



# Who is Interrelate?

Interrelate is a not-for-profit provider of relationship services that celebrated 90 years in operation in 2016. Interrelate specialises in supporting parents and children – each year it helps more than 90,000 individuals, couples, families, children, schools and communities to strengthen their relationships through its flexible programs.

If you need support or would like more information about Interrelate's programs, contact 1300 i relate (1300 473 528) or visit [www.interrelate.org.au](http://www.interrelate.org.au).



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## Child Consultation

## What is Child Consultation?

Child consultation helps parents to see their current family circumstances through the eyes of their children.

At the time of separation or in other family situations, children may feel they don't have a say or are caught in the middle of disputes or conflict. This can cause children to experience anxiety and distress. This could also be due to changed parenting or living arrangements, or attendance at a new school.

Child Consultation is a carefully designed and ethically delivered service that permits children's views to be taken into consideration, thereby assisting parents to address any concerns that may be raised. Using a child focus can create better outcomes for families.

## Who participates in Child Consultation?

It is expected that both parents of a child/ren will be involved in Child Consultation and both parents will be requested to provide consent for Child Consultation to take place.

We operate on the best practice principle that it is generally not appropriate to conduct Child Consultation with children younger than five years of age. The children to participate in Child Consultation will be discussed and agreed with their parents.

## Who are Child Consultants?

Child Consultants are Interrelate practitioners with tertiary counselling qualifications, who have undergone specialised training enabling them to conduct an age-appropriate process of consultation with children.

## How does Child Consultation work?

Child Consultation is part of the core services offered by Interrelate, such as mediation or couples/family counselling, and will be discussed with parents when they commence using one of these services.

Once parents give their written consent, the Child Consultant will contact both parents individually to confirm suitability for the consultation. Then arrangements are made for the child/ren to meet with the Child Consultant. The child/ren will meet with the Child Consultant either individually or together, depending on the needs of each family.

After the Child Consultation session, and subject to gaining the child/ren's permission, the Child Consultant will verbally report back to the parents the child/ren's thoughts and feelings about the current family situation. No formal written reports are produced in this process.

As a mandatory reporter, Interrelate is required to report any identified risks of harm.

## What are the benefits of Child Consultation?

Parents have suggested that Child Consultation offers the following benefits:

- It helps to understand how children are feeling and coping in difficult family situations
- It ensures children are not left out when a family is making significant decisions
- Children can feel emotionally safer, more resilient and more confident in their parents' choices
- Through the skills of the child consultant, information is brought to light that otherwise would not be revealed
- It brings parents together in making arrangements for their children by providing an understanding of the impact the conflict is having on them

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