

## What is a Child Contact Centre?



A Child Contact Centre is a safe, friendly and neutral place where children of separated families can spend time with one or both parents and sometimes other family members. They are child-centred environments that provide toys, games and facilities that reflect the diverse needs of children affected by family breakdown.

There are currently more than 300 Child Contact Centres throughout the British Isles (excluding Scotland). Trained volunteers run the majority of these centres and it is estimated that 15,000 children use them every year. All staff and volunteers are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau prior to starting work at the centre.

## What qualities do you need to be a Child Contact Centre volunteer?

Volunteers in Child Contact Centres need to be impartial, caring, tolerant, sensitive, flexible, discreet and reliable. They must always put children's needs first and not take sides with either parent or any other adults involved in the contact.

## How much time will I need to give?



Most Child Contact Centres open on a Saturday morning or afternoon every week. Their volunteers are normally organised into teams and each team is on duty once every four to six weeks.

New volunteers join a team and are given training either in advance of, or shortly after they have started working in the centre. All volunteers receive ongoing support from their team leaders and / or the Centre Co-ordinator.

## What will you have to do?



A volunteer at a Child Contact Centre is primarily responsible for facilitating meaningful contact between a child or children and a non-resident parent, by:

- Helping to prepare the centre before children arrive.
- Welcoming families and showing them around.
- Listening to adults and children without judging, advising or taking sides.
- Making refreshments.
- Tidying up once the centre is closed.

It is also important for potential volunteers to know that they do not:

- Counsel families using the centre.
- Supervise the children – they remain the responsibility of their parents at all times.
- Get involved with the families away from the centre.

## Could you become a volunteer at a Child Contact Centre?



People who are already volunteers in Child Contact Centres have commented that:

“It has made me more adaptable and open minded.”

“The rewards outweigh the problems and disappointments.”

“It is a real joy when after a few minutes a new relationship begins to grow between the adults and children.”

## National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC)

Promoting safe child contact within a national framework of Child Contact Centres

NACCC holds the following values:

- Ensuring safety.
- Child-centred within the family.
- Promoting equality, celebrating diversity.
- Independent and impartial.
- Respecting individuals, preserving confidentiality.
- Valuing and supporting voluntary service.
- Sharing skills and expertise to achieve better outcomes for children and their families.

### And finally...

If you would like to help make a difference for children like Lucy and Tom or find out more about the work of Child Contact Centres please contact either:



Tel: 0845 4500 280 [local rate]  
email: [contact@nacc.org.uk](mailto:contact@nacc.org.uk)  
[www.nacc.org.uk](http://www.nacc.org.uk)

National Association of Child Contact Centres  
Minerva House, Spaniel Row, Nottingham, NG1 6EP

### Your Local Contact Centre is:

Chichester Child Contact Centre  
Christ Church,  
Old Market Avenue,  
Chichester  
PO19 1SW

Coordinator: Becca Dickenson  
Telephone: 07746 026695

## Lucy and Tom's world fell apart when dad left



## Spare time?

Could you help Lucy, Tom and other children see their mum or dad at a Child Contact Centre?



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