

Nicola Withycombe - Founder of Kids Come First

Whether we're divorcing, separating or 'consciously uncoupling', around 50% of adult partnerships end these days. As a result, more adults and children have to find a way to deal with the emotional impact and traumatic effects of the family breakdown situation.

Working for several years at a local family mediation service, Kids Come First Founder, Nicola Withycombe, became acutely aware of how overwhelmed many parents are by the various stages of loss & grief when reaching the end of their intimate, co-parenting relationships. Equally, she soon identified the distinct lack of support available when dealing with the dramatic, confusing ups & downs of the divorce and separation 'journey'.

For many separating parents, panic sets in whilst navigating and resolving the legal and financial implications of their separation. Often, this lengthy process happens at the expense of their children (who are mostly in a state of shock, confusion and emotional turmoil) as, unintentionally, parents lose focus on how to address their emotional needs.

To provide a much-needed support forum for parents, in 2015 Nicola decided to set up Kids Come First, a community interest company delivering professional, child-focused, teaching workshops for the benefit of parents and indirectly, their children. Collaborating with a well-respected colleague, they developed a program of specialist adult teaching material, combining their experience and expertise working with separated parents, and specialist training in the fields of mediation, family therapy & child counselling.

They have encountered many parents who were unable to work together or agree, thus being unable to provide the vital structure

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their children crave at this difficult time. Once communication breaks down and parental mistrust sets in, the conflict often escalates and has a negative impact on children – especially when matters end up in the Family Courts.

Kids Come First workshops help parents maintain a collaborative, co-parenting relationship with their ex-partner. We aim to keep matters out of the family courts and protect children from the emotional damage caused by prolonged parental battles. We examine the different ages of children so that parents can further understand their behaviours and responses; knowing what to look out for and how to deal with each situation that arises. At the heart of the Kids Come First lies a philosophy that by helping parents cope better - we help children cope better too!

Workshops are held in Hampton (easily accessible for parents living in the boroughs of Richmond, Kingston or Hounslow) and sessions are run on Tuesday evenings or Saturday mornings to accommodate working parents. Get in touch via email at: kidscomefirstuk@mail.com for more info or visit our website: kidscomefirstuk.co.uk to find out how we can help you.