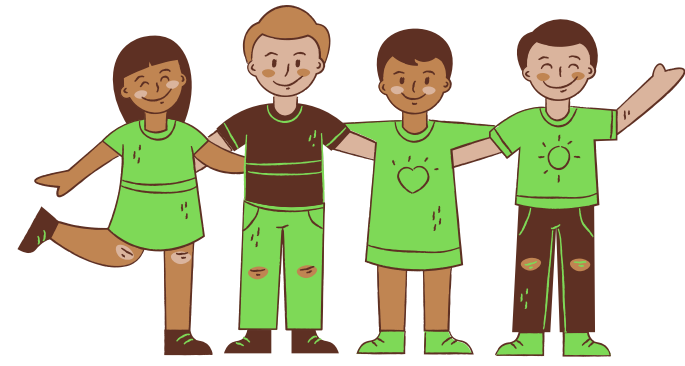


My "lets think about contact visits" checklist.

- ☒ Do I feel comfortable talking about this right now/today, and do the children?
- ☐ Is this a safe space to have this talk for everyone?
- ☐ Can I be kind, honest and understanding at the same time with whatever is said right now?
- ☐ Do I have self-care strategies in place for us all after this contact visit?
- ☐ Do I need time to think or do I already know how and what I would like us to discuss?
- ☐ Am I emotionally prepared to handle any thoughts and feelings I have on my child talks about?
- ☐ Have I reminded my child that no matter what is said or they feel I love them regardless?
- ☐ Am I able to be open to stepping into my child's shoes while I listen to what they have to say today?

Some tips, hints and ideas for managing on the day and for talking to my child about contact visits.



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Acknowledging this might be a difficult time for all involved.

Provide younger children with 'grounding'/sensory toys such as a familiar soft toy or favorite item. This helps them to have a sense of comfort when being away from you. Keep these items close when discussing contact visits.

Be honest using age appropriate child appropriate language.

Reassure your child that the separation has nothing to do with them and or is not their fault. Be mindful of how your child is prior to contact and after. Today could trigger a range of emotions for both of you.

Don't forget your own self-care on these days!
You deserve time to unwind and your wellbeing is a priority. Contact days can feel extremely stressful and it is vital that you take time for yourself. Schedule-in time for yourself to do something positive for yourself.

On a day when contact visits occur, try to set-up family routines. For example, you could schedule having a 'special breakfast' together before contact visits at home and plan for a movie night in the evening afterwards.

If your children are refusing to go to contact gently explore reasons why and make time to listen to their worries and feelings.
Seek legal advice on how to change contact arrangements:
Women's Legal Service
1800 957 957

You and your child might have differing views on contact time as well as on their other parent, be emotionally prepared for that and open to looking at their point of view.

Creating an easy comfortable space to talk about what happened at contact, both good things and not so great things.

It is important to create a space of relaxation for both yourself and your child so that conversations about contact can be in a safe and calm environment.
Routine is the key and it allows a sense of control when all else can feel uncontrollable due to heightened emotions.

Try to make sure that contact is scheduled around what is best for you and your children's safety and emotional wellbeing as best you can.

Listen to how your child feels about contact visits and empathize with them as best you can. If your child is distressed and states they do not want to attend, never physically force them into the car. Seek legal advice as soon as possible.

