

**News release - for immediate release**

## **Relate Cambridge's tips for summer holiday survival**

Local relationship support charity Relate Cambridge is preparing for a surge in enquiries from couples whose relationships reach breaking point over the summer. Last year, the charity received a 20% increase in calls in September 2016\* compared to an average month in 2016 along with a 9% rise in web traffic.\*\* This makes it their second busiest time of year after the post-Christmas peak it sees in January.

Relate Cambridge says that relationships are often already at crisis point by the time people come to them in September. School holidays, enforced jollity at rainy seaside resorts and financial pressures are just some of the reasons that summer can be the final straw. Some couples head straight for the divorce court, with family lawyers also experiencing a rise in the number of new clients at this time of year.\*\*\*

Relate Cambridge wants to encourage anyone with concerns about their relationship to get in touch before things head into real difficulties. They say that, whilst it's never too late to ask for support, the earlier you tackle problems in your relationship, the more likely you are to overcome them.

Relationship Counsellor Elaine Taylor said: "Most of us look forward to the summer holidays. But if you're already having problems in your relationship, then the pressure of juggling work, keeping the kids entertained and spending concentrated time with your partner, might tip things over the edge. Tempers can get frayed and families can end up counting down the days until September begins. By the time schools re-open, some relationships are in a pretty bad state.

"We'd suggest seeking help at the earliest possible stage rather than leaving it until things get to crisis point. Even if you're getting on alright now, there are some simple things it could be worth doing to ensure you make it through the summer with your relationship in a good place."

### **Relate Cambridge's tips for summer survival:**

- **Plan together.** Whether you're going on holiday or staying put, it's important to plan together as a family. Make everyone feels involved in plans and keep a chart with everyone's top wishes on it.

- **Make hay while the sun shines.** Make the most of what's special about summer. Go for family walks during those long warm evenings, or arrange a picnic. Also, look out for free or cheap music events and summer schools arranged by local authorities.
- **Turn down the heat.** Arguments are often a part of family life, but take care to diffuse tensions before things get too heated. If your children are arguing, ask them to go into separate rooms and 'take five'. You can do this too if you're getting wound up.
- **Switch off.** If you have time off work, try to make sure it's really time off. Try not to check emails or work phones and really focus on enjoying time with your family.
- **Reconnect.** It's common for parents not to see their friends as much as they used to, especially when children are very young. But summer provides a chance for reconnecting as there are lots of activities, like weddings, fetes and barbeques, where parents and children from different families can get together.
- **Check in.** Make sure your luggage isn't the only thing you check in this summer. Talk to your partner regularly to find out how they're feeling about themselves, the family and the relationship. You can then catch any issues early on and address them together.
- **Keep things sizzling.** During the summer, older kids are often out doing their own thing, so this is a good opportunity for investing some time in your relationship with your partner.
- **Seek support.** If things aren't going swimmingly, relationship counselling could help. Don't leave it until things have reached rock bottom to get in touch with Relate.

Relate Cambridge's non-judgmental services support individuals, couples, families, children, young people and friends of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations. For more information or to book an appointment, contact Relate Cambridge on 01223 357424 Mon-Thur 8am-10pm, Fri 8 am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm (confidential answerphone at all other times) or visit [www.relatecambridge.org.uk](http://www.relatecambridge.org.uk)

## ENDS

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

For urgent out of hours enquiries call: 07971 869 735

\* This figure was calculated based on the level of calls to Relate's Response telephone network in September 2016 compared with the monthly average in 2016. 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.

\*\*This number refers to the number of sessions on the Relate website in September 2016 compared to the average month.

\*\*\* Express, *Summer holidays rival Christmas and New Year as peak time for divorce*, 2013  
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/700879/divorce-marriage-rate-summer-holidays-Christmas-New-Year-separation>

## Notes to editors:

- Relationships are the beating heart of our lives – when they aren't healthy, we suffer. That's why Relate, the UK's leading relationship support charity, is here to help.

- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships for all as the basis of a thriving society.
- Nearly 3 million people in the UK are in distressed relationships – that’s 1.4 million families at breaking point.
- Relate’s work helps prevent loneliness, depression, abuse, homelessness, debt and many other life-shattering events that can happen when relationships go wrong.
- Relate’s non-judgmental services helped more than 1.5 million people last year, of all backgrounds and sexual orientations.
- Relate will celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2018.
- Visit [relate.org.uk](http://relate.org.uk) or call 0300 100 1234 to find out more.
- Relate is a registered charity number 207314.