order a parent to complete this program if there are allegations of family violence or a Family Violence Intervention Order.

Parenting After Separation

There are further parental education programs and support services available for parents following separation, including Parenting After Separation courses. These courses focus on assisting parents and families with adjusting to separation, new routines, and any conflict that may arise.

How much do parenting courses cost, and who pays?

The duration and cost of completing a parenting course vary. Some are free and can be completed at your own pace, while others incur a fee or have a set schedule for attendance.

Generally, the parent completing the course is the one responsible for meeting any fees associated with the course. If you need to complete a course and are unsure about what costs you may incur, our experienced family lawyers can provide you with an overview of your options.

Get help from a family lawyer

If you have been ordered by the Court to complete a parenting course and want more information about the process or the types of courses available, our family lawyers can help.

Contacting Smith Family Law

03 8625 8957

info@smithfamilylaw.com.au

This blog is of a general nature and should not be relied upon as legal advice. If you require further information, advice or assistance for your specific circumstances, please contact us.