

News release

**New report calls for improved support for separating parents as
Relate Cambridge prepares for New Year peak in calls**



Counsellors at Relate Cambridge are preparing themselves for an anticipated 62% increase in calls from couples, families and individuals this January, in line with annual trends.*

The charity says it hears from many couples and families in the New Year whose relationship issues have come to a head over the Christmas period. It reports that some couples seeking counselling are on the verge of separation but are looking to give their relationship one last shot. Others they say have already made the decision to break up but want support to help them separate in the least painful way possible.

This comes as Relate launches a new national report, [Breaking Up is Hard to Do](#), which finds that divorcing and separating families are being let down by a complex support system which is hard to access and even more difficult to navigate. The result is families trapped in a cycle of conflict, leading to poor outcomes for children.

In response to the report's findings, Relate is calling for an interactive online portal where people can access all the support they need before, during and after separation, as well as a national helpline. The report has been welcomed by the Department of Work and Pensions and the Ministry of Justice.

Elaine Taylor, Relationship Counsellor at Relate Cambridge said: "New Year is a time when many of us naturally assess how life is going and this can make people think about how their relationships are faring. The high number of calls Relate receives in January suggests that many people are considering what they want from their relationships at this time of year. It may also be affected by issues which have come to the surface over Christmas.

"Contacting Relate is a positive step – we can help people in all sorts of situations to work out what's next for their relationships. However, as Relate's new report finds, the wider support system for separating families, which includes services such as solicitors, Citizens Advice, mediation and counselling, is often difficult to access and complex to navigate. We are therefore calling for a more joined up system with a single online point of access to all relationship support, as well as a national helpline. This will help to ensure that children and families are put first when it comes to divorce and separation."

Relate Cambridge offers information, advice and counselling for all stages of your relationships, including family counselling which can include support for families and parenting. Call us on 01223 357424 or visit www.relatecambridge.org.uk for more information.

ENDS

For all media enquiries including interviews and pictures contact Elaine Taylor on
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LIKE us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/RelateCambridge>
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Relate Cambridge – supporting relationships at every stage of your life

Attached photo provided by Relate is available for use. Credit: Relate

*This figure was calculated based on the level of calls to Relate's Response telephone network in January 2015 compared with an average month. Staffed by expert Consultants, Response is Relate's national phone network set up to deliver a high quality and consistent service to all callers. We consider Response to be the 'front door' to everything we offer, helping people to access our services across the country.

Notes to editors:

- Relate Cambridge offers a package to help the whole family and offers individual, couple, family and children counselling.
- Relate Cambridge delivered nearly 6,000 sessions last year.
- The following are links to two promotional films made by Relate Cambridge :
<http://vimeo.com/92023037> and <http://bit.ly/1NZp4PV> .
- Relate Cambridge celebrated its 70th birthday in 2015.
- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Personal and social relationships are important in our everyday lives and are central to our wellbeing.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure - breakdown costs the UK economy £46 billion each year according to the Relationships Foundation.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but it's clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- 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 1,700 counsellors across the country.
- For more information and advice visit: www.relate.org.uk.