

Being Parents First

“Relationships are fundamentally important if people are to change

Prison reform expert Lord Farmer, 2017



relationships

employment

education

Lord Farmer also said that family work must be “the third leg of the stool that brings stability and structure to prisoners’ lives, particularly when they leave prison”. Leading relationships charity Relate is putting this into action: Being Parents First is a new government-funded programme offering counselling to recently-released parents and their partner or ex-partner. It supports rehabilitation by strengthening family relationships and helping people to settle back into community life.

By helping parents to improve communication skills and reduce conflict, the programme ultimately supports children and young people’s education, mental health and life chances. This is crucial in tackling the intergenerational cycle of offending.

Who’s eligible?

Anyone who’s been released from prison in the last six months, has at least one child aged between five and 16 and lives in East Sussex or Kent can access the programme. Domestic abuse can’t be an issue and ex-prisoners’ convictions must not be of a sexual nature.

What does the programme offer?

Relate counsellors will provide expert, non-judgemental support that changes lives. Ex-prisoners and their partner or ex-partner and children will attend an initial assessment together, followed by six to eight counselling sessions for just the parents. There will then be a final assessment with both the parents and children. The success of the programme will be measured by the impact those sessions have on the children’s wellbeing and behaviour. Both parents will receive a certificate of completion and the children will receive ‘thumbs up’ stickers.



Relate is the leading relationships charity. We offer counselling, information, mediation and support to individuals, couples and families of all backgrounds and sexualities. **Last year we helped more than two million people.**

How to make a referral

The Probation Service, charities, housing associations and other agencies working with ex-prisoners can refer people to the service. In all cases the client's Probation Officer will need to approve the referral.



**Fill in
online form**



**Short phone
questionnaire**



**Visit local
Relate Centre**



**Attend 6-8
counselling sessions**



**Final
appointment**



**Certificate
of completion**

So what's next?

STEP 1

Fill in the online form:

relate.org.uk/being-parents-first

STEP 2

We'll call the client to go through a short questionnaire

STEP 3

They'll talk to us at a local Relate Centre with their partner or ex-partner and children

STEP 4

The parents will then have six to eight counselling sessions at the Centre or via video

STEP 5

Parents and children will attend a final appointment

STEP 6

Certificates of completion will be given to parents, and children will get stickers

Alternatively get in touch with us to find out more about the programme on **0300 003 0270** or **beingparentsfirst@relate.org.uk**