



# Separated Parents Policy

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Spark Therapy Services is committed to providing the best care for all of our clients while maintaining a respectful and supportive environment for their families. We understand that separated or divorced parents may have unique needs and circumstances. Our policy aims to ensure clear communication, consistency in treatment, and the well-being of the child.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that services provided are consistent, respectful, and supportive of the unique needs of children whose parents are separated or divorced. This policy aims to:

- **Facilitate Clear Communication:** Establish clear guidelines for communication with both parents to ensure they are equally informed about their child's therapy and progress.
- **Promote Consistency in Care:** Ensure that therapy remains consistent and focused on the child's well-being, regardless of the parents' relationship status.
- **Respect Legal Custody Arrangements:** Respect and adhere to legal custody arrangements, ensuring that the rights of both parents are considered and upheld.
- **Support the Child's Best Interests:** Prioritise the child's best interests in all therapy-related decisions, aiming to create a stable and supportive therapeutic environment.

This policy helps create a collaborative approach to paediatric occupational therapy, ensuring that all parties are working together to support the child's development and well-being. This policy is also intended to minimise the impact of parental conflict on the child's therapy and overall well-being, ensuring a stable and consistent therapeutic environment.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Director

- Overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring legal compliance.
- Mediating conflicts between parents when necessary.

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## Parents

- Advising The Spark Therapy Services of current family situation's accurately and honestly.
- Advising of any court orders that impact on the relationship between the family and therapy services.
- Providing copies of any relevant legal documents or court orders, if in place.
- Advising the scope of engagement each parent will have.

## Occupational Therapists

- Maintaining neutrality and ensuring that therapy decisions are child centred.
- Documenting any relevant information regarding parental involvement.

## 4. PROCEDURE

### Therapy Commencement and Appointments

The Spark Therapy Services will accept only one parent's consent for their child to commence therapy, unless a court order stipulates that both parents must provide consent or that a specific parent must provide consent.

Regardless of which parent is the primary carer or has engaged The Spark Therapy Services and in the absence of specific court order, each parent is able to:

- Schedule an appointment with their child
- Be present at their child's appointment
- Know the child's current therapy goals
- Request copies of session notes and assessment report(s)

In the event of a disagreement between parents about therapy decisions, The Spark Therapy Services will defer to any existing legal documents or court orders. If no such documents exist, The Spark Therapy Services may seek legal advice to ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of the child.

In cases of significant conflict, we reserve the right to suspend our services until the dispute is resolved. If the conflict disrupts the clinic or hinders the child's care, we may need to discharge the family from our services.

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## Communication

Parents are encouraged to share important information and collaborate on scheduling therapy appointments. We welcome the involvement of both parents in their child's therapy, unless legal restrictions prevent so.

If joint attendance at therapy sessions is not possible or preferred, The Spark Therapy Services may offer alternative arrangements, such as separate appointments or telehealth options, to ensure both parents can participate in their child's care.

If an appointment is made by one parent, it is their responsibility to inform the other parent, invite them to attend, and provide feedback to them.

Clinical notes will be sent to the parent who attends the child's appointment and the other parent if consent and the other parent's contact details are provided. If consent and these details are not provided, it is the responsibility of the attending parent to forward information and reports to the other parent.

In situations of high conflict, The Spark Therapy Services may facilitate communication between parents by providing session summaries to both parties, ensuring that both parents are equally informed about their child's progress.

## 5. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on this procedure, contact Tina Bruce Director The Spark Therapy Services [tina@thesparkts.com.au](mailto:tina@thesparkts.com.au) 0431273352

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