



Advertisement

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Our kids come first

For our kids to grow up strong and proud, they need the love and support of the whole mob, especially their parents. Sure, sometimes relationships don't work out, but this shouldn't mean that kids suffer.



KEEPING OUR KIDS IN FOCUS

When parents break up it can be hard for them to stay focused on what's most important - their kids. It can also mean that kids lose touch with other important family members, like their aunts and uncles, cousins and grandparents.

So to help families put their kids first, the Government has changed the way the family law system works.

A NEW FAMILY LAW SYSTEM

- IT'S ABOUT PUTTING KIDS FIRST

Kids should always come first, no matter what. And family is important. So even when mums and dads separate, it's still best for kids to have both parents play a big part in their lives, if this is possible. So the family law system has changed, because parenting is something that should be shared.

Sharing doesn't necessarily mean kids have to spend equal time with their mum and their dad. It means parents should share the responsibilities that come with raising kids - things like making decisions, spending quality time together, and teaching kids about where they come from.

This isn't about people telling you how to raise your kids. It's about making sure our young fellas get all the love and support they need.

LET'S KEEP IT OUT OF THE COURTROOM

Fights and courtroom battles can hurt kids, so the new laws make it easier for separating parents to sort things out without going to court.

Rather than focusing on the legal fights, parents can sit down and work things out in a safe and neutral environment.

NEW SERVICES FOR A NEW SYSTEM

Don't worry - you won't have to work out all these new laws by yourself. There are a whole lot of services that have been set up to help. Some of these services have been created especially with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in mind.

They're not just for mum and dad, either. Everyone can use them - cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, step-parents - anyone who cares about their family's kids, and wants them to grow up strong and happy.

Every family is different, and one size doesn't fit all. These services are there to help make things easier, so we can get on with the important job of raising our kids.

Some of these services are:

- Family Relationship Centres - these centres will be opening up around Australia over the next three years. They are somewhere parents and families can go to get information and advice, and to find help for separation and relationship problems.
- Family Relationship Advice Line & Family Relationships Online - These services are for everyone to find information and advice, and to help families with separation or relationship problems.

GET THE LOW-DOWN

For more information on the new laws and services, head to www.australia.gov.au/familyrelationships or call the Family Relationship Advice Line on 1800 050 321.



KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE

It's a sad fact that some families are affected by domestic violence and child abuse. These things can scar kids for life, creating a cycle of violence and abuse that threatens our community's future.

The law recognises that kids living in violent or abusive environments are at risk of physical and emotional harm, and so the changes to the Family Law System include special safeguards to keep kids safe.

In cases involving violence or abuse, separating parents won't have to sit down together to try and work things out before going to court, and parenting responsibilities won't have to be shared. New Family Relationship Centres will also be able to offer information and referrals to victims.



Australian Government

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ACTIVITY 1: SKIMMING FOR MAIN IDEAS

Look at the large, bold heading (The heart of the matter. Our kids come first), the paragraph in bold type in the first column under the heading, the photograph under that and the next part of the text under the photograph.

1. Why is the title **The heart of the matter. Our kids come first** an effective one?

2. According to the advertisement, what is it that kids need in order to grow up strong and proud?

3. What is the main purpose for this advertisement?

4. How do the photographs add more information to the text in this advertisement?

ACTIVITY 2: SCANNING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Which government has authorised this advertisement?

2. Why has the family law system changed?

3. List three services that have been set up to help people understand the new family law system better.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



ACTIVITY 3: UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE

1. "Sure, sometimes relationships don't workout, but this shouldn't mean that kids suffer" is an example of
 - a. formal language
 - b. colloquial language
 - c. slang
2. "Don't worry – you won't have to work out these new laws by yourself" is written in the
 - a. first person
 - b. second person
 - c. third person
3. "Every family is different, and one size doesn't fit all" means

ACTIVITY 4: CREATING A POSTER

Design a poster to inform Indigenous teenagers about the new family law system and the services offered by various agencies.

Include the most important information about the new laws and what they are trying to achieve.

Include language that will persuade the audience.
Include visuals that will attract the target audience.