

Minister sets out Welsh Government's approach to parental alienation

There are occasions when one parent behaves in a way which creates anxiety in the child, so that it appears the child is opposed to living with or spending time with the other parent. This is often referred to as 'parental alienation'.

The Welsh Government recognises parental separation affects many children and their families. Where it is handled well, the adverse impact on children is minimised.

To address this, the Welsh Government continues to place a firm focus on positive parenting and the provision of parenting support services are an integral part of the Families First and Flying Start programmes. Funding has been made available to up-skill the family support workforce, so they are better able to embed inter-parental support in their early intervention services for families.

Later today, the Minister will appear before the National Assembly for Wales' Petitions Committee, where he will respond to calls that the Welsh Government should take specific actions to reduce the impact of parental alienation on children and their families.

Huw Irranca-Davies said:

"The Welsh Government believes a child is entitled to a meaningful relationship with both parents following family separation where it is safe and in the child's best interests. However, I am clear the welfare of the child should always be at the centre of our concerns.

"We recognise some parents can behave in a way that alienates the other from their child's life, and that these behaviours can have a significant adverse impact on the emotional well-being of the child.

"We view parental alienation not as a syndrome or a classification, but as a set of behaviours. The most important issue for us is that these behaviours, when they occur, are appropriately dealt with using our family and parenting support programmes and the existing regulatory and legal frameworks."