



## Child Assessment Services when Parents are Separating

In our society, a substantial number of parenting relationships end up in separation and divorce. It is common for children to be referred to our service for assessment and ongoing care in situations where parents are separating.

This policy is to advise about the services we offer in this situation.

The purpose of assessment at the CDN is to assist with the understanding of children, and building a management plan based out of that understanding to help children.

In situations of marital separation, particularly where there are unresolved legal processes around asset distribution and childcare arrangements, the well-being of the children can become confused with the resolution of these legal proceedings.

In our practice, we separate these two issues. We are able to take referrals where understanding the child and working towards the well-being of the child is the purpose of the referral.

By contrast, we **do not take referrals** where the purpose of the assessment is to generate information for legal decision making around custody issues of parent separation. Our letters and reports are for clinical, and not legal purposes. The only exception to this is when we agree beforehand to prepare legal reports.

For this reason, if you wish to consult with us, and are currently within an ongoing process of separation, we would like both parties to agree that the purpose of the consultation is to build an understanding of the child's needs and work together around assisting that child. To help us achieve clarity on this matter, we ask that both parents sign below to indicate this.

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We understand that the purpose of referral to the CDN is for assessment and ongoing care of our child's needs. We understand further that this information is not to be used as part of legal proceedings.

Mother's Name: ..... Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Mother's Signature: .....

Father's Name: ..... Date: ..... / ..... / .....

Father's Signature: .....

