

A child with long blonde hair, wearing a bright red hooded jacket, blue jeans, and blue rubber boots, is seen from behind, jumping rope on a grey asphalt surface. The child's hair is blowing in the wind. On the ground, there are blue chalk drawings of squares and the numbers 1, 2, and 3. The child is currently in the middle of a jump over the number 2.

# Family-based arrangement form

# Child maintenance and family-based arrangements

Most parents want what's best for their children, even if they live apart from them. Making a child maintenance arrangement can help your children get the best possible start in life.

Child maintenance is regular, reliable financial support that helps towards a child's everyday living costs. But it doesn't only have to be about money. The parent who does not have the main day-to-day care of their child gives child maintenance to the parent or person (such as a grandparent or guardian) who does.

Child maintenance can make a real difference to children as it can help pay for things like clothing, food and other essentials. It could also help keep both parents involved with their children's lives.

Many people choose to sort out child maintenance between themselves. This can happen without involving anyone else

or with the help of a relative, friend or a professional mediator. It doesn't always have to be about money either - it can include other kinds of support, for example, providing school uniforms. This form will help you to set up this type of family arrangement.

## Who we are

Child Maintenance Options is a service run by the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, a new child maintenance body set up in July 2008.

We give impartial information and support to help parents make informed choices about all the child maintenance options available. We offer a different service from the CSA, which is just one option for getting child maintenance from the other parent.

We're here to help you decide which option is best for you.

# Our family-based arrangement

What we've agreed about  
child maintenance for our children

A Our children

Who we're responsible for

## Our first child

Full name

Date of birth

 /  / 

Address

  

## Our second child

Full name

Date of birth

 /  / 

Address

  

## Our third child

Full name

Date of birth

 /  / 

Address

### Our fourth child

Full name

Date of birth

 /  / 

Address

## B The parents

Who made this arrangement and agrees to follow it

### Mother

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Weekly income

£

### Father

Full name

Address

Phone

Email

Weekly income

£

## C The payments

If you need help working out the amount of maintenance to pay, use our online calculator at [www.cmoptions.org](http://www.cmoptions.org) or call us on 0800 988 0988.

### For our first child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payment date

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide on this amount?

### Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

### For our second child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

Please turn over

First payment date

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide  
on this amount?

### Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

### For our third child

Who pays?

How much?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payment date

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide  
on this amount?

### Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

## For our fourth child

Who pays?

How much?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Date for payment?

(for example: every Friday, last working day of the month)

First payment date

 /  / 

How paid?

(for example: cash, cheque, standing order)

How did we decide  
on this amount?

## Payments 'in kind'

For what?

(for example: holidays, school fees, uniforms, lessons, clothes)

Value?

£

How often?

(for example: once a week, once a month, twice a year)

Review date

 /  /

## D Our promise

We've both read this arrangement carefully, and agreed to it. By signing here, we promise to keep to the arrangement, for the sake of our children. If either of us is unable to keep to this arrangement, for any reason, we agree to let the other parent know.

### Mother

Signed

Name

Date

 /  / 

### Father

Signed

Name

Date

 /  / 

This is not a legal document, but signing this arrangement is a clear statement of our commitment to our children.

Review  
date

 /  /



### Why is a family arrangement a good idea?

If you make a family arrangement, it can help you and the other parent to keep on good terms. It costs nothing to set up and nobody else needs to get involved. Also, both of you may be able to agree new terms quickly and easily when your circumstances change.

### Working out an amount

In a family arrangement, you don't have to follow a set of rules to work out child maintenance.

You and the other parent could agree on a weekly amount or include payments 'in kind'. Payments in kind are when one parent pays for things like, school uniforms and clothes, food, school fees or home repairs - rather than paying money to the other parent.

The important thing is that you both sign up to the arrangement and that it provides reliable financial support towards your child's everyday living costs. If you need help working out the amount to pay, based on income, you could use our online calculator at **www.cmoptions.org** or call us on **0800 988 0988**.

### Agreeing how often to pay

The agreed amount could be paid weekly, every 2 weeks or once a month - whatever suits both of you. Some people find it easier to budget by paying or receiving maintenance payments at the same time as their wages or benefits reach their bank account. What suits both of you will depend on your circumstances.

### How to make or receive payments

There are different ways of making and receiving the payments, for example standing order from a bank account, cheque or cash. A standing order is best for making sure that payments are made in full and on time, and are recorded on paper.

### Keeping a written record

Whatever you both agree, it's vital that you write it down clearly so there's no misunderstanding. Your arrangement is not legally binding, but signing it is a way of showing your strong personal commitment.

### What if my circumstances change?

Things change over time, so you may want to agree a date now to sit down and review your arrangement together - perhaps every 6 months. How often you do this will depend on your own circumstances (for example, changes to your employment, new relationships and living arrangements).

### What if a family arrangement breaks down?

If your family arrangement breaks down, perhaps because payments aren't being made, talk to the other parent or call us at Child Maintenance Options.

If that doesn't work, you can ask the CSA to set up a new arrangement. The CSA will then collect the money and pay it to the parent who has day-to-day care. If a parent doesn't pay maintenance, the CSA can use its legal powers to make them pay it. You can call the CSA on **0845 7133 3133** or visit **[www.csa.gov.uk](http://www.csa.gov.uk)** if you'd like to find out more.

### What if more than one child is involved?

If you have more than one child with the same parent, you may be able to come to an arrangement for all your children at the same time.

Our form has space for 4 children. If you have children with more than one person, you will have to come to an arrangement with each parent separately.

Providing impartial information and support for both parents to make choices about child maintenance

## Contact us

Freephone\* **0800 988 0988**

8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday

9am to 4pm Saturday

**[www.cmoptions.org](http://www.cmoptions.org)**

This leaflet is also available in other languages, in large print, in Braille and on audio cassette. You can get these formats by calling us on freephone\*  
**0800 988 0988**

Our TextBox and textphone number is **0800 988 9 888**

\* Calls to 0800 numbers are free from BT landlines but you may have to pay if you use another phone company, a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0845 numbers from BT landlines should cost no more than 4p a minute with a 6p call set-up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls to 0870 numbers from BT landlines should cost no more than 8p a minute with a 6p call set-up charge. You may have to pay more if you use another phone company or a mobile phone, or if you are calling from abroad.

Calls from mobile phones can cost up to 40p a minute, so check the cost of calls with your service provider.