

Relieve the Pressure Prompts

Week 2 – Co-Parenting At Christmas

With Family Mediation NI

CONVERSATION PROMPTS: NOVEMBER 21ST-27TH

Whether you are newly separated or parted a while ago, co-parenting over the holiday period may continue to be challenging and tensions may run high when agreeing arrangements. Family Mediation NI suggest the following tips to help you communicate better and focus on the needs of your children;

- 1.We are newly separated, how do we explain to the children that the holidays will be different this year?
- 2.How can we communicate and deal with tension without impacting on our children?
- 3.How can we make sure our children spend time with both of us over the holiday period?
- 4.We have both moved on and have new partners and other children, a blended family. How can we manage the holidays and maintain the civilised relationship we all have?
- 5.How can we consider our child's needs and each other's feelings and make plans that suit all of us?



TOP TIPS TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE

- Reassure your children, using age appropriate language, that both parents will discuss how best to organise shared time over the holidays.
- Try and keep all conversations focused on the needs of your children, not on the past.
- Keep all discussions calm, avoid making demands or raising your voice. Try to avoid using text or e-mail for these discussions as this can be open to misinterpretation.
- Consider agreeing to a family annual calendar, considering work rotas, school breaks, the particular needs of individual children, and how the links to wider family and grandparents may help.
- Try putting yourself in the other parent's position, in your child's position and the other grandparent's position...how would you feel? Communication is key to better outcomes for children.

WHAT NEXT?

For a range of tips, tools & videos to support you to 'Relieve the Pressure' on your relationships this winter, visit;

[Relateni.org/Campaigns](https://relateni.org/Campaigns)

For more tips, tools and support: Contact FMNI, provider of family mediation across Northern Ireland. Mediation is not counselling, it is a process that empowers separated parents to manage conflict and mediate a co-parenting plan that places their children's needs at the centre.

familymediationni.org.uk