

Imagine this scenario.



This is how our clients often feel
when going into mediation.

Better Place
Australia

Preparing parents for the challenge of ongoing child focused shared parenting

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Agenda

- **What is pre mediation preparation (PMP) and what is its purpose?**
- **A brief history of PMP**
- **When is PMP recommended**
- **What is covered in the session**
- **Current learnings**



The Development of Pre Mediation Preparation

- **Pre Mediation Preparation was developed in 2016 by Better Place Australia counsellors and FDR practitioners** as an additional mediation preparation tool in response to increasing case complexity in FDR.
- **PMP is delivered by counsellors and psychologists** to an individual, couple or group depending on the case.
- **PMP is generally provided to individuals who are assessed** to be concerned about being in the presence of their former partner or are considering shuttle mediation.
- **PMP can still be offered to individuals who experience an amicable and child focused relationship with their former partner** but still need to utilize the mediation process.
- Mostly used at the Chadstone FRC with 2-3 referrals a week



When PMP is recommended when practitioners identify

- High level, deeply entrenched conflict between parents
- Elevated level of anxiety around FDR
- Intense negative emotions and emotional regulation difficulties
- Poor communication skills impacting on clients' ability to articulate their goals in mediation
- When clients are uncertain about the goal of mediation
- Low confidence impacting client's ability to negotiate effectively
- When a client identifies that they are concerned about their former partner's or their own emotional response during the mediation process
- When clients' may need to increase assertiveness skills
- When clients present with an external locus of control

Skills Training: What is covered in the session

- Ascertain the nature of the client's specific concerns with going in to the mediation.
- Negotiation skills
- Visualisation
- Cognitive Behavioural
- Emotion regulation
- Locus of Control.

FDRP reported impact on FDR Process and outcome

- The closer the session to the FDR the more impact it does have
- However too close can be detrimental
- Has changed the quality of the discussion between parents and carers
- More prepared to use the supports within the FDR process
- A move away from parties being positional
- Highlighted between parents the need for an ongoing parental relationship
- Also parents recognised that there is a need for the children to have a quality relationship with the other parent even if they don't

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- Less escalation of emotions and opportunity to develop effective communication strategies
- Family Relationship Counselors are well skilled to deliver this program but many FDRPs do have the skill base to also provide the service
- The true advantage of PMP in the FDR space has been to tailor the program to specific client need
- Clients also have are more likely to engage in ongoing counselling if they have already met with the counsellor

Questions?

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