

NAVIGATING CONFLICT WITH CARE



**PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PARENTS FACING
CONFLICT POST-SEPARATION**



Your child sees the world through your eyes. From as young as 6 months old, they are absorbing everything—your emotions, your energy, your words. They may not understand why you're upset, but they feel it. And even when you try to protect them, they sense the conflict and tension in your home.

The truth is, your conflicts impact them more than you know. Every argument, every raised voice, every tense moment—these shape their sense of security and leave lasting imprints on how they see the world and build relationships.

But here's the good news: it doesn't have to be this way. By being aware, you can take steps to protect their emotional well-being and create a calm, loving environment where they can truly thrive. Let's build a safer, stronger foundation for their future—together.



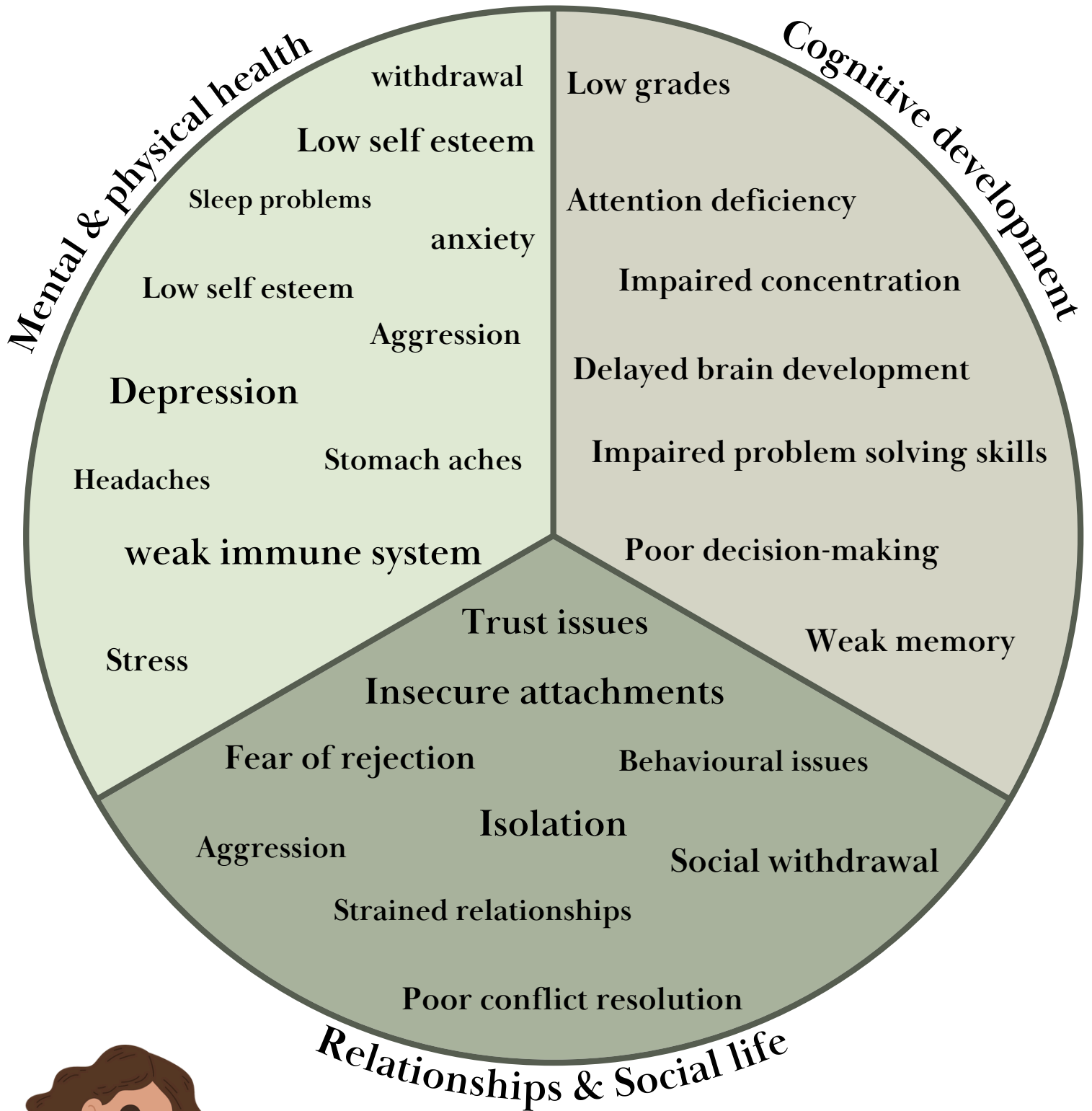
CONFLICT CAN LOOK LIKE:

- Heated words and shouting matches
- Physical outbursts or intimidation
- Cold silence and shutting each other out
- Surrendering to keep the peace, even when it hurts

CONFLICT POST-SEPARATION CAN LOOK LIKE:

- Using children to relay messages
- Interrogating them about the other parent's life
- Pressuring them to keep secrets
- Making children feel they have to hide affection from the other parent to please you
- Putting down or badmouthing the other parent

HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOUR CHILDREN?



TIPS TO MITIGATE CONFLICT

Short Term

- **Keep It Out of Sight:** arguments are for adults—don't let your child witness conflicts. If tensions rise, suggest discussing matters privately.
- **Speak Kindly, Always:** when discussing the other parent in front of your child, use respectful language. Children deserve to hear both parents spoken of kindly.
- **Shift Their Focus:** if your child feels the tension, gently guide them toward something fun to ease anxiety.
- **Model Conflict Resolution:** show your child how adults resolve disagreements. Explain how the issue was addressed, reinforcing that conflicts can be worked through.

Long Term

- **Involve Your Support Network:** reach out to trusted family and friends for emotional and logistical support.
- **Identify Your Triggers:** recognize situations that escalate conflicts and develop strategies to pause and regroup.
- **Cultivate Healthy Coping Skills:** engage in calming activities such as exercise or meditation.
- **Establish Clear Boundaries:** set respectful co-parenting boundaries, focusing on your child's needs to minimize tension.
- **Seek Professional Help:** consult a professional to address lingering conflicts that may affect co-parenting. Seek workshops to enhance your skills for your child's benefit.

YOUR CHILD COMES FIRST

Remember, your child's wellbeing is always the top priority. By keeping conflicts in check and away from them, you help give your child the greatest gift—a peaceful, secure environment.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR CHILD

Build Your Child's Support Team

Think of your child's support network as their safety net—a group that helps them thrive:

- **Family Connections:** Surround them with loving family members who can provide emotional stability and encouragement.
- **Social connections:** keep up their contact with friendships and extracurriculars. Ask their school if they have a guidance counsellor.

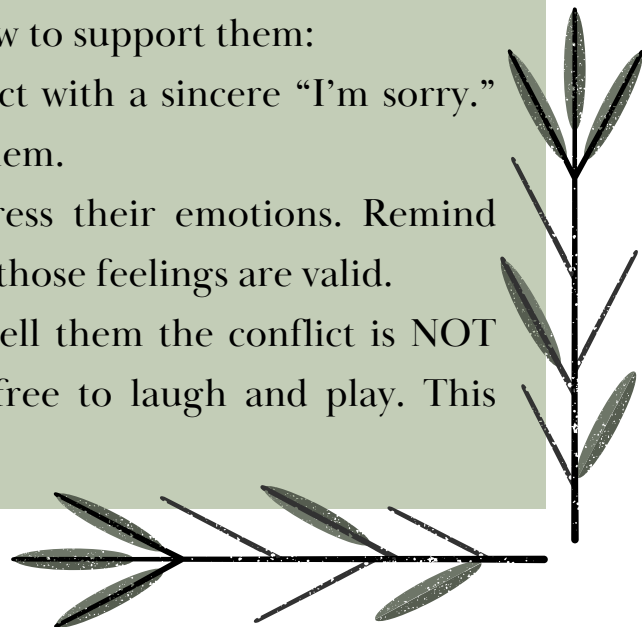
Establish Consistent Routines

- **Daily Structure:** Create a daily schedule that includes regular meal times, bedtimes, and homework periods. Consistent routines help children feel secure and understand what to expect, reducing anxiety during uncertain times.
- **Transition Plans:** Clearly outline what each transition between parents will look like, including where the child will go and what they can expect. Consistent and tension-free changeover routines can help minimize stress.

Apologize, Acknowledge, and Reassure

If your child has witnessed conflict, here's how to support them:

- **Apology:** Calmly acknowledge the conflict with a sincere "I'm sorry." This shows you recognize its impact on them.
- **Validate Their Feelings:** Let them express their emotions. Remind them it's okay to feel confused or upset—those feelings are valid.
- **Reassure with Love:** Most importantly, tell them the conflict is NOT their fault. Their job is to be a child, free to laugh and play. This reassurance helps them feel secure.





FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION
FAMILY REPORTS
COUNSELLING

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HELPFUL RESOURCES

Online

- **Relationships Australia:** support and resources for co-parenting.
- **Australian Institute of Family Studies:** research on family dynamics and separation.
- **Family Relationships Online:** government advice on family relationships.
- **Beyond Blue** - mental health support for parents.

Websites

- **Legal Aid Australia** - information on family law and separation.
- **Divorce Support Australia** - resources for divorce and separation.

Support Networks

- **Australian Parenting Website** - advice on parenting and separation.
- **Kids Helpline** - support for children affected by separation.

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