

## **Session 4. Child & Adolescent Issues in Blended & Separated Families**

### **Paula Barrett**

#### **Some points made in Paula's presentation:**

- Poor conflict and problem solving are predictive of poor child adjustment - this is independent of family status
- Approx half Australian families are blended/separated
- Takes time to develop trust
- Accept differences
- Cooperate rather than compete
- Focus on solutions
- Have network of support (include grandparents etc)
- Sharing rituals very important
- Regular family meeting - in restaurant (neutral territory)
- Monthly calendar of who is doing what
- Flexibility and availability of both parents

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#### **The two books referred to in the session are:**

- Newman, Margaret. Stepfamily Life: why it is different – and how to make it work. 2004 Finch Publishing Lane Cove NSW Australia
- Robert N. Munsch, Sheila McGraw. Love You Forever. 1986 Firefly Books USA