



Landeshauptstadt  
München  
**Sozialreferat**  
Stadtjugendamt

# Separation and divorce

A brochure for parents



**Wir sind München**  
für ein soziales Miteinander

Reihe Erziehungsfragen



**Dear parents, dear mothers, dear fathers,**

Separation and divorce are times of uncertainty. You will be faced with many questions and issues that are new to you, and with institutions and procedures that you may not yet be familiar with.

This brochure is intended to support you throughout this critical situation. It contains important information about the different phases of a separation and through to a new start. You will find useful recommendations to support you in your parenting following separation as well as further answers, offers and resources to any questions you may have.

Don't be shy and, when necessary, please contact one of the above-mentioned offices so that you can find a good way to parenting together while meeting your child's needs and interests.

I hope that this brochure is a source of help and support to you!

**Dorothee Schiwy**

Head of Social Services

The gender star\* makes gender diversity visible and thus designates not only girls\*, women\*, boys\* and men\*, but also trans\* and inter\*, as well as people of different gender identities.

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## Dear parents, dear mothers, dear fathers!

### Staying parents – despite separation and divorce

When parents go through separation or divorce, this means a far-reaching adjustment in the lives of all mothers, fathers and children. Nearly every separation is associated with strong emotions. Pain, anger, sadness, a sense of injury, feelings of disappointment or abandonment occur for all those involved and, especially for the children. After all, children are not only equally affected by relationship conflicts, but are often helpless when faced by them. They simply have to accept the fact that their parents are separating, which is something no child really wants. Every child perceives its family as “unique”. It gives them a sense of security and safety – despite their parents’ quarrels and conflicts. During and after a separation **mothers and fathers bear a special responsibility for their child.**

However, in this situation – itself so crisis-ridden for parents – it is hard not to lose sight of the child’s needs. We would, therefore, like to offer you some assistance and information in this brochure. If

parents separate, it’s not possible to generalise when safeguarding the child’s welfare. Every family is different and every child is unique. Individual solutions are, therefore, required for each instance of separation. We would like to offer support in developing solutions and we hope that you, as parents, will find your own way **to separate as a couple while still remaining responsible parents.**

### How children react to the separation of their parents

Usually, children whose parents go through separation or divorce go through a difficult adjustment period in an attempt to adjust to the new living arrangements. But then they no longer differ fundamentally from their peers in terms of their behaviour and experience. Some children may even feel better following a separation if their parents’ cohabitation was characterised by protracted and daily quarrels. This depends to a great extent on one circumstance:

**The parents have succeeded in settling their conflicts within a reasonable period of time after the separation/divorce and, in their roles as mother and father,**

***do not act against one another but together.*** If this is not successful, then girls\* and boys\* have a much harder time coping with their parents' separation.

The experience of separation is accompanied by pain and loss for every child, but ***how the individual child will cope with this depends crucially on the behaviour of both parents.***

Every child reacts to the separation of their parents individually. The child's personality, the family situation and the behaviour of the adults all play crucial roles in this process.

### **Everything different? What happens in the different phases of your separation?**

Every separation is different – some couples have been carrying around their doubts for a while, whereas others suddenly leave the relationship without a moment's notice.

Or one of the two parents discovers that their partner has chosen someone else and will soon be living in a new relationship. Everything is different – with many new things along the way!

The question is: What challenges do you and your child face during the various stages of separation? How can the problems be minimized for you and your child, and when?

To this end, counselling centres offer support in the form of meetings and group offers for you and your child. You alone can decide whether or not you want to accept such an offer of support.

### **Times of doubt**

Perhaps, you are thinking about going through with a separation, but are not yet sure. Your mood fluctuates between hope and resignation. For some families, this period is characterised by intense conflict. The future seems uncertain and only one thing is clear: A separation will bring about big changes in your life. Your child is also affected by these tensions and it is not surprising if he or she reacts in an uncertain or irritable manner.

## **What can I do?**

Your ambivalent feelings and thoughts of separation are a warning signal for your relationship, which require you to respond. A consultation could help you.

You can arrange the consultation alone or together with your partner.

As to which of the two options would be better for your relationship cannot be said in general terms and depends largely on your particular situation and the willingness of your partner to cooperate. In any case, the goal after counselling is either to feel more satisfied with the relationship or to have gained enough clarity to understand why a separation is inevitable.

## **How can I support my child now?**

- Do not argue in front of your child.
- Tell your child that they (your child or children) are not the reason for the situation.
- Do not speak ill of the other parent to the child, even if you believe you have good reason to do so.

- Consider your child and ask yourself the following questions:
  - How is my child doing?
  - What does my child need?
  - What can I do to relieve the burden on my child?

## **The separation and divorce phase**

If one or both partners no longer see(s) any possibility of improving the relationship, separation usually occurs. The phase of separation usually lasts for a period of time and is often perceived as particularly stressful. Life plans and everyday structures that were believed to be secure suddenly dissolve. Emotions such as sadness, anger and despair can occur with unusual intensity, even if the separation is amicable.

You may now have to look for a new home, divide up previously shared items, make arrangements regarding your finances, in general, and especially maintenance payments. A plan for caring for your child must be developed. You may also have appointments with lawyers and courts. All this costs a

lot of energy. You may feel increasingly drained and exhausted. But, for the first time, you may also feel a sense of relief and hope.

### **What can I do?**

It is important to let your child know once you have decided to separate. During the time when you are separating as a couple, both of you as parents face challenges in taking care of your child, to alleviate their fears and to provide them with a sense of orientation



### **How can I support my child now?**

- Talk to your child together. Explain to them that they are breaking up as a couple, but not as parents. Convey to your child that you are still there as parents and that you love your child.
- Ensure that you are well-prepared for how you will communicate your separation to your child in a suitable, age-appropriate way. Younger children, for example, often find it easier to understand the separation if you use a picture book, images or characters.
- Alleviate your child's fears and dispel any possible worry that the child might be in any way to blame for the separation.
- Explain what your daily life together will soon look like – what will change, but also what will remain the same.
- If your child asks you a question to which you do not yet have an answer, be honest and admit it openly. Always assure your child that it is your job as a parent to find the answer – and that you will certainly succeed.

**Good to know:** This phase is particularly difficult because you are now negotiating how you want to manage your parenthood going forward. Meeting these challenges when making the transition to a new form of parenthood. If you feel that you are overwhelmed, please seek assistance in the form of counselling or mediation.

### **The phase after separation and the new beginning**

You have now found some initial solutions to what your parenthood will look like going forward, and how you will care for your child. Nevertheless, that sense of uncertainty has not disappeared: Will all this work? Will we manage to interact in future exclusively on a parent level? Will we still be able to talk to each other and discuss common solutions for our child? Will we be able to avoid falling back into old behavioural patterns in the presence of the child?

### **What can I do?**

The process of re-orientation needs time and space. Allow both! After all, you now have to process all the feelings that have changed your

family's life. But do not put yourself or your child under any pressure. Not every intense or conspicuous reaction of your child is a result of your behaviour as parents. Your child is busy processing a change in their life.

### **How can I support my child now?**

- Make sure you keep the agreements with the other parent.
- Do not use your child as a scout or messenger.
- Avoid anything that might make your child feel that they should ally with one parent against the other.
- Take a relaxed approach to your new everyday life with your child by taking it one day at a time and making the processes involved as accommodating as possible for your child.
- Be open and emotionally available: Take your time, listen to your child and ask questions.

**Good to know:** Children's development proceeds in phases. Above all, the desire for autonomy will grow continuously with increasing age.



If you are aware of this, you will find it easier to deal with your child's striving for autonomy. Specifically, this may mean that you will have to change your form of contact with them from time to time. The older your child becomes, the more important it will be to include them when making arrangements.

### **New partnerships and patchwork families**

Probably, you will enter into a new relationship at some point. This can be quick or take longer – both possibilities are fine. Try not to evaluate the life chosen by the other parent. Some people want to start a new partnership again quickly following a separation, while others find this unimaginable. Sometimes, a new love affair was the trigger for the separation, so that this new relationship follows on seamlessly from the old one. Whenever a new partnership materialises: A new beginning is now in sight. You gain distance from your former relationship and the processing of what you have gone through appears easier. You feel more stable and balanced

again and enjoy the new experience of closeness and intimacy. Often, a new relationship is initially experienced separately from your parental role. The children are not yet involved, and are often not even told.

If a new relationship becomes stable, joint plans for the future are forged – but new questions (and sometimes even concerns) may also arise. Most of these are likely to relate to your child and their place in the new relationship dynamic.



Your new partner may also have children in their household. Questions and uncertainties may then also arise.

### **What can I do?**

Your child is once again going through a big change. The fact that their mother or father is in a new relationship (with or without other children) is unlikely to be a source of un-troubled joy. Perhaps your child will react to this news rather cautiously – or anywhere from suspicious to dismissive. Accept this! This is because, for your child, your new relationship means that they have to say goodbye to (what is probably) the secret hope that their parents could potentially get back together again.

### **How can I support my child now?**

- Give your child the answers to all their questions.
- Help your child to navigate this new situation: What does your new partnership mean for everyday life? Is your new partner also allowed to permit or forbid something for me? How will mum or dad continue to be

there for me? Will the other child live with us? Do I have to share “everything” now? Is the other child now also a member of our family?

- It is essential that you discuss this with the other parent so that your child receives the same message from both sides.

**Good to know:** Your child should not play the role of messenger, especially not when relationship matters are concerned. It is essential that you announce it yourself that you are living in a new partnership. Do not turn your child into the messenger!

## What can I expect?

In the case of separation and divorce, many areas require new rules and dividing up. These include, for example, housing, a maintenance settlement or the division of assets. In this brochure, we focus on those areas that directly affect children and which must be sorted out by parents in every separation and divorce where children are involved. These relate to questions of custody, care, contact and maintenance.

**Good to know:** The “Beratungshilfegesetz” (Legal Aid Act) enables all people with no or only a small amount of income (or asset base) to be advised and represented by independently chosen lawyers for a small contribution, in order to exercise their rights outside of court proceedings.

All additional costs arising from the lawyer’s work are covered by the state treasury. You are free to either contact a lawyer of your choice directly and later submit the application for legal aid to the court via this lawyer, or you

can initially contact the **Amtsgericht München, Abteilung Beratungshilfe (Munich Local Court, Legal Aid Department)** to submit an application for **the granting of legal aid**. With the approval of an application for legal aid, a **certificate of entitlement** will be issued. This is then submitted to the legal adviser of your choice.

## Joint custody

Irrespective of which parent the child will live with (and to what extent), both parents usually receive and retain joint custody in the event of divorce. If one of the parents claims sole custody of the child, this must be applied for and justified at the family court. Even unmarried couples, who have applied for joint custody of their child by means of a corresponding declaration to the Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) may, in principle, retain joint custody after a separation.

**Joint custody means that you both continue to make all important decisions concerning the child together and share the responsibility as parents.**

To this end, both of you must have

the opportunity to ascertain your child's situation (for example, through development discussions in kindergarten or parent-teacher conferences at school).

However, shared parental care does not mean that both parents share all care, custody and education absolutely equally, nor does it mean that the agreement of the other party must be obtained for each and every decision. ***The parent with whom the child lives can manage the affairs of daily life on their own***, for example, leisure activities, visits to the doctor or private tutoring.

***Decisions of "considerable importance" must be made by way of mutual agreement between both parents***; these include, for example, the choice of school education, questions about religious affiliation and medical interventions. Shared custody requires a greater degree of coordination and cooperation than sole custody. In order for this to succeed, it is essential that you trust each other in your role as parents, even if you handle certain things differently. ***Especially during the early days*** it is helpful

to make precise arrangements and to take your time when trying out new setups. Not everything will run smoothly from the beginning and some things that sounded good in theory may prove to be unfeasible in day-to-day life. Shared parental responsibility should never amount to controlling the other parent or determining how the other must behave towards the child. That would only result in a power struggle as a couple at the parental level. The one losing out would be your child. The better you work together as parents, the more certain your child can be that they can love both parents and be loved by both.



If a parent has some **important reasons** that oppose joint custody, they may submit an **application to the family court** requesting a change in custody. Reasons can be, for example,

- that the child's welfare is at risk with one parent for various reasons.
- that one of the parents has chosen to waive custody.

Children from the age of 14 may object to the parental custody applied for.

**Good to know:** Here, too, you can get advice and support at one of the Beratungsstellen (advice centres) or directly from the Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) at your local Sozialbürgerhaus (Citizens' Centre) and at the Stadtjugendamt (municipal youth welfare office).

## Custody models

The most important decision you have to make together is which parent your child should live with and for what amounts of time. It is good for everyone involved if this is not the subject of argument, because nothing is worse for a child

than being used as "leverage" during a separation. Children do not count among the "possessions". However even if you have found an amicable solution, that does not mean that it will not cause pain. The wounds can perhaps heal better and faster for parents and children if an amicable agreement can be reached. A child whose parents try to win them over to one or the other parent will find themselves in a hopeless situation: No matter which side the child chooses, it will simultaneously be deciding against the other. Sometimes, the parents' fear of losing the child for themselves is the root cause of this – and this fear often leads to intense conflicts.

Parents who can reassure each other that nobody wants to take the child away from the other side have created a good basis for further agreements for the wellbeing of their child. If the girl\* or boy\* lives primarily with one parent after a separation, this is referred to as the **residence model**. If, after a separation, the child spends half the time with both parents, or even approximately the same amount of time with both parents, this is

known as the **rotation model**, or even the parity, shuttle or double residence model. With the so-called **nest model** the child lives in the previously shared apartment and the parents take it in turns moving in with the child. In this model, there can be up to three households: one apartment for the child/children and one for each parent.

### Arranging contact

Irrespective of how parental custody is determined, the child has, in principle, a right of contact with each of the two parents. Likewise, each parent is entitled (and also obligated) to have contact with the child. Contact refers to the time spent with the parent with whom the child is not residing. The arrangements made should take into account the age of the child, and any agreements reached must be based on the needs and options available to all parties involved, while the best interests of the child remain paramount. Reliability and regularity are particularly important in the initial period. This provides support and a basis for orientation – for the child, but also for the adults, especially if there

is still a conflict. Nevertheless, every arrangement must be given some time to work and parents should give priority to the needs of the child. The older the child, the more natural it should become to involve them in decisions regarding arranging contact. The parent who is visited by the child should also be aware that young people often find it difficult to plan over a longer period of time and that peers are becoming increasingly important for your child. This may be a source of disappointment for you – but all mothers and fathers experience this, whether they live separately or not.

For the parent who picks up their child, the first rule is: punctuality and reliability! Your child is waiting for you and will be disappointed if you do not appear at the agreed time. If you do not stick to the agreed times, your child will think that you do not care. You may find meeting the other parent uncomfortable, but if you both make an effort, you may gradually find a way to treat each other with respect as adults.

## **What does right of contact entail?**

- Personal contact
- Contact by telephone, text message, messenger services, email and post
- The right to give presents to the child
- The right to information about the child's personal circumstances (pursuant to section 1686 German Civil Code [BGB])

## **What is meant by the term “Umgangspflicht” (“obligatory contact”)?**

- Both parents must do everything in their power to promote a good relationship.
- Both parents are required to find a common and mutually acceptable form of contact.
- The needs and interests of the child are always decisive.
- In principle, the parent with a right of contact must bear the costs of bringing and fetching the child.
- If you have right of contact and receive Arbeitslosengeld II (unemployment benefit II), your travel costs can, within certain limits, be claimed from the Job-

center (Job Centre) under additional requirements in accordance with section 21 (6) Social Security Code (SGB) II.

- If parents are unable to find an amicable solution, the family court can also ultimately decide, upon application, how contact should be organised in future.

As a rule, grandparents, siblings and close relatives of the child who bear (or have borne) actual responsibility for the child also have the right to contact.

**Good to know:** Don't worry if you do not find the right model straight away, or if, after a while, you notice that the model you originally wanted simply does not work. This is quite normal! Sometimes it takes time to find a solution that is fair to all involved. Interim solutions may also be possible and appropriate. But, in general, every arrangement must be reviewed from time to time and adapted to the age and needs of the child.

If you are uncertain or at a loss, please ask for help from the advice centres when making a decision.

## kindwärts – Unterstützung für Trennungsfamilien

If your child lives far away after separation, it is not always easy to maintain close contact.

**kindwärts** finds parents following a separation or divorce **nationwide accommodation possibilities** with volunteer hosts\*, as well as a place for child-friendly interaction. Parents pay a small fee for using the resources.

Membership can be cancelled monthly.

You can find out more by calling the free phone number:

0151 19026387 or by visiting

[welcome-online.de/kindwaerts](https://www.welcome-online.de/kindwaerts)

## Child maintenance

Be aware that the topic of maintenance can become a contentious issue. The differences usually begin with the separation – especially when it comes to child maintenance (sections 1601 et seq. German Civil Code [BGB]). The most important details are as follows:

- ***In principle, both parents are liable to pay maintenance for a child they have together, so both must provide a form of maintenance.***
- The parent who looks after the child predominantly in their own household already fulfils their maintenance obligation by providing food, lodging and care, as well as by raising the child.
- The other parent, who looks after the child less often, has to pay cash maintenance.
- Even in the case of children who live under the parity rotation model, in which the parents look after the child for roughly equal proportions of time and where each bears responsibility to roughly the same extent, the obligation to provide cash maintenance may still apply. The amount of maintenance depends on the parents' respective income and, in the case of joint custody, this can be determined by legal counsel, if desired.
- Children of adult age also have, under certain circumstances, the right to assert a claim for maintenance.



As a rule, the amount of child support is based on the so-called “Düsseldorfer Tabelle”, which you can find, for example, on the website of the Düsseldorf Higher Regional Court ([olg-duesseldorf.nrw.de](http://olg-duesseldorf.nrw.de)). This maintenance guideline covers normal, foreseeable needs and takes account of the parents’ income, their assets and their life circumstances.

**Good to know:** If the other parent is unable or unwilling to pay maintenance, you can apply for an “Unterhaltsvorschuss” (UVG) (advance on maintenance) from the Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) or one of the key Sozialbürgerhäuser (Citizens’ Centres). [muenchen.de/uvv](http://muenchen.de/uvv)

### Who else provides advice on maintenance issues?

The specialist service “Beistandschaft” (assistance) provided by the Stadtjugendamt (City Youth Welfare Office) advises single parents free of charge on how to establish paternity and on their child’s claim to maintenance. As a single parent with a small child, you can also obtain advice

here on your own maintenance claims if you were (or are) not married to the other parent. Young adults are entitled to advice and support in asserting maintenance and maintenance compensation claims against their parents until their 21st birthday.

### What is “Beistandschaft” (assistance)?

**This assistance by the Stadtjugendamt (City Youth Welfare Office) supports you in establishing paternity and in the assertion of your child’s maintenance claims.** To facilitate the collection of child maintenance, this department will contact the



parent responsible for maintenance.

Your child's maintenance claim will then be calculated. Should it be necessary, this department will represent your child's interests in court proceedings.

You can apply in writing to the Stadtjugendamt (City Youth Welfare Office) for assistance from this department,

- if you have sole custody, or
- if you have joint custody and your child lives predominantly with you.

***Receiving this assistance is free of charge.***

Parental custody is not affected by this provision of assistance. You may terminate this assistance at any time by way of written notice.

You can find more information about this form of assistance under "Custody and maintenance" at: [muenchen.de/jugendamt](http://muenchen.de/jugendamt)

## **Recommendations for your parenthood following a separation**

Children still need reliable parents following a separation – as well as their care and protection. In order to put as little strain as possible on your child when moving between you and the other parent, you should pay close attention to the following aspects:

- Your child needs a strong bond and relationship with both parents, and experiences both in its own, unique way.
- As a parent, you should be willing to cooperate and communicate as reliably as possible with the other parent regarding your child's care and upbringing.
- Please treat each other with respect.
- Support one another in parenthood: Respect the rules and habits of the other, even if they do not correspond to your own ideas. In this way, you will promote your child's relationship with the other parent.
- Feelings of guilt towards your child can sometimes lead you to spoil him or her to an excessive

degree. However, this only improves the situation in the short-term and at most to a superficial degree (if at all). Remain authentic and reliable for your child. Boundaries offer security.

### **When your child comes back from the other parent**

This is often a critical situation. The parent who brings their child back is sad because they will now not see their child for a long time, while the other parent experiences the child's pain about leaving their father or mother. Nevertheless, it is better for the child to be brought back to the other parent's home and for the parents to be able to talk briefly about how things went. ***The parent bringing the child back should under no circumstances "sneak away", but deliberately say goodbye.*** In order to better process this transition, it is often helpful for children to create ritualised procedures to begin each return. ***Show interest in what your child has been up to, just listen to them without commenting or judging.***

### **The time with the child: Everyday life is good**

Think about what you would like to do together without scheduling every minute for one thing or the other. ***It is important for your child to experience everyday situations with both parents.*** Allow them enough time to arrive and settle down at home. Especially in the early days, and, in particular, when your child is still young, they may first have to adjust to you and the new environment in order to feel at home. ***For younger children, it can be helpful to introduce a re-orientation ritual to start each new arrival:*** Reading a story, drinking cocoa together or a simple joint activity that has a calming effect. Then you can plan how you want to spend your time together and clarify what needs to be done, such as schoolwork or everyday chores like clearing the table. ***What is more important than any exciting programme are conversations in which you show your child that you are actively involved in their everyday life*** (but without "asking", for example about the other parent). For a functioning parent-child relationship, it is essential to talk to each other,

but also to set boundaries and deal with conflicts. It goes without saying that your child should have their own room or corner and their own bed in your home, as well as being allowed to invite their friends to your home. The older your child is, the more you should involve them in planning their time together. Not every idea can be implemented, but it is also much more important to work out something together.

Even the farewell needs some preparation. You should tell your child at least one hour in advance that the time you are spending together is coming to an end. This allows them to adjust to it and to slowly say goodbye to the toys, the place and the situation as a whole.

***You can download an APP at [getrennt-gemeinsam.de](https://getrennt-gemeinsam.de) that supports you as parents in organizing contact.***

## **Separation and divorce: Tasks of the Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office)**

The Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) is the authority responsible for children, young people and families and assumes tasks aimed at the protection and development of children and young people. In Munich, this task is carried out by the Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) in the dedicated Sozialbürgerhaus (Citizens' Centre).



### **Advisory services by the Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) / the Bezirkssozialarbeit (District Social Services)**

In the event of a divorce, the family court will forward your data to the competent Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office). The Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) will then send you a letter with an offer of advice. The advice is free of charge. So you are welcome to accept the offer, or not. Enclosed in this letter, you will also receive the **Guide to parental care and contact** with useful addresses and points of contact in Munich.

The advice services offered by the Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) are aimed at “all mothers and fathers who have to care for (or actually care for) a child or young person” (section 17 [1] German Social Code [SGB VIII]).

In the event of a separation or divorce, it has the task (according to sections 17, 18 German Social Code [SGB VIII]) of supporting parents in fulfilling their responsibility in the context of custody and thus promoting the welfare of

the child. The aim is to keep both parents present for the child.

- The advice is free-of-charge and issued on a voluntary basis.
- It is subject to professional secrecy and social data protection.

As a rule, Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) refers you to the support and advice services offered by the Munich advice centres and provides you with additional addresses and points of contact so that you can have your questions about custody, contact and maintenance claims answered. You can find your local Sozialbürgerhaus (Citizens' Centre) at: [muenchen.de/sbh](https://muenchen.de/sbh)

### **Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) and family court proceedings**

If your ideas and those of the other parent are so polarised that you cannot reach an amicable agreement regarding custody, residence and/or contact, you can turn to the family court and request that it take a decision. However, you should always try to settle your differences out of court first. Only if that fails does the court determine,

for example,

- who receives custody,
- where the child will stay in the future,
- how often (and under what circumstances) the child can see its parents.



### **How does such a procedure work?**

The Jugendamt (Youth Welfare Office) has the statutory mandate to participate in family court proceedings concerning parental custody or contact. In Munich, this is done by the Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services). For this purpose, the team members talk in detail with both parents and the child/children (usually from the age of 4). They often also carry out home visits to get an impression of the living situation for everyone involved. They then draw up a socio-educational opinion and a recommendation for the court, but also point out assistance and support options for both children and parents. These documents form the basis for the decision by the family court.

The family court can speed up and simplify proceedings in appropriate cases. In this case, the hearing will take place within four weeks. In accelerated proceedings, the Bezirkssozialarbeit (district social services) only presents its findings verbally. With the parents' consent, an advice centre can also be invited to the hearing. If no amicable solu-

tion can be found at the hearing, the family court asks the parents to attend a Beratungsstelle (advice centre). This supports you in finding a solution yourself. Only if this ends without success does the family court then make a decision.

### **Support and advice offers: What aid is available for parents, children and young people?**

You will no doubt feel a sense of loneliness and helplessness from time to time during the first few months. Do not shy away from seeking help and support, including professional advice. In Munich, you have access to a wide range of advice and points of contact.

**The network of Munich's parenting advice centres** is an association of municipal, church and independent advice centres, each of which offers parents, children and young people advice free of charge. These advice centres are distributed throughout the city, so that the distances you are required to travel to receive the respective advice and support are short.

**The parenting advice centres** offer parents, children and young people advice free-of-charge. You can also receive advice and support from the **marriage, family and life advice centres (Ehe-, Familien- und Lebensberatungsstellen – efl)**. A socially acceptable form of cost sharing (donation) is charged for their advice, which is based on the income and family situation in question.

There are also **special advice centres focusing on separation and divorce**. These are:

- TuSch – Trennung und Scheidung - Frauen für Frauen e.V.
- IETE – Intakte Elternschaft trotz Trennung/Scheidung
- VAMV – Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter e.V. Ortsverband München
- Familien-Notruf München e.V.

All advice centres can provide you with a wide range of advice and support in all phases of separation. Should it be necessary or useful, the advice sessions can take place with the involvement of your children.

**Good to know:** The basis for any advice session is the same for all institutions. A denominational advice centre will also provide you with neutral support regarding all questions on separation and divorce. Appointments will be allocated upon telephone registration.

## How can mothers and fathers find advice?

### Personal

At an advice centre, you can seek advice individually as a mother or father, together as a couple or as a whole family. If adolescents or young adults wish to seek advice on their own, this is also possible without the consent of their parents. The contents of the advice session are confidential. The counsellors are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

### Group offers

In addition to individual advice, there are also topic-specific and non-topic-specific group offers for parents, children and young people. The time frame of each group can vary, both in terms of the length of the individual group meetings and

their number. You can find an overview of the current offers at: [erziehungsberatung-muenchen.de](http://erziehungsberatung-muenchen.de)

### Parent group training “Kinder im Blick” (“Children in focus”)

“Kinder im Blick” (“Children in focus”) is aimed at separated parents (or those already divorced) with children aged three and over. The training programme was developed in cooperation between the LMU Munich and the Familien-Notruf München. In addition to the child’s welfare, the focus of “Kinder im Blick” is on the child’s own personal situation, as well as communication with the other parent with a view to establishing constructive cooperation.

The “Kinder im Blick” programme can take place with a maximum of nine other parents. Each parent attends a separate group – so they take part in the training separately. You can find additional information and all Munich advice centres offering this service at:

[kinderimblick.de](http://kinderimblick.de)

### Anonymous telephone advice

Free telephone advice is available for adults, children and adolescents. The telephone advice is



provided anonymously. The advantage to you is that, if you are unsure, this allows you to see how a consultation session works. The call can be ended at any time.

### **Online counselling**

One easy-access offer is the online consultation, which you can also take advantage of anonymously. The online consultation can take place by email, in individual chats or in group chats. Forums represent a special and very open offer. Here, parents and young people can post their topics – and other parents and young people provide advice or comment on the problems.

Our recommendations:

[bke-elternberatung.de](https://bke-elternberatung.de)  
[bke-jugendberatung.de](https://bke-jugendberatung.de)

### **Mediation**

Even if you separate as a couple, there are still many things you need to clarify and arrange together. For example, all topics relating to the child/children, finances or the housing situation. It is quite possible (and indeed only too understandable) that you may sometimes feel overwhelmed. Then perhaps mediation could help you. Mediators are neutral third-parties

who support you as parents within a clearly structured process to find solutions that are in line with your interests and perceived as fair by both sides.



### **How does mediation work?**

- During a mediation, you will negotiate both the content of the conflict and its potential solutions. It is helpful to start these talks in as open-ended a fashion as possible.
- If legal proceedings are already pending, these are suspended during mediation, in order to be able to work out an amicable arrangement.

- Mediation is a strictly confidential process that is separate from the court proceedings. In order for this to succeed, the parties to the conflict must be prepared to disclose all relevant information – including their financial situation.
- Mediation is a voluntary process that can be terminated by all parties at any time.
- Mediation is frequently offered by legal, educational or psychological professionals with an additional qualification in mediation.

**Good to know:** Mediation cannot replace legal assistance. So, even during a mediation, remain in touch with your lawyer so that you are always fully and thoroughly informed about everything concerning your contact or divorce proceedings.

### **Where are mediators active?**

In Munich, the following advice centres offer mediation in relation to questions of care and contact. You will also find mediators who offer advice not just on issues relating to children, but also on all other issues relevant to a couple's separation, including any financial issues. The individual providers are:

- pro Familia e.V.
- Evangelisches Beratungszentrum München e.V.
- Familien-Notruf München e.V.

In addition, you can also contact established mediators and a legal advisor with additional training in mediation, however, in this case, you must bear the costs yourself.

It is our hope that this brochure has provided you with some answers to your most pressing questions. Above all, we would like to encourage you to continue seeking a dialogue: Be it with the other parent or with your child. We have also introduced you to the numerous counselling offers for families facing separation.

These advice centres want to help you find your own way to managing parenthood responsibly and lovingly, even after a separation/divorce. A separation requires a lot of emotional work, it consumes a lot of time and energy – but it is not “the end of the world”, but rather a challenge to make a new start. We wish you and your child(ren) every success in this chapter.

Your Stadtjugendamt  
(City Youth Welfare Office)

## Addresses

Counselling for parents, teenagers and children:

All parenting counselling centers listed here can be found at

[erziehungsberatung-muenchen.de](http://erziehungsberatung-muenchen.de)

## Regional parenting advice centres

### **Altstadt, Maxvorstadt, Ludwigsvorstadt, Isarvorstadt**

Evang. Beratungszentrum München e.V. (ebz)

Beratung für Eltern, Kinder, Jugendliche und Familien

Landwehrstraße 15 Rgb.

80336 München

Phone: 089 59048-130

[eb@ebz-muenchen.de](mailto:eb@ebz-muenchen.de)

### **Altstadt, Lehel, Bogenhausen**

Katholische Jugendfürsorge

Psychologische Beratungsstelle für

Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche

Freischützstraße 94

81927 München

Phone: 089 21937930

[erziehungsberatung@](mailto:erziehungsberatung@kjf-muenchen.de)

[kjf-muenchen.de](http://kjf-muenchen.de)

**Au, Haidhausen**

schule-beruf e.V. Beratungsstelle  
für Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Kirchenstraße 88  
81675 München  
Phone: 089 488826  
[team@beratungsstelle-  
kirchenstrasse.de](mailto:team@beratungsstelle-kirchenstrasse.de)

**Berg am Laim, Trudering, Riem**

SOS-Kinderdorf e.V.  
SOS-Beratungs- und Familien-  
zentrum  
St.-Michael-Straße 7  
81673 München  
Phone: 089 4369080  
[bz-muenchen@sos-kinderdorf.de](mailto:bz-muenchen@sos-kinderdorf.de)

**Giesing-Harlaching**

Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt  
Städtische Beratungsstelle für  
Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Oberbiburger Straße 49  
81547 München  
Phone: 089 233-35959  
[beratungsstelle-gh.soz@  
muenchen.de](mailto:beratungsstelle-gh.soz@muenchen.de)

**Harthof, Am Hart**

FamilienWelten e.V.  
Beratung am Harthof  
Neuherbergstraße 106  
80937 München  
Phone: 089 225436  
[verwaltung@beratung-am-harthof.de](mailto:verwaltung@beratung-am-harthof.de)

**Hasenberg, Feldmoching,  
Lerchenau, Ludwigsfeld,  
Fasanerie**

Diakonie Hasenberg e.V.  
Riemerschmidstraße 16  
80993 München  
Phone: 089 312096-52  
[eb@diakonie-hasenberg.de](mailto:eb@diakonie-hasenberg.de)

**Milbertshofen**

AWO Stadtteilarbeit e.V.  
Milbertshofen  
Georgenschwaigstraße 27  
80807 München  
Phone: 089 35651503  
[lebensunderziehungsberatung@  
awo-muenchen.de](mailto:lebensunderziehungsberatung@awo-muenchen.de)

**(Neu-) Aubing, Langwied,  
Lochhausen, Westkreuz**

pro familia München  
Erziehungsberatungsstelle  
Bodenseestraße 226  
81243 München  
Phone: 089 8976730  
[muenchen-neuaubing@  
profamilia.de](mailto:muenchen-neuaubing@profamilia.de)

**Neuhausen, Nymphenburg,  
Moosach**

Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt  
Städtische Beratungsstelle für  
Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Dantestraße 27/1. Stock

80637 München  
Phone: 089 159 897-0  
**beratungsstelle-nm.soz@  
muenchen.de**

**Pasing, Obermenzing, Allach,  
Untermenzing**

Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt  
Städtische Beratungsstelle für  
Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Hillernstraße 1  
81241 München  
Phone: 089 546736-0  
**beratungsstelle-pa.soz@  
muenchen.de**

**Ramersdorf**

Evangelisches Beratungszentrum  
München e.V. (ebz)  
Erziehungs-, Jugend- und Familien-  
beratung  
Echardinger Straße 63  
81671 München  
Phone: 089 590480  
**mail@ebz-muenchen.de**

**Perlach**

Caritas  
Beratungsstelle für Eltern, Kinder,  
Jugendliche und Familien  
Lüderstraße 10  
81737 München  
Phone: 089 67820224  
**caritas-muenchen-ost@  
caritasmuenchen.org**

**Schwabing/Freimann**

Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt  
Städtische Beratungsstelle für  
Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Aachener Straße 11  
80804 München  
Phone: 089 233-83050  
**beratungsstelle-sf.soz@  
muenchen.de**

**Schwanthalerhöhe, Laim, Klein-  
hadern, Blumenau**

Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt  
Städtische Beratungsstelle für  
Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche  
Westendstraße 193/3. Stock  
80686 München  
Phone: 089 233-49697  
**beratungsstelle-lsb.soz@  
muenchen.de**

**Sendling, Sendling-Westpark,  
Groß- und Neuhadern**

Caritas  
Beratungsstelle für Eltern, Kinder,  
Jugendliche und Familien  
Hansastraße 136  
81373 München  
Phone: 089 7104810  
**eb-sendling@  
caritasmuenchen.org**

**Thalkirchen, Obersendling,  
Forstenried, Fürstenried, Solln**

Caritas

Beratungsstelle für Eltern, Kinder,  
Jugendliche und Familien

Schertlinstraße 4

81379 München

Phone: 089 72449060

[eb-obersendling@](mailto:eb-obersendling@caritasmuenchen.org)

[caritasmuenchen.org](mailto:caritasmuenchen.org)

**Interregional parenting advice  
centres/specialized centres**

**Educational, marriage, partner-  
ship, family and life counselling  
for people with hearing deficits  
and and their families**

Landwehrstraße 15

80336 München

Phone: 089 59048180

SMS 0172 8585846

[hug@ebz-muenchen.de](mailto:hug@ebz-muenchen.de)

**Familien-, Paar- und Erziehungs-  
beratungsstelle für Sinti und  
Roma**

**Madhouse GmbH**

Landwehrstraße 43

80336 München

Phone: 089 7167222-500

[info@madhouse-munich.com](mailto:info@madhouse-munich.com)

**Israelitische Kultusgemeinde  
München und Oberbayern  
K.d.ö.R.**

Erziehungsberatungsstelle

Phone: 089 2006170-11

[eb@ikg-muenchen.de](mailto:eb@ikg-muenchen.de)

Child protection centre:

**KinderschutzBund München**

**KinderschutzZentrum**

Kapuzinerstraße 9 (Hof, Aufgang D)

80337 München

Phone: 089 555356

[kischuz@dksb-muc.de](mailto:kischuz@dksb-muc.de)

**Marriage, partnership, family  
and life counselling centers**

**Evangelisches Beratungszentrum  
München e.V.**

**Ehe-, Partnerschafts-, Familien-,  
Lebensberatung**

Landwehrstraße 15 Rgb./3. OG

80336 München

Phone: 089 59048-120

[ebz-muenchen.de](http://ebz-muenchen.de)

**Evangelisches Beratungszentrum  
München e.V.**

Ehe-, Partnerschafts-, Familien-,  
Lebensberatung

Pasing-Obermenzing

Pippinger Straße 97

81247 München

Phone: 089 59048-210  
[ebz-muenchen.de](http://ebz-muenchen.de)

**Evangelisches Beratungszentrum  
München e.V.**

Ehe-, Partnerschafts-, Familien-,  
Lebensberatung  
Ramersdorf  
Echardinger Straße 63  
81671 München  
Phone: 089 59048-220  
[ebz-muenchen.de](http://ebz-muenchen.de)

**Ehe-, Partnerschafts- und Familienberatung der Erzdiözese  
München und Freising**

Rückertstraße 9  
80336 München  
Phone: 089 544 311-0  
[eheberatung-oberbayern.de](http://eheberatung-oberbayern.de)

**pro familia  
Familien-, Paar-, Sexual- und  
Schwangerenberatungsstelle**

Türkenstraße 103  
80799 München  
Phone: 089 330084-0  
[profamilia.de/muenchen-schwabing](http://profamilia.de/muenchen-schwabing)

**Verband binationaler Familien  
und Partnerschaften – iaf e.V.**

Goethestraße 53  
80336 München

Phone: 089 2488137-70  
[binational-muenchen.de](http://binational-muenchen.de)

**Advice centres focusing on  
separation and divorce**

**Familien-Notruf München e.V.**

Beratungsstelle für Partnerschafts-  
krisen, Trennung und Scheidung  
Pestalozzistraße 46  
80469 München  
Phone: 089 238856-6  
[familien-notruf-muenchen.de](http://familien-notruf-muenchen.de)

**IETE Intakte Elternschaft trotz  
Trennung und Scheidung**

Beratungsstelle für Familien in  
Krisen und Trennungssituationen  
Germersheimer Straße 26  
81541 München  
Phone: 089 452443-120  
[iete-muenchen.org](http://iete-muenchen.org)

**Verein Humane Trennung und  
Scheidung e.V.**

Goethestraße 68  
80336 München  
[vhhs-muenchen.de](http://vhhs-muenchen.de)

## Counselling for women

### **TuSch – Trennung und Scheidung Frauen für Frauen e.V.**

Grimmstraße 1  
80336 München  
Phone: 089 774041  
[tusch.info](http://tusch.info)

## Counselling for single parents

### **VAMV OV München Verband allein erziehender Mütter und Väter**

Ramersdorfer Straße 1  
81669 München  
Phone: 089 6927060  
[vamv-muenchen.de](http://vamv-muenchen.de)

### **Erzbischöfliches Ordinariat München Fachstelle für alleinerziehende Frauen und Männer**

Rochusstraße 5  
80333 München  
Phone: 089 21371236

### **Haus Dorothee Begegnungsstätte für Allein- erziehende**

St.-Michael-Straße 88  
81671 München  
Phone: 089 668708  
[alleinerziehende-programm.de](http://alleinerziehende-programm.de)

### **Evangelische Fachstelle für allein- erziehende Frauen und Männer**

Landwehrstraße 15  
80336 München  
Phone: 089 538868615  
[alleinerziehend-evangelisch.de](http://alleinerziehend-evangelisch.de)

### **Siaf e.V.**

allfa\_m - single mothers in Munich  
Sedanstraße 37  
81667 München  
Phone: 089 4580250  
[siaf.de/alleinerziehende](http://siaf.de/alleinerziehende)

### **Siaf e.V.**

allfa<sup>beta</sup> - Contact\_Network for  
single mothers with children with  
disabilities  
Phone: 089 458025-11  
[siaf.de/alleinerziehende](http://siaf.de/alleinerziehende)

## Other points of contact

Service centre city of Munich:  
**Einheitliche Behördennummer  
in München 115**  
Phone: 089 115  
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
[115.de](http://115.de)



**Sozialreferat/Sachgebiet  
Beistandschaft**

Werner-Schlierf-Straße 9  
81539 München

Phone: 089 233-67515 (A – K)  
089 233-67514 (L – Z)

Monday - Friday 9.30 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
[muenchen.de/beistandschaft](http://muenchen.de/beistandschaft)

**Advance on maintenance**

Advance maintenance payments are provided de-centrally in Munich by three main Sozialbürgerhäuser (Citizens' Centres). Responsibility is determined by the child's place of residence. You can find your responsible Sozialbürgerhaus (Citizens' Centre) on the Internet at: [muenchen.de/uvb](http://muenchen.de/uvb)

**Sozialbürgerhäuser München**

The Sozialbürgerhaus (SBH) which is responsible for you depends on your residential address:  
[muenchen.de/sbh](http://muenchen.de/sbh)

**Munich District Court  
Legal application office**

Pacellistraße 5  
Zimmer B 213  
80333 München  
[t1p.de/rechtsantragstelle](http://t1p.de/rechtsantragstelle)

**Legal advice for citizens with a low income**

[t1p.de/rechtsberatung\\_geringverdiener](http://t1p.de/rechtsberatung_geringverdiener)

**For parents after separation and divorce****kindwärts**

Support for fathers and mothers with rights of access who live far away from the child after separation

Phone: 0151 19026387  
[wellcome-online.de/kindwaerts](http://wellcome-online.de/kindwaerts)

**Diakonie Hasenberg  
Casa Papa - Counseling for fathers**

Neuherbergstraße 104  
80937 München  
Phone: 089 452235595  
[diakonie-hasenberg.de/casa-papa-vaeterberatung](http://diakonie-hasenberg.de/casa-papa-vaeterberatung)

## Online advice

### **bke e.V.**

Elternberatung und Jugend-  
beratung online

for parents: [bke-elternberatung.de](https://bke-elternberatung.de)

for teens: [bke-jugendberatung.de](https://bke-jugendberatung.de)

for adults:

### **Katholische EFL Beratungsstelle**

Onlineberatung für Erwachsene

[bayern.onlineberatung-efl.de](https://bayern.onlineberatung-efl.de)

### **Onlineberatung der Caritas**

[caritas.de/onlineberatung](https://caritas.de/onlineberatung)

### **Stark - Streit und Trennung meistern**

Online help for couples and separated families in crisis

[stark-familie.info](https://stark-familie.info)

## Telephone advice

### **TelefonSeelsorge im Evangelischen Beratungszentrum München (ebz)**

Phone: 0800 1 110111

By email or chat via:

[online.telefonseelsorge.de](https://online.telefonseelsorge.de)

Accessible day and night, also on  
Sundays and public holidays

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**Sozialreferat**

**Stadtjugendamt**  
**Fachstelle Elternbriefe und Jugendinformation**

Westendstraße 193, 80686 München

Telefon 089 233-747190

elternbriefe.soz@muenchen.de

elternbriefe-muenchen.de

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Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt

Angebote der Jugendhilfe

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Sozialreferat/Stadtjugendamt

Abteilung Kinder, Jugend und Familien

Sachgebiet Angebote für Familien, Frauen\* und Männer\*

Familien-Notruf München e.V.

Beratungsstelle für Partnerschaftskrisen, Trennung und Scheidung

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