

## Has your summer not been so loving?

*Relate believes that communicating effectively during the summer break may prevent some from the divorce courts afterwards.*

Relationship counsellors at Relate Cambridge are preparing themselves for an anticipated increase in calls this September - in the immediate post-holiday period - in line with national trends. Relate centres across the country answered 19,527 calls in September last year - a 9% increase on the monthly average of 17,879 calls - and they are ready for a similar onslaught this year.

Relate also gets a spike in calls in early January, but interestingly couples are more likely to proceed with a divorce after the summer holiday than after the Christmas break. It is felt that this is because September is a more energetic time of year, whereas January can be very bleak with emotional resources depleted after dealing with Christmas. When the New Year increase in calls can be a "get it off your chest" plea or a cry for help, the September increase is potentially much more serious.

Relate Cambridge is aware that, as well as offering a break, holidays can be a difficult time. They are, therefore offering ideas to help people cope. Elaine Taylor, a relationship counsellor at Relate Cambridge said: "There is something psychological about September. Even though we're not at school any more, the memories of fresh beginnings, a new satchel, pencil case or uniform is seared into us. We may make New Year's resolutions but there's something equally - if not more - profound about September. Often we invest it with more meaning. So though we may not make resolutions in the same way as on New Year's Eve, we may still resolve to change a situation that's been making us unhappy for some time".

With so much investment in a holiday – both emotional as well as financial - the levels of expectation can be very high and when that happens there may be, as with Christmas, a huge risk of disappointment. Some couples may think their holiday is a chance to sort things out but find they are unable to.

Elaine explained: "If one of you is unhappy you can be sure both of you are. We suggest that everyone use their holidays, if they can, to really talk to each other. For those struggling with basic communication skills, Relate Cambridge is a great place to learn them and feel supported while doing so" Elaine went on to say "See this as an opportunity. People may think they are listening well to their partner talking, when in fact what they are doing is 'tooling up their own army' with ready responses".

However, if a couple does decide to consider separating after their holiday, Elaine said: "I would definitely encourage them to contact Relate Cambridge for help". She went on to say: "We have a great deal of experience in helping couples to separate as amicably as possible. All the research tells us it's not the separation itself that causes the greatest stress, but how this process is managed. We are here for people who feel they have no option other than to split up".

Relate Cambridge offers information, advice and counselling for all stages of relationships, including helping families to build and maintain strong relationships. Support is offered (free in

some cases) to children (5-10 years) and young people (11-17 years) who are adversely affected by traumatic life circumstances, including family change or breakdown, loss or bereavement.

Any family can also come to Relate for help. It doesn't matter what their size or how they are made up. Relate Cambridge can help families understand and cope better with the stresses and strains of family life and get you all talking again. Call us on 01223 357424 or visit [www.relatecambridge.org.uk](http://www.relatecambridge.org.uk) for more information.

ENDS

**For all media enquiries contact Elaine Taylor on 01302 347712**

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## **Relate Cambridge – supporting relationships at every stage of your life**

### **Notes to editors:**

- Relate is a registered charity number 207314
- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure – breakdown costs the UK an estimated £48bn each year.
- Relate provides impartial and non-judgmental support for people of all ages, at all stages of couple, family and social relationships.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but its clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- Relate's couple counselling work delivers an estimated £11.40 of benefits for every £1 spent.
- Relate's services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy and informal courses and workshops and are offered through a network of around 1,700 counsellors across the country.
- Relate Cambridge celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2015.
- For more information and advice visit: [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk).