

# SERVICES + PROGRAMS



## When Relationships Affect Health

A referral guide for GPs and health professionals

*Relationships*  
AUSTRALIA • NSW

# Relationships are part of being human.



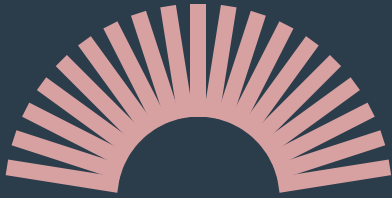
Relationships shape how we see ourselves, how we connect with others, and how we experience the world – in our families, workplaces, schools, friendships and communities.

When relationships are strong, they help us feel safe, supported and understood. But when they're under pressure, because of conflict, grief, change or disconnection, it can affect every part of our life and wellbeing. At Relationships Australia NSW, we provide support during these times.

For over 75 years, we've helped individuals, couples, families and communities navigate challenges such as separation, trauma, isolation and communication breakdown. Our services include counselling, mediation, group workshops and tailored support at different stages of life.

We work with people of all ages, backgrounds, genders, cultures and family structures. Our trained, compassionate practitioners take the time to listen, understand your situation, and help you find the next steps that feel right for you.

# We're here to help through:



03 Counselling +  
Relationship Support



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# Why Relationships Matter for Health

Strong relationships are a key predictor of long-term physical and mental wellbeing.

## Relationship stress may present as:

- + anxiety and depression
- + sleep disturbance
- + chronic stress
- + substance misuse
- + parenting stress
- + family conflict affecting children.

Health professionals are often the first people patients turn to when relationship problems begin affecting their wellbeing.

Early referral to relationship support can help patients address underlying issues contributing to distress and improve their ability to manage life transitions.



## Patients may benefit from relationship support when they:

- + present with stress, anxiety or depression linked to relationship conflict
- + are navigating separation or divorce
- + report ongoing communication breakdown with a partner or family member
- + are experiencing parenting or co-parenting challenges
- + are concerned about family conflict affecting children
- + are feeling isolated or overwhelmed in family relationships.

Relationship support can complement clinical care by helping patients develop practical skills to navigate communication, conflict and family transitions.

# Case Studies



Ben presents with poor sleep over the past few weeks. Through discussion, you learn he and his partner have recently experienced a relationship breakdown. He is unsure about the status of the relationship, feeling very stressed, and seeking medication to help him sleep. You provide appropriate medical advice and intervention.

Here you could ask:

- + Have you been able to access any support for your relationship?
- + Are you aware of affordable relationship counselling or separation support?

Medical and non-medical interventions can work together to support Ben, addressing his immediate symptoms while also helping him navigate his emotions, the changes he is facing and the decisions ahead.

**SERVICES:  
INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE  
COUNSELLING / MEDIATION**



Marta is 70 and attends for a routine health check. During the consultation, she shares that her adult son has recently moved into her home and is causing 'problems'. You note that Marta is in good physical health and feels safe, however she is managing all domestic responsibilities and covering household expenses.

Here you could ask:

- + How are you feeling about this situation?
- + Are you aware of support services that can help with family relationships, particularly if things are becoming more difficult?

Many older people wish to maintain family relationships without involving legal or policing pathways. Elder mediation can support family members to come together and discuss concerns, while prioritising the older person's safety and wellbeing.

**SERVICES:  
LET'S TALK, ELDER MEDIATION  
AND SUPPORT**



Shriti, aged 35, attends with her three-year-old son James, who has a viral infection. You provide appropriate medical treatment. During the consultation, Shriti shares that she has been separated from James's father for two years and that there is ongoing conflict around care arrangements. She notes that James is often unsettled during and after handovers.

Here you could ask:

- + Have you had access to any separation support?
- + Are you aware of services that can help you develop arrangements in James's best interests?

While Shriti's immediate concern is James's illness, she has also shared distress related to ongoing family conflict. Referral to family dispute resolution may not resolve James's illness, but it may help his parents address the underlying issues contributing to his distress. It may also connect the family to additional supports, such as Parenting After Separation programs.

**SERVICES:**  
**FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
(MEDIATION) / PARENTING AFTER  
SEPARATION GROUPS**



Rosie, aged 68, presents with long-term pain and mobility issues. Her pain has recently worsened, prompting her to seek medical support. During the consultation, as the doctor begins the physical examination, Rosie becomes unresponsive and unable to engage. The appointment is ended without a clear plan for managing her pain.

Rosie is a Forgotten Australian. As a child, she experienced significant abuse in institutional care, leading to a fear response to authority figures, including doctors. Her reaction in the consultation reflects a trauma response, where she feels unsafe.

While a patient's history may not be known in advance, small adjustments in approach can help reduce distress.

For example:

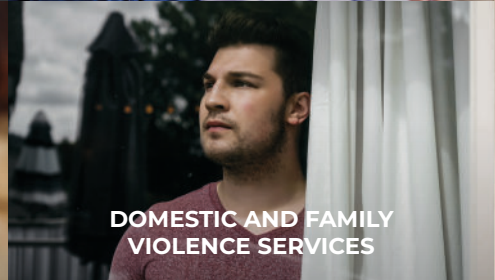
- + Acknowledge any signs of discomfort or unease
- + Explain what you are going to do before approaching
- + Seek consent and check in throughout the process.

If Rosie discloses her experience, you could also ask whether she has access to appropriate support.

**PROGRAM:**  
**WATTLE PLACE, FORGOTTEN  
AUSTRALIANS SUPPORT SERVICE**

# How we can help your patients

We offer:



Relationships Australia NSW provides confidential services that support individuals, couples and families.

# Where we operate

Relationships Australia NSW provides services across metropolitan and regional NSW through:



**IN-PERSON CENTRES**



**TELEHEALTH SERVICES**



**ONLINE PROGRAMS**



# How to Refer a Patient



## SELF-REFERRAL

Patients can contact us directly:

Phone: 1300 364 277

Website:  
[relationshipsnsw.org.au](http://relationshipsnsw.org.au)



## HEALTH PROFESSIONAL REFERRAL

Health professionals can:

- + encourage patients to contact us directly
- + provide patients with referral information
- + discuss relationship support as part of broader wellbeing care.

Our services support individuals, couples and families across NSW.

Scan to refer a patient or find services near you.



**Patients often raise relationship concerns in general practice.**

If relationship stress is contributing to a patient's wellbeing, referral to relationship support services can help address underlying factors.



# Counselling + Relationship Support

When dealing with conflict, grief, stress or major life changes, talking things through with someone can make a real difference. Our experienced counsellors provide a safe, inclusive space to reflect, build resilience, and find a way forward.



## INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING^

One-on-one support to help make sense of personal experiences – whether it's stress, relationship challenges, past-trauma or low self-esteem. Our experienced counsellors can identify patterns and offer tools and strategies to help make things feel more manageable.



## COUPLES COUNSELLING^

Support for couples to talk openly, understand each other better, and work through issues like communication breakdown, conflict or disconnection. We work with all types of relationships, including LGBTQIA+, separated, and non-monogamous couples.



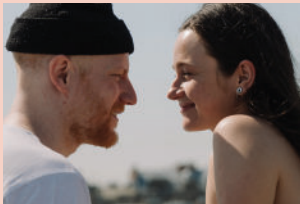
## FAMILY COUNSELLING^

Support for families who want to improve how they relate to and understand one another. We work with all family structures – including blended, extended and caregiving families – to help strengthen connection and reduce tension at home.



### **ADOLESCENT FAMILY COUNSELLING<sup>^</sup>**

For families with young people aged 10–21 facing challenges like conflict, school refusal, mental health concerns or changes at home. This service helps teens and caregivers reconnect and find new ways to navigate difficulties together. Available in Parramatta.



### **PREPARE + ENRICH<sup>^</sup>**

A structured program for couples preparing for a big life step, such as marriage or long-term commitment. Includes an online relationship assessment and three sessions with a counsellor to explore and unpick shared values, communication styles and potential areas of tension.



### **CABER-RA NANGA ENGAGE<sup>^</sup>**

Free, culturally safe support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in northern Sydney, including casework, referrals and workshops to build identity, wellbeing and community. Activities may include family tracing, spiritual mapping and cultural practices like art, dance, bush tucker.

# Separation + Mediation Support

Separation can be one of life's most challenging transitions, especially when children, shared responsibilities, or strong emotions are involved. We offer mediation, and child-focused services to help families navigate this time with care, clarity and respect and make decisions in the best interests of any children.

“I felt heard and supported throughout the process. It was the first time I'd been able to speak honestly about my concerns and start creating a parenting plan. I'd put it off for a long time after separating, but my mediator helped me feel comfortable putting things on paper and taking that important step.”

Mediation Client



## **FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION ^**

Often called mediation, we help separated couples resolve parenting, property and financial matters without court. Our accredited and impartial practitioners create a safe space to reduce conflict, prioritise children, and support constructive, forward-focused decisions. In person or online.



### **LET'S TALK – ELDER SUPPORT + MEDIATION<sup>^</sup>**

Support for older people and their families to navigate changes in health, housing, finances, conflict and future care. Through counselling, mediation and casework, we help families move forward while upholding the older person's dignity, safety and connection.



### **CHILDREN'S CONTACT SERVICES<sup>^</sup>**

Support for separated families to manage contact arrangements in a safe, child-friendly environment. We offer supervised contact services and changeover, helping reduce conflict and build more stable routines – with the child's wellbeing and sense of security our priority.



### **PARENTING ORDERS PROGRAM<sup>^</sup>**

For separated parents experiencing ongoing conflict after parenting orders. Includes individual and joint sessions (where safe) and child-inclusive consultations for ages 5–18 – helping parents better understand and respond to their children's needs. Available in the Illawarra.

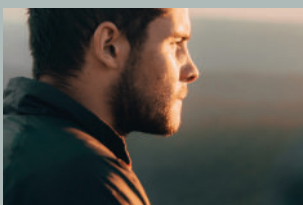
<sup>^</sup> Funded by the Australian Government.

<sup>■</sup> Funded by the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice.

<sup>•</sup> Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

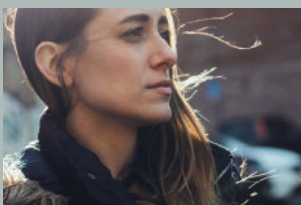
# Domestic + Family Violence Services

We provide support for people impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence, as well as those who want to change harmful behaviour. Our services prioritise safety, dignity and meaningful change, and include group programs, casework and partnerships with health and legal networks.



## **TAKING RESPONSIBILITY – MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAM ^**

A program for men who have used violence in relationships, combining individual casework and an 18-week group, focused on accountability and respect. Free support is also available for affected partners and children.



## **WOMEN'S CHOICE + CHANGE ^**

A supportive, trauma-informed group for women who've experienced emotional, psychological, physical or financial abuse from a partner. Small groups run twice a week for eight weeks, creating a safe space to share, build support and strengthen wellbeing.



## **SUPPORTING RECOVERY ^**

A trauma-informed program for people on the Central Coast and Newcastle impacted by domestic or family violence. Local Care Teams provide tailored support including, counselling, safety planning, advocacy and help with housing, legal and mental health services.



### **DOMESTIC, FAMILY + SEXUAL VIOLENCE LINKER PROGRAMS**

Specialist caseworkers provide trauma-informed support to people disclosing domestic, family or sexual violence in healthcare settings. We connect clients with counselling, housing, legal, financial and health services, and train health staff to recognise abuse and respond with care.

- + **Care + Connect Linker Program** ♦  
For residents of Nepean, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Lithgow and Penrith.
- + **Safe + Healthy Linker Program** ♦  
For residents of the Hunter, New England and Central Coast.



### **FAMILY ADVOCACY SUPPORT SERVICE** ♦

Support for men who have used or been affected by family violence and are involved in court proceedings. We offer safety planning, referrals, and support with housing, legal services and counselling. Available at Family, Circuit and Federal Courts across NSW and by phone.

♦ Funded by Legal Aid NSW.

♦ Funded by Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network.

# Specialised Support Services

We offer trauma-informed support for people affected by institutional care, forced adoption or child sexual abuse in institutional settings. Services include counselling, casework, record tracing, advocacy and practical assistance, delivered in person and online through our specialist Wattle Place centre in Harris Park, and partner programs across NSW. All services are offered free of charge.



## **AFTERCARE RESOURCE CENTRE<sup>^</sup>**

Support for young adults aged 17–24 leaving out-of-home care.

We assist with housing, education, employment, legal needs and life skills to help build confidence and independence.

Available in Blacktown, Central Coast and Parramatta, with phone and online support across NSW.



## **FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIANS SUPPORT SERVICE<sup>^</sup>**

Confidential support for adults who spent time in orphanages, children's homes, institutions or foster care in Australia before 1990. We offer counselling, casework, family tracing, social connection and help accessing records or services.



### **NATIONAL REDRESS SUPPORT SCHEME<sup>^</sup>**

Trauma-informed support for people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse and are considering applying to the National Redress Scheme. We offer guidance from understanding your options, to preparing and submitting your application.



### **FORCED ADOPTIONS SUPPORT SERVICE<sup>^</sup>**

Support for those affected by past forced adoptions, including birth parents, adopted children, or close family members. We help manage the ongoing impacts of these experiences through tailored strategies and counselling.



### **FIND + CONNECT<sup>^</sup>**

Support for people who were placed in institutional or out-of-home care before 1990. We can help locate records, make sense of personal histories and provide connection with care and dignity.

<sup>^</sup> Funded by the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice.  
■ Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

# Workplace + Professional Training

Practical, skills-based workshops for community service providers, small businesses and corporate teams. We focus on communication, mental health and conflict resolution to support safer, more connected and emotionally healthy workplaces.

**“This training gave me the confidence to handle tough conversations with care and clarity. I walked away with practical tools I could use straight away around listening, setting boundaries, and knowing what to say when someone’s struggling. Highly recommended for anyone who supports others as part of their role.”**

**Accidental Counsellor Client**



### **ACCIDENTAL COUNSELLOR**

A half-day workshop to support mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Participants learn how to recognise signs of distress, listen with empathy, respond safely to disclosures, and refer others to appropriate support. Delivered online or in person at your workplace.



### **ACCIDENTAL MEDIATOR**

An interactive half-day workshop that helps staff recognise and respond to interpersonal conflict. Participants build communication skills, learn to de-escalate tension, and foster psychological safety to support a more respectful and resilient workplace culture. Available online or in person across NSW.

# Community Programs

Free, inclusive programs that support wellbeing, learning and social connection across diverse communities. We partner with schools, multicultural and faith-based groups to deliver workshops, social groups and family-focused initiatives – with many programs offered in languages other than English.

**“Thank you for the friendship, encouragement and incredible support this year. The wellbeing of our community has been enhanced by your team’s incredible efforts. I feel very fortunate and privileged to have the opportunity to work with you.”**

**Community Builders Client**



### COMMUNITY BUILDERS<sup>^</sup>

Free programs across Northern Sydney to strengthen family relationships, emotional wellbeing and community connection. Programs include parenting and carer workshops, youth support, and training for community leaders. They help families build practical skills and strengthen communication and confidence.

Programs also support children and young people to thrive at home, school and in the community. Delivered with local partners, including schools and community organisations, services are available in multiple languages across Ryde, Northern Beaches, Hornsby and surrounding areas.

# Group Workshops + Online Learning

We offer a range of evidence-based programs to support learning, personal growth and healthier relationships. Programs are available online, face-to-face and self-paced, making learning accessible and easy to fit into daily life.



## **KIDS IN FOCUS ONLINE**

A self-paced, 75-minute online course that helps parents understand how separation impacts children and how to respond with empathy and care. Evidence-based and easy to complete, it includes a downloadable workbook and is a pre-requisite for Family Dispute Resolution.



## **COUPLES CONNECT**

A self-paced, 10-module online course that helps couples or individuals break negative communication patterns, better understand each other and reconnect. Designed to suit busy schedules and a range of relationship stages, with interactive scenarios and activities throughout.



## **GROUP WORKSHOPS**

Our workshops create a welcoming space to build confidence, strengthen relationships and support emotional wellbeing. With practical tools, real-life strategies and expert guidance, they're designed for all life stages – and offered both online and in person.



#### Group Workshop Key Focus Areas:







- + **Parenting Support**  
Programs like Tuning in to Kids and Tuning in to Teens help parents and carers improve communication, strengthen connection and support children's emotional development.
- + **Support After Separation**  
Workshops guide parents through co-parenting challenges, improving communication and reducing conflict to prioritise children's wellbeing.
- + **Emotional Regulation**  
Programs such as Managing Strong Emotions and Managing Anger offer practical tools to understand and manage intense emotions in everyday life.
- + **Communication Skills**  
Courses help participants build confidence, improve how they express themselves, and strengthen personal and professional relationships.

These workshops are designed to be accessible and practical, providing participants with tools and insights to navigate various life challenges and improve their wellbeing.

# Our Locations



We have centres across New South Wales, and many of our services are also available online – so support is never far away.

- B Bathurst Centre** Wiradjuri Country   
91 Seymour Street, Bathurst, 2795
- B Blacktown Centre** Darug Country    
Level 2, 2 Warrick Lane, Blacktown, 2148
- C Central Coast** Darkinjung Country   
Level 1, 4 Watt Street, Gosford, 2250
- H Hunter Centre** Awabakal Country   
6 Heddon Rd, Broadmeadow, 2292
- I Illawarra Centre** Dharawal Country  
Level 1, 63B Market Street, Wollongong, 2500
- M Macquarie Park** Darug Country   
Level 1, 68 Waterloo Road, Macquarie Park, 2113
- N Northern Beaches Centre** Gai-mariagal Country   
Level 1, 651 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why, 2099
- P Parramatta Centre** Darug Country   
Level 6, 126 Church Street, Parramatta, 2150
- P Penrith Centre** Darug Country   
Level 2, 606 High Street, Penrith, 2750
- S Sydney City Centre** Gadigal Country   
Level 7, 10 Barrack Street, Sydney, 2000
- W Wattle Place Centre** Darug Country  
67 High Street, Harris Park, 2150

-  Family Relationship Centre
-  Children's Contact Service

## OUTREACH LOCATIONS

If none of the above locations work for you, we're also available at a number of **outreach sites**. These are open on specific days, so please get in touch to make an appointment before visiting.

### Outreach Sites Include:

- |          |            |             |          |
|----------|------------|-------------|----------|
| + Cowra  | + Katoomba | + Maitland  | + Mudgee |
| + Forbes | + Lithgow  | + Moss Vale | + Orange |

## Contact Us

Find the right support  
for you or someone you care about.

**1300 364 277**

[relationshipsnsw.org.au](http://relationshipsnsw.org.au)



Scan to book or find  
a service near you.

## About Relationships Australia NSW

Relationships Australia NSW is a non-profit organisation providing relationship support services to individuals, couples and families across NSW.

We support people to navigate relationship challenges, strengthen communication and build healthier connections.

**WE'RE RELATIONSHIP PEOPLE**

**WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER**