

Frequently Asked Questions: Making Step Families Work

What is the purpose of this program?

The program is designed to support couples with children from previous relationships that are forming blended (step) families with new partners. This program is suitable for couples in the initial or ongoing stages of creating blended families that wish to seek support, tips and strategies to support their families' transition.

How long is the program and is it offered face-to-face or online?

This program takes place over four weeks with two-hour sessions held weekly.

How many participants are in each group?

The group is capped at 10 participants.

What topics are covered?

The program explores several topics around step-families including grief and loss, origins of step-families and debunking myths, identifying expectations for partners and children, defining roles and new/existing dynamics, learning healthy communication skills, creating new step-family rituals to enhance emotional connection, as well as the importance of self-care.

Who can attend?

The program is open to parents/caregivers of children and teenagers. This program accepts both individuals and couples into the program.

Are programs offered online or face to face?

This program is currently offered online via Zoom. Participants need to have access to a device such as a laptop/computer or tablet, stable internet connection, and be able to have privacy for the duration of the session (no children or other adults in the same room and participants should use headphones).

Smartphones are not recommended as the screens are too small to adequately see the slides, facilitator, and other participants.

How do the sessions work?

The sessions will be a combination of presentations via PowerPoint, online videos, group discussions and skills practice. Participants will be encouraged to practice skills in-between sessions, and report back to the group.

Are couples expected to discuss personal issues?

Participants are expected to participate in group discussions and skills practice, but they only share what they feel comfortable with. We set group agreements at the start of the program to ensure participants feel safe to share and that they are given a confidential and respectful space in which to do so.

How do you enrol?

Participants can enrol via our website or by contacting us on 1300 543 396. All participants are required to attend an intake appointment prior to the program start date to ensure this is the correct program for their needs, and to answer any questions about the program.

During the intake assessment, participants will be asked a series of questions about their current circumstances, which they are expected to answer to ensure their suitability for the program. Intake appointments are conducted by phone with the program facilitator or with one of our counsellors (depending on availability) and are for 45-60 minutes.

Do you get a certificate at the end?

Yes. Participants who attend all four sessions will receive a Certificate of Completion. If a session is missed, participants will receive a Certificate of Participation with the number of sessions completed/attended. Participants who are court-ordered will need to attend every session or provide a medical certificate to explain their absence to the court. We do not offer make-up sessions for this program.

Does Relationship Matters provide a report for court at the end?

No. Participants may provide a copy of their Certificate, but we do not provide any other information on participation.

What is the cost of the program?

The cost of this program is \$200 for individuals and \$350 for couples. For individuals, please call our reception team on 1300 543 396 to purchase tickets at the appropriate rate. Couples can purchase tickets through the website.

For more information visit:

<https://relationshipmatters.com.au/programs/making-step-families-work-group-session/>