

Annual Report 2022-2023

A member of 
RELATIONSHIPS
counselling, mediation
& family support across **SCOTLAND**



Who we are

We are an independent registered Scottish charity based in Orkney, providing specialist support for adults, children, couples and families affected by relationship difficulties, family breakdown and associated challenges.

The charity has been operating since 1994, originally as Family Mediation Orkney, which merged with Couple Counselling Orkney in 2006 to form Counselling and Family Mediation Orkney. In 2008 this organisation joined Relationships Scotland, the national body for counselling, mediation and family support in Scotland, and adopted the name Relationships Scotland Orkney, operating as RS Orkney. We are a registered Scottish charity (SCO23164) and became a Company Limited by Guarantee (SC380628) in 2010.

As a Relationships Scotland (RS) member, we are part of a Scotland-wide network of locally run services, are Organisational Members of COSCA (the Professional Body for Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland) and the College of Mediators. RS are also a Signatory of The Scottish Mediation Charter.

Our Values

- We work to the highest possible standards in accordance with the requirements of professional bodies.
- We respect and value diversity in our clients, practitioners, staff members and volunteers.
- We work in partnership with other organisations and individuals who share our aspirations for the people of Orkney.
- We are transparent and accountable, acting with openness and integrity at all times.

Our charitable objects

To relieve the needs and promote the welfare of individuals, families and children affected by relationship difficulties by providing support services, principally family mediation, child contact and confidential counselling services, and to develop other appropriate services to meet the changing needs of those disadvantaged by such difficulties.

**Our vision is for positive
and respectful
relationships to be at
the heart of our
community.**



What we do

Counselling

We provide a safe, confidential place for individuals and couples to talk to a professional counsellor about problems of any kind such as anxiety, depression, anger, relationship difficulties, to explore feelings and find ways to move forward. We also offer specialist counselling for those struggling with alcohol/drugs.



Mediation

Family mediation is a voluntary process which can help separated parents and family members when communication becomes difficult or has broken down. With the help of a trained and impartial mediator, long, painful and expensive legal battles can be avoided. We also offer specialist workplace mediation for conflicts arising at work.

Family Support

Our **Child Contact Centre** provides a safe, friendly, neutral and child-centred environment where children affected by family breakdown can meet and maintain their relationship with the parent they no longer live with or with other family members.

Family Support Workers help individuals and families to identify their strengths and build capacity, so they become better able to cope with relationship issues, parenting and other life challenges. They provide a range of specialist support including specific evidence-based interventions such as Parenting Apart, to help separated parents co-parent effectively; and support for Primary School age children and their parents.

Alcohol/Drug Support helps individuals and families affected by alcohol/drug use to reduce harm and, where appropriate, to explore the underlying causes through counselling.

Our Aims

- Children and their families, couples and individuals, are supported to have better, stronger relationships.
- People in Orkney make the best possible transitions through relationship difficulties, separation and divorce.
- Relationship and family support is fully integrated within national and local policy and practice.

Our Objectives

- To provide and support high quality services across Orkney, including relationship counselling, family mediation, child contact centres and other related forms of family support.
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of our services and help local policy makers, politicians, the media and others understand why relationships matter.
- To achieve long-term, stable funding for Relationships Scotland Orkney services.

We support **#The Promise** and work to ensure that every child grows up loved, safe and respected and able to realise their full potential.



A word from our Chair

Relationships Scotland (RS) Orkney has had another very busy year. Thanks to funding from a range of sources, we have been able to continue helping adults, young people and children in Orkney affected by relationship difficulties and a range of associated challenges. For many, these issues have been exacerbated by the pandemic and the current cost of living crisis, so that more people than ever are seeking our help.

We opened 413 new cases during the year, up 74% on the previous year. We worked with 306 adults and 162 children/young people, who attended 2,575 sessions. This is a tribute to our skilled and dedicated staff team, who have worked hard to respond to this growing demand.

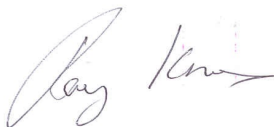
We are grateful to our colleagues at Relationships Scotland (RS) for helping us to ensure that standards continually improve and keep pace with codes of good practice and current legislation. RS undertook our 3 yearly Quality Assurance review this year and we were delighted to be awarded a Quality Certificate to November 2025.

We have a skilled and dedicated staff team, and demonstrated our commitment to fair remuneration by becoming an accredited Scottish Living Wage Employer in September 2022.

This year we welcomed Johny McEwen to our Board, and expressed thanks to Colin Nisbet, who retired from the Board after almost 5 years.

Looking ahead, our aims and objectives remain a good fit with national and local priorities, with a focus on prevention, early interventions and work with children and families. We continue to work closely with third sector and statutory partners locally, all of whom face similar challenges of high demand and limited resources.

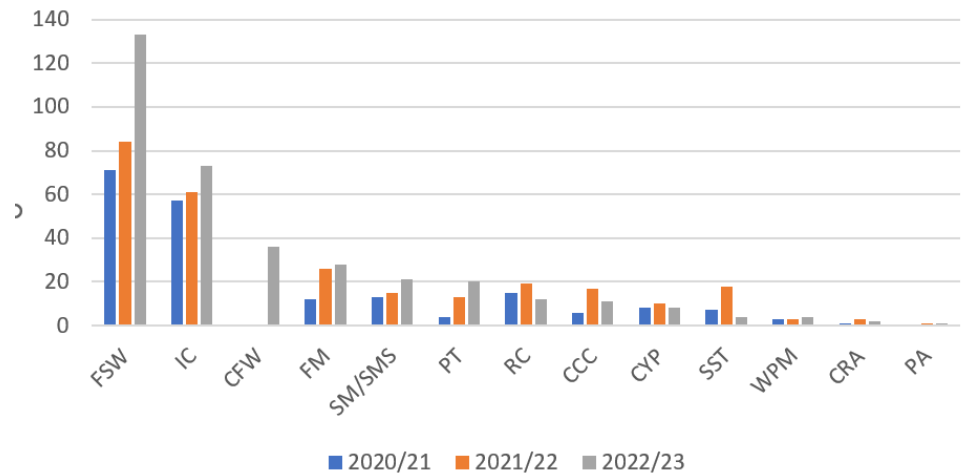
We remain committed to providing services for the Orkney community free of charge, and are grateful to all of the funders and donors who enable us to continue doing so.



Ray Knox, Chair

Overview of our work

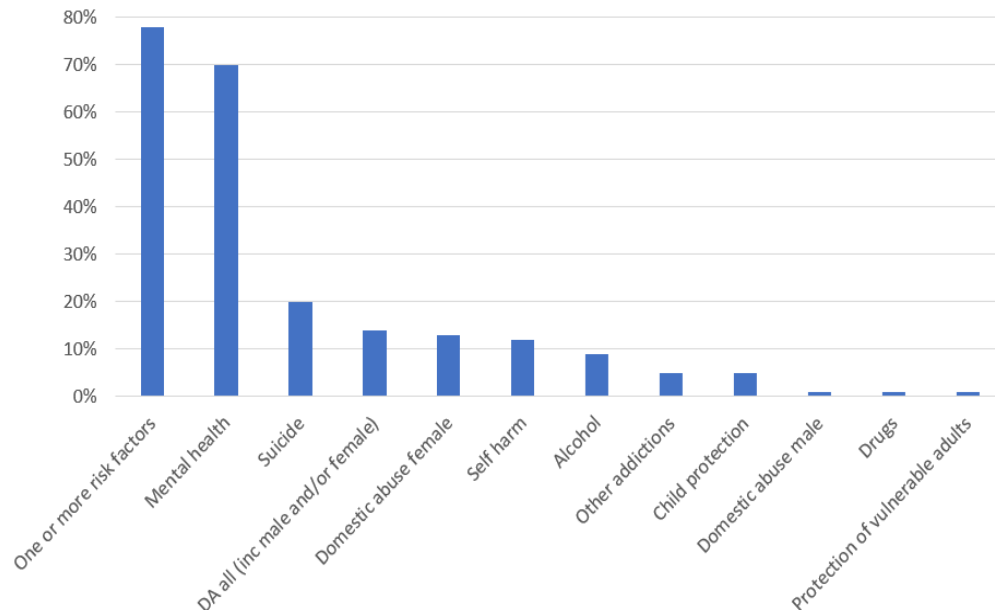
Cases actively involved with the service



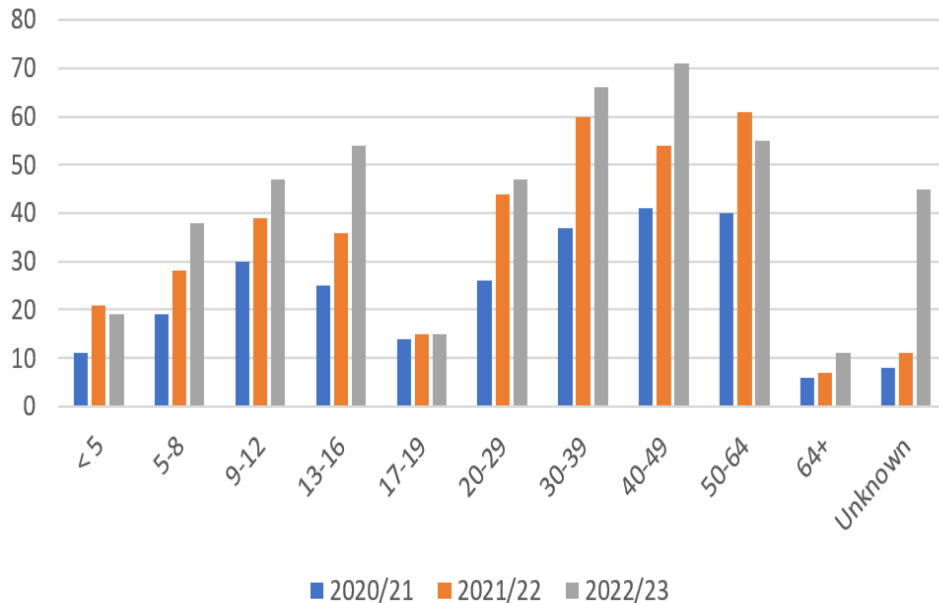
OUR SERVICES

FSW	Family Support Work
IC	Individual Counselling
CFW	Children & Families Support Work
FM	Family Mediation
SM/SMS	Substance Misuse Counselling/Support
PT	Play Therapy
RC	Relationship Counselling
CCC	Child Contact Centre
CYP	Children & Young People Counselling
SST	Single Session Therapy
WPM	Workplace Mediation
CRA	Community Reinforcement & Family Training
PA	Parenting Apart

Our clients



Clients actively involved with service by age



What our clients say

"I feel this is a vital service that is making a huge difference to people. It made a massive difference in my life and gave me a lot of insight about myself and lots of tools to manage my feelings better. Everything about my experience is positive. The therapist who treated me was brilliant."

"Relationships Scotland Orkney is an absolutely brilliant organisation. I have been attending regularly for over 2 years and all the support workers I have met have helped me immensely. They have helped me navigate through a very turbulent part of my life, and I know for certain that I would be in a much darker place if I had not had the expert, dedicated and compassionate help I was given."

"Your support was critical to us, and helped hold things together as best as could be done at the point in our lives where everything else had completely collapsed. It opened the only glimmer of a space for communication to occur in -- it wasn't possible by any other means -- and gradually over time this let us make plans and take actions towards a separated family future that now, thankfully, has ended up in a much better environment for our child to grow up in. I'm so grateful -- thank you from the bottom of my heart!"

Across the Relationships Scotland network:

- 92% of clients said their relationship/family situation had improved as a result of counselling
- 86% of clients said their ability to deal with relationship conflict had improved as a result of mediation
- 94% of parents said that attending a Child Contact Centre had helped improve their family situation

An update from the Service Director

This has been another busy year for the staff, with strong demand for all our services, and new services developed in response to local needs. We have worked with more people than ever before, and have seen especially strong demand for Family Support, with an 84% increase in referrals.

The cases handled by the Service are increasingly complex: 78% of clients identified at least one risk factor at intake; and of these, 70% identified mental health as a risk, 20% suicide, 14% identified a domestic abuse risk and 10% substance misuse. Equal opportunities monitoring shows that 54% of respondents have a disability; 41% a mental health condition; 16.5% experience a long-term illness, disease or condition and 9.5% have a physical disability.

The proportion of clients accessing 2 or more of our services has increased by 20%, now representing 41% of all clients, with 12% accessing 3 or more services. This demonstrates the integrated way we work, referring internally for specialist support where appropriate, and evidences the increasing complexity of the issues clients bring.

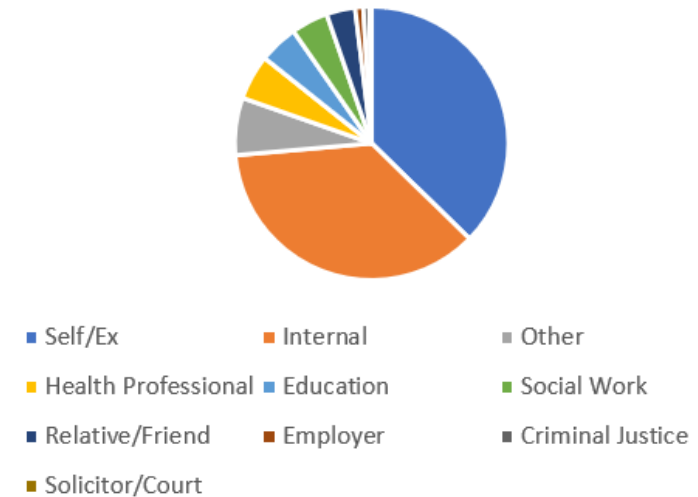
The majority of people self-refer or are referred internally. We also work closely with third sector and statutory partners to ensure we provide holistic support for individuals and families in Orkney. Referrals from all sources have increased this year, notably Social Work referrals are up from 10 to 18 cases, Health Professionals' from 17 to 22, Criminal Justice 0 to 3, Education 5 to 19, Women's Aid from 5 to 19.

Our growing and varied caseload has placed significant pressure on resources. We still strive to ensure that enquiries are responded to within one working day and clients are offered an initial appointment within a week. Unfortunately there is a wait for some services, but support is available meantime.

We secured additional funding this year which enabled us to grow our staff team and develop services in respond to local needs. However, short term funding remains a challenge. We will continue to explore different funding options and to evidence the benefits of our work to our funders, so we can continue to support the Orkney community through the period of recovery from the pandemic, and beyond.

Tamsin Bailey

Referral source



We acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through a Children, Young People & Families Early Intervention Fund (CYPFEIF) and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities (ALEC) Fund grant; and for funding for Child Contact Centre services.

In addition we are grateful to all those who have generously funded our work through grants this year:

CORRA Foundation - Drugs Improvement Fund

The Henry Smith Charity - Improving Lives

The Henry Smith Charity—COVID-19 Long Term Support

Mind On

Orkney Alcohol & Drugs Partnership

Orkney Islands Council—Child & Adolescent Mental Health

Orkney Islands Council—counselling, mediation and homelessness prevention

Voluntary Action Orkney - Third Sector COVID-19 Emergency Fund

Voluntary Action Orkney—Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund

We also receive generous donations from clients and members of the public. Without this funding we could not continue to provide these vital

"I am so much more empowered and strong then [sic] when I started getting counselling [sic] and have such a 'can do' problem solving attitude instead of thinking the world had come to an end."

Counselling

Demand for counselling continues to be strong, with 104 new referrals (+47%) this year for **Individual Counselling** and 22 for **Relationships Counselling**. Clients attended 756 counselling sessions during the year.

Capacity remains a challenge in responding to this level of need, particularly for individual counselling. Thanks to a *COVID-19 Long Term Support* grant from The Henry Smith Charity we have been able to increase staff hours. We are also investing in training and support for student placements to grow our capacity for the future.

"The contact centre managers and staff have been unfailingly warm and kind and both they and other staff at RS Orkney have been extremely supportive.."

Child Contact Centre

The **Child Contact Centre** opened 14 new cases over the year, and 104 contact sessions were attended. This vital service enables children to maintain contact with a parent they no longer live with. Over time, families progress from supervised or supported contact to managing handovers through the Centre and eventually making their own arrangements.



Funded by:



Scottish Government
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gov.scot



"I found the mediation helpful but ultimately my partner did not find the sessions easy to be a part of. Hopefully the advice we have received will enable us to continue to communicate on a amicable level to ensure our children are OK."

Mediation

Family Mediation, which helps separated parents make arrangements for their children, has increased, with 37 new cases opened and 115 sessions attended. There has also been some uptake of our specialist **Workplace Mediation**, with feedback showing this can be a constructive and helpful way to resolve conflict in the workplace.

Children & Young People

Our direct work with **Children and Young People** has increased this year. We launched a new **Children & Families Support service** in June 2022, for Primary School age children and their families, and had opened 43 cases by end March 2023. One of our Support Workers now regularly offers one-to-one sessions for pupils at Kirkwall Grammar School. In total 223 in-school sessions were offered this year across both Primary and Secondary schools.

Our capacity for **Play Therapy** has also increased, with two trainees working towards their full therapist qualification. A total of 34 cases attended 169 sessions during the year.



Family Support

There has been particularly strong demand for our **Intensive Family Support** work this year, with 133 cases attending 844 sessions, and 126 new cases opened (compared to 55 last year).

The Support Workers work one-to-one with people of all ages, providing help with issues from parenting challenges and relationship breakdown to anxiety and depression. Support is closely integrated with other services, for example helping parents who are using the Child Contact Centre or while taking part in Family Mediation. Client feedback from a representative sample of our Intensive Family Support clients showed that 70% felt more able to manage their emotions and 76% had seen an improvement in their relationships since attending support sessions.

“So happy with every aspect of relationship Scotland and their support team, always welcomed with a warm smile and an understanding and non judgemental ear, which truly is more than I could have ever wished for! [The Support Worker] has really helped me through some of the hardest points in my life this past couple of years... I have and will continue to recommend your awesome work you all do to everyone.”

We continued to support the running of weekly **LINC (Lonely? Isolated? Network Connect)** sessions in the community this year, helping people to rebuild confidence and connections after the pandemic. This was funded through Mental Health and Wellbeing Funds distributed by Voluntary Action Orkney.

This work is supported by:



Scottish Government
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gov.scot

Alcohol & Drug Services

Our **Substance Misuse Support Worker** works with people to reduce harm and supports family members affected by a loved one's substance use. They operate alongside the specialist Substance Misuse Counsellor commissioned by the Orkney Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to work with adults. Once the client is stable, the Counsellor can help them to address the issues underlying their drug/alcohol use. The service worked with 21 cases involving harmful consumption of alcohol/drugs. 19% of all clients who completed a Fast Alcohol Screening Test at their initial appointment were found to be consuming alcohol at what is considered a harmful level.

“It has given me an anchor point, targets and point of focus. Each meeting makes me feel good and gives me good insight into myself and allowed me to believe in myself.”



orkney alcohol and drugs

partnership



We really appreciate clients taking the time to give us feedback, as this helps us to understand the impact we are having and informs service development.

- 100% of counselling clients said they would recommend the service to others
- 100% said the counsellor fostered a safe and trusting environment

“Play Therapy helped my son at the time it was needed and was very beneficial.”

“Thoroughly enjoyed my sessions, got a lot out of them. In a far better place mentally now, looking forward to a happy future.”



Our staff

We have a small and dedicated staff team of 10 employed staff (6.8 FTE), 7 self-employed practitioners and 6 sessional workers, plus 3 trainees on placement.

All of our Counselling, Family Mediation and Play Therapy practitioners are trained to nationally recognised standards and are members of their respective professional body.

Minimum training for **Counsellors** is post-graduate Diploma level. Our counsellors practice within a range of frameworks including person-centred, psychodynamic and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). We support counsellors in training who work with clients once assessed as fit to practice.

Our postgraduate-trained **Family Mediators** are on the Register of Practising Family Mediators held by the Court of Session.

We have one registered **Play Therapist** and two **Therapeutic Play Practitioners** training to be Play Therapists.

All practitioners receive regular clinical practice supervision, and support from the Service Director. They must evidence Continuing Professional Development to ensure standards are maintained, and undergo annual registration through Relationships Scotland.

Support Workers have regular training and supervision, and are experienced working with a range of mental health issues, parenting difficulties, parental conflict and other life challenges. Our **Children & Families Support Worker** has trained in Theraplay® to support improved parent/child relationships.

Our **Child Contact Centre Workers** are experienced working with children and families and, like all our staff, their approach is person-centred and trauma-informed. They are trained in line with Relationships Scotland national requirements and pay particular attention to the needs of children using the service.

In all the work we do with families, we seek to ensure that the voice of the child is heard when decisions are being made or actions taken which affect a child's future.

Relationships Scotland Orkney

Board

Ray Knox (Chair), Luigi Borsotti (Vice-Chair), Huw Gwynn-Jones (Treasurer), Amanda Bettison, Mark Causer, Johny McEwen, Shona Flanagan, Lucy Stansfield, Uka Summers

Service Director

Tamsin Bailey

Administrators

Cecily Cromby (Client Liaison Worker)
Deborah Rhodes (Finance)

Counselling (Adults)	Family Mediation	Child Contact Centre	Individual & Family Support	Counselling (Young People) Play Therapy
<p>Counsellors June Anderson Barbara Cordukes Katie Eaton Helen Hiscoke Chloe McCormack (trainee) Rachel Spence Hannah Stanger Sharon Stephen Eimear Young</p> <p>Supervisors June Anderson Helen Hiscoke</p> <p>External Supervisors Judith Bale Manda Balfour Celia Batrakouli Emma Gordon Helen Moya Jacqueline Sharpe Shirley Sim Beth Wiseman</p>	<p>Registered Family Mediators Tamsin Bailey Barbara Smith</p> <p>External Supervisor Rhona Wilson</p> <p>Parenting Apart Facilitator Barbara Smith</p>	<p>Team Leader Laura Flett</p> <p>Co-ordinator Yvonne Drever</p> <p>Support Workers Cynthia Chaddock Ruth Fogg Mary Foubister Ria Leslie Lesley-Anne Millar Edith Pirie</p>	<p>Team Leader Helen Pepper</p> <p>Support Workers</p> <p>Adults & Young People Yvonne Drever Mary Foubister Lorinda Logan</p> <p>Children & Families Theraplay® Carrie Rendall</p> <p>Drug & Alcohol Counsellor Hannah Stanger</p>	<p>Counsellor & Play Therapist Renate Andrews</p> <p>Trainee Therapeutic Play Practitioners Kayleigh Shaw Sarah Wood</p> <p>Supervisor Renate Andrews</p> <p>External Supervisor Susan Atkins</p>

Our Strategy sets out our priorities and outcomes for 2022-27:

RSORKNEY

counselling, mediation & family support



Services

Priorities 2022-27

Outcomes

A member of Relationships Scotland

Strategy Priorities 2022-27 : overview of progress

Improve & extend our services to meet client needs

- In light of the increased demand for counselling, we employed a 30 hour per week counsellor (job share), thanks to a Henry Smith Charity *Covid-19 Long Term Support* grant.
- As part of a joint initiative with other third sector services, funded by Orkney Health and Care, we developed a new Children & Families support service for Primary School age children and their families. We have worked with over 40 families so far.
- We responded to a huge increase in demand for support (new cases +84%) by increasing Support Worker hours, thanks to an *Improving Lives* grant from The Henry Smith Charity. This enabled us to see more adults, and to grow our work with young teenagers, offering more direct support to pupils at Kirkwall Grammar School.

Build capacity and develop the workforce

- We continue to invest in staff training and development, which this year has included Theraplay® training for the new Children & Families Support Worker; offering placements to two trainee Therapeutic Play Practitioners; supporting a staff member through their Certificate in Counselling, and providing a placement for a Relationship Counsellor in training.
- We continue to offer the Relationships Scotland's Parenting Apart programme and staff have undertaken additional training to deliver this.

Raise awareness of our services and influence local service development

- We participate actively in a range of local partnerships including the Third Sector Forum, Orkney Alcohol & Drugs Partnership, Orkney Community Justice Partnership, Orkney Partnership for Action Against Gender-Based Violence and Abuse, and the Young People and Mental Health Strategy Group, among others.
- We work closely and constructively with colleagues in the Community Mental Health Team, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Social Work, Housing and Police Scotland to support clients and ensure a holistic approach to meeting their needs, wherever possible.
- We continue to provide information for people in Orkney about the services we offer support by attending local events, sharing online and in the local media.

Fund our ambitions

- We have worked hard to identify new sources of funding to enable us to continue our vital work for the local community. In particular, we are seeking funding for our Family Support work beyond July 2023 and await the outcome.
- We supported Relationships Scotland's successful applications to the Scottish Government for funding for core counselling and mediation services to end March 2025, and for Child Contact Centre services to end March 2024.



How to access our services

Individuals can self-refer or someone (e.g. a professional) can contact us on their behalf.

They will receive a phone call or email within 1 working day, and an initial appointment is usually offered within 5 working days. There may be a wait for some services, but support is available meantime.

We put the client's needs at the centre: we will work with them to find out which of our services best suit their circumstances. If appropriate, we can refer on to other services, and will support the client through the transition from one service to another.

RS ORKNEY

counselling, mediation & family support

Relationships Scotland Orkney

First Floor Right
Kirkwall Travel Centre

West Castle Street

Kirkwall

Orkney KW15 1GU

01856 877750

enquiries@rsorkney.org.uk

www.rsorkney.org.uk

If you are concerned about a family member or someone else you know, you can contact us to discuss confidentially whether we may be able to help. If you think we can help you or someone you know, please get in touch.

A member of
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counselling, mediation
& family support across **SCOTLAND**

www.relationships-scotland.org.uk

Our services are free and confidential.

