

Getting involved:

A guide to Family Mediation Week 22nd – 26th January 2024



Resolving family issues doesn't mean going to court!

This is the message we will seek to spread in Family Mediation Week in 2024. Organised by the FMC, Family Mediation Week provides an opportunity to raise awareness of family mediation and its benefits to separating families. Our aim is to let more people know about the benefits of family mediation and encourage separating couples to think about family mediation as a way of helping them take control, make decisions together and build a positive future for their family.



What will happen during Family Mediation Week?

The FMC is hosting a series of webinars, aiming to increase awareness of family mediation amongst different groups of people. We will hold sessions for the general public, for professionals working with families such as social workers, teachers and health professionals, as well as those working in the family justice system including lawyers, CAFCASS officers, judiciary and court staff. We will also host sessions which will help develop mediators' understanding of how mediation can be adaptable by also engaging in other forms of dispute resolution and by using neutrals such as IFA's divorce coaches, forensic accountants etc. Please see the webinar timetable [here](#).

Alongside these webinars, we will be sharing resources and information about family mediation on multiple channels and a number of mediators are hosting local networking events. Everything we do is aimed at ensuring people having a better understanding at the end of the week of how non-court dispute resolution can help families, than they do at the start!

We need your help!

The FMC and its five member organisations are all involved in and contributing to Family Mediation Week in different ways. It is great to have so many individuals coming together under the FMC umbrella to promote family mediation.

However, there is only so much we can do centrally. As an FMC Registered mediator, you can also have a significant impact, so please get involved.

You can do this by:

- Following us on social media, and liking, retweeting and sharing our posts to share our news and events with your network.
- Making a mediation pledge. Choose one and do it well – it will make a difference!
- Hosting your own event, share a resource such as [those here](#), or writing an article – tell us about it, and we will help spread the word!

My Mediation Pledge

Last year, we invited you all to make a pledge before or during Family Mediation Week to carry out a specific marketing activity. This doesn't have to be done during the week itself, but use the week as the catalyst to make the commitment.

We have had great feedback from mediators who have used the following approaches to marketing **which have resulted in increased referrals**:

- A pledge to make contact with schools. The mediator included her local Sure Start centre (sometimes now called a Family Centre) in the distribution list. As a result, she was invited by the Sure Start centre to give a presentation attended by representatives of several local schools about options for resolving issues following parental separation, which has resulted in referrals. The link with the Sure Start centre has also allowed the mediator to learn about new resources for clients.
- A pledge to carry out radio advertising. A mediator paid about £200 for advertising on her local radio station to run around the time of Family Mediation Week. The advert ran 3 times a day for 10 days. Off the back of this, the mediator also approached the radio station to offer an interview about family mediation, and this was arranged.
- A pledge to use the FMC's template press releases such as [the one we've released for FMW](#). We know these are used by local press from time to time, and once they are on local news websites they are often picked up by news-sweeper type services such as Yahoo!News and distributed much further. Mediators who have used the releases have told us they have resulted in referrals. A tip for those who do send news releases is to set up a Google alert for your name, as journalists don't always let you know they have used your release. Please also see [the guidance on using the FMW template press release](#).
- A pledge to invite solicitors to observe MIAMs. A mediator realised that some local solicitors didn't really understand what happened in a MIAM, and so started inviting them to observe MIAMs (with participant consent and where there is no conflict). As well as resulting in an increased number of referrals from those solicitors, clients are

arriving with a more open mind about mediation and with a better idea of what to expect from the MIAM. You can use the [FMC's Code of Conduct for observations of mediations or MIAMs by non-mediators](#) to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

- A pledge to promote the voucher scheme by contacting local solicitors. The mediator reported writing to local solicitors to tell them directly about the scheme and this resulted in a positive response.
- A pledge to hold a Family Mediation Week networking event. This cost the mediator the price of the drinks provided, but brought together local solicitors, domestic abuse agencies, financial advisers etc. The mediator chose to hold the event just before FMW, so she could tell them all about the events that would be happening during FMW.

Or try this very straightforward pledge!

- A pledge to distribute this simple [single-page A4 leaflet](#) about family mediation to local advice centres, libraries etc. Online versions of the leaflet are available on our website [here](#) and can be used by mediators on websites and social media.

Thank you to our sponsors

Family Mediation Week 2024 is being generously supported by our sponsors. This sponsorship allows us to spread the message about family mediation further than we would otherwise, and the FMC would like to thank all sponsors for their support.



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Useful websites & social media links

Family Mediation Week website: <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/fmw/>



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Remember to use #familymediationweek