

CHILDREN AND SEPARATION

When couples separate one matter which will need to be considered is where the children will live and how often they will see the parent they will no longer be living with. In most cases it is important that the “non resident” parent remains involved in important decisions concerning their upbringing. If you are married or if your son or daughter was born after the 1st December 2003 and the father’s name is on the birth certificate then both parents share Parental Responsibility for the children which means that you both have a say in decisions concerning their upbringing. Even if the father or civil partner does not share Parental Responsibility this should not prevent parents from agreeing between themselves what is best for their children.

ing what is best for the children than the parents themselves and should always be seen as a last resort.

There are several ways parents can approach trying to reach an agreement over living and contact arrangements for their children without the need to involve the Court:

Mediation- where an independent solicitor holds a number of meetings with the parents to draw up an agreement;

Collaborative law, where each parent instructs a collaboratively trained solicitor and together they attend a number of four way meetings or each parent instructs their solicitors who enter into negotiations on their behalf (often referred to as **negotiations** at arms length).

At Leeds Day we always approach such matters in a sensitive and constructive way; even though the relationship between the parents may have broken down, it is important that they can agree what is best for the children so as not to disrupt them during what will already be a time of change in their lives. We also strive to ensure that the parents remain in control of the decision making process as whilst a Court will do what it considers to be in the children’s best interests it is no better placed at know-

The family team at Leeds Day are experienced in dealing with such matters and has offices in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots. Should you wish to make an appointment to see us please contact us on 01480 454301.

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The information contained in this note is correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of publica-