

# FAMILY SEPARATION SERVICES

Sharon is a warm, empathic Clinical Psychologist who has experience and a non-biased consideration in working with families who are separating. She has a special interest in this population and has empathy and understanding for the challenging emotions often evident during this process.

Sharon acknowledges the complexities associated with family separation. She uses her competencies and skills in Mediation and Report Writing to work collaboratively with clients to ensure the best possible outcomes for their children.

Sharon engages in regular continuing professional practice development to ensure her skills are up to date and relevant. She seeks regular peer and/or formal supervision in accordance with the Australian Psychological Association's Code of Ethics.

## ***Qualifications***

Dr. of Psychology (Clinical)  
Bachelor of Soc. Sciences (Psychology) (Hons.)  
Grad. Dip. of Family Dispute Resolution Practice



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“Gold Standard” Family Report writers recognise that better quality reports lead to improved outcomes for families, including healthier adjustment for children of separated families. They take extra time to get to know the children of separating families and take into account the individual needs and desires of each family. Gold Standard Family Report writers:

- ◆ Maintain an unbiased perspective throughout the process. This means not working with families of clients who have sought assistance from the Report Writer in another capacity (e.g. psychological therapy).
- ◆ Work within the limits of their competencies, in accordance with their Codes of Ethics, and include among their competencies knowledge of domestic and family violence, child abuse dynamics, and children’s developmental stages, engaging with children in an age-appropriate manner.
- ◆ Are members of professional bodies with a Code of Ethics and a complaints mechanism.
- ◆ Provide a CV to solicitors upon request.
- ◆ Stay up to date with relevant research regarding family separation and children’s development.
- ◆ Obtain appropriate cultural understanding if required (such as seeking assistance from an appropriate cultural consultant regarding cultural norms and values when the family is from another culture).
- ◆ Remain independent of other professionals who are working with the families seeking the Family Report.

## “Gold Standard” Family Reports

Sharon recognises the emphasis given to Family Reports and believes that corresponding and appropriate time needs to be afforded to the report writing process. As such, she has a comprehensive process of information gathering and assessment, intended to better serve the individual needs of each family, to produce detailed recommendations in the best interests of the child/ren, and therefore promote healthier adjustment for the children of separated families. Family Reports provide recommendations suitable for forming the basis for Parenting Plans or Parenting Orders and therefore potentially reduce the need for ongoing litigation, saving the financial resources of families. A Family Report may also be required for Family Court processes.

Sharon’s process of preparing a Family Report includes:

- An initial individual consultation with each caregiver of 60-90 minutes duration. These consultations include taking a comprehensive history and relationship history from each caregiver, along with their completing questionnaires which relate to family and individual factors. Children are not required to attend these consultations. New partners may also attend at this stage but caregivers will be interviewed initially on their own.
- A secondary consultation with each caregiver and the child/ren of the relationship. This involves spending time with the caregiver and child/ren, building rapport with the child/ren, and observing the interactions between the child/ren and caregivers. From time to time, other relevant parties may be invited to attend, such as a grandparent or other extended family member.
- Age-appropriate interviews with the children assessing their developmental level and wishes. These will likely occur at the above appointment.
- Completion of a typed Psychologist Report, which concludes with recommendations applicable for use in Parenting Plans, Parenting Orders, or in Court.

**FIXED FEE ARRANGEMENT: \$4,000 EXCLUDING GST\***

**50% DEPOSIT**

**50% PAYMENT PRIOR TO RELEASE OF REPORT**

- \* Full disclosure is to be provided and agreed upon for any additional fees relating to services not included above (e.g. additional consultations, attendance at Court if required).