



relate
the relationship people



Helping Relationships to Survive the Credit Crunch

Launch of a new Partnership Project between Parentline Plus, Relate Bedfordshire & Luton and Pictons Solicitors

MAY 2009

Many families who have already experienced the emotional impact of the credit crunch caused by redundancies, relationship difficulties and financial hardship have had to reassess their lives and are now looking for ways of improving on their current situation.

In response to this growing need for expert advice, Relate, Parentline Plus and Pictons Solicitors have come together in partnership to provide support to families across Luton. The Partnership Project is designed to offer an initial point of contact coupled with valuable advice and, if necessary, longer term guidance and assistance.

Figures released by Relate on 27 February reveal that 66% of Relate Centres across the country have seen an increase in demand for their services as clients feel the impact of the recession. Parentline Plus has also seen a leap in the number of calls from adults who have rung with concerns over finances, mental health and divorce and separation [1].

Marcus Muir, the Project Leader for Parentline Plus, said: "It is vital that accessible services are there for local parents. By working together on this Partnership Project, Relate and Parentline Plus will be able to support parents who are facing these challenging circumstances."

Further Relate research shows that client impact of the recession is currently particularly acute in the South-East and Midlands [2]. At such times of emotional turmoil, with potentially damaging consequences for both children and adults in the family, it is vital that support is given to local families. For couples that are divorcing, there may be the option of a collaborative approach.

Relate Relationship Counsellor, Denise Knowles, advises people who are facing these difficulties to:

- remember there are things you can do straight away if you experiencing money problems – talk about the reality of the situation. Acknowledge that your relationship is being squeezed by outside pressures and discuss how you can manage this as a couple. For example, you may need to make some lifestyle choices and if your children are old enough explain the situation to them so they can understand. Also seek independent financial advice
- recognise that as a family and a couple you can have fun together without spending money –going for walks, or have special nights in – where you get dressed up as if you are going out but just stay-in and have a simple meal together
- invest time in building up your 'emotional bank balance' by spending more time together. Perhaps instead of putting on the telly, play a board game together, or put some music on and chat
- be really open with each other, this isn't the time to have financial secrets. Be honest so you can share the problems and talk them through.

The Partnership Project will be launched on 8 May at Pictons Solicitors office on Dunstable Road, Luton. Following the launch, Relate will be offering relationship counselling sessions in a number of venues across Luton. To book an initial consultation appointment please call **Relate on 01234 356350**.

Pictons Solicitors will also be offering free 30 minute consultation sessions for anybody seeking legal advice in respect of their marriage. **To book your free consultation between 10am and 4pm Monday 11th – Friday 15th May call 01582 870 880.**

For further support, **Parentline's free confidential helpline service 0808 800 2222** offers parents in crisis 24 hour support and a referral into their individual telephone support service. In addition the Parentline Plus website www.parentlineplus.org.uk provides a wide range of support and information, including community sites, message boards, telephone groups, and links to relevant organisations and specialised Agencies.

[Click here for Pictons Family Team](#)