Parental Acrimony Scale Guidance

The Parental Acrimony Scale (Emery, 1982) measures the levels of Acrimony (emotional hostility) between separated parents on a range of issues. This tool was condensed and refined by (Rahimullah, 2020) into a shortened screening tool.

Screening should be completed by both sets of parents and can help you as a practitioner determine the levels of acrimony from both parents, this will help in determining whether there is awareness of an issue from both parents.

In addition to individual scores the assessment provides you an overall score, the higher this score the higher the likelihood that there is conflict present. A score **21 or above** is considered the cut off point suggesting the need for support. If screening indicates that support would be beneficial then discuss this sensitively with parents focusing on the content of their acrimony rather than the scores.

Professional judgement should be used when offering an intervention as these should be responsive to the needs of the parents. Potential interventions can include Relationship counselling, OnePlusOne, Within My Reach and the SIPCO programme if one parent refuses to engage with support consideration should still be given in offering an intervention to the willing parent.

This tool is not suitable for use with separated couples where there has been a history of domestic abuse.

If you have any questions regarding this tool please speak to your local School link worker or contact your Reducing Parental Conflict Coordinator at relationshipsmatter@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

To access a standalone copy of the assessment tool that you can easily provide to parents please download it out from here https://docs.google.com/document/d/15nPbZLy1AqPhYd0RJTicIsuM0GleTQNC/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=109205504046504026728&rtpof=true&sd=true