

Title	The use of assisted contact services in private law cases		
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Abstract	<p>This research project uses a mixed methods approach. It encompasses both a quantitative analysis of 168 court files and an interview sample of 25 resident and non-resident parents from 20 families.</p> <p>The research questions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the characteristics of families who express a need for assistance in post-separation contact? 2. How do the courts respond to these families? 3. What other assisted contact services are involved with these families? 4. How do parents achieve (or not) the psychological tasks that impact upon the quality of contact? <p>The court file data are comprised of a total sample of all cases attending Norwich County Court and Norwich Family Proceedings Court over a 5-month period where an application for a section 8 order (Children Act 1989) was made. The data provide demographic and biographical information about families seeking help with contact.</p> <p>The semi-structured interviews explore the varied pathways into and out of assisted contact, as well as parents' experiences of using a range of services. Themes include the post-separation relationship between parents, practical concerns and perceptions of power.</p> <p>All data has been collected and entered onto SPSS or NVivo. The court file data have undergone a preliminary analysis and descriptive findings are available; the interview data analysis is underway.</p> <p>This project is being undertaken as an ESRC CASE award in conjunction with Families' House, a Norwich based organisation offering supervised contact.</p>		