

BRIGHTER FUTURE MEDIATION

A parent's guide

The manosphere, your children, and two households

What to watch for, what to do, and where to get support

Written by Rebecca Waclawyj, founder of Brighter Future Mediation. FMC registered family mediator. Former assistant psychologist in the prison service, probation, and specialist domestic abuse perpetrator intervention. Lived experience as a litigant in person in family court proceedings.

This guide is free to download and share. It is not legal advice. Seek professional advice for your individual situation.





Introduction

This guide is for any parent navigating separation, whether you are co-parenting, single parenting, or somewhere in between. It is for parents of all children: boys, girls, and young people across the gender spectrum. And it takes seriously the specific challenges of raising children across two households when the online world is adding a new layer of complexity to an already hard situation.

The manosphere, the network of ultra-masculine online communities and influencers that has been in the news since Louis Theroux's Netflix documentary in March 2026 and the BBC's Men of the Manosphere in November 2025, is not going away. And while the conversation around it has largely focused on boys, its impact reaches all children.

You do not have to be an expert in the manosphere to protect your child. You need to be present, curious, and consistent. This guide will help you with the rest

Understanding The Manosphere

What is it?

The manosphere is a loosely connected network of websites, forums, and social media influencers promoting rigid, ultra-masculine ideals. These communities frame their ideas in opposition to feminism and gender equality, using language about male dominance and female manipulation. Entry points often look harmless: gym motivation, money advice, self-improvement content. Algorithms then gradually introduce more extreme material.

Key figures

Harrison Sullivan (HSTikkyTokky), Myron Gaines (Fresh and Fit podcast), Justin Waller, Sneako, and Andrew Tate are among the most prominent figures. A 2023 study found manosphere content had been viewed over 2.7 billion times on TikTok, primarily by boys aged 13 to 17. Research from 2022 found that 42 per cent of children aged 9 to 16 held neutral or favourable views of Andrew Tate.

Why does this matter for separated families?

Inconsistent messages across two homes can amplify a child's exposure and confusion. Conflict between parents about what is appropriate online can leave children caught in the middle. And children navigating separation already face elevated questions about identity, belonging, and what it means to be a man or a woman, exactly the questions the manosphere rushes to answer.



The Impact On Your Children

This affects all children, not just boys

Boys are disproportionately targeted. But girls are affected too, through peer relationships with boys who hold these views, through the normalisation of misogynistic language in school and online environments, and through the specific stress of navigating separated households that may model gender inequality differently. Younger children absorb the atmosphere in their households. Non-binary and gender-questioning young people may find the rigid gender frameworks promoted by these communities particularly harmful to their sense of self.

Children aged 5 to 10

Younger children are unlikely to have direct exposure but are highly attuned to parental conflict and the attitudes modelled by the adults around them. Research confirms that even toddlers detect and respond to tension between parents (Cummings and Davies, 2010). Watch for: shifts in language about gender roles, 'boys do this, girls do that' thinking, or distress that seems connected to parental conflict rather than anything your child can articulate.

Tip: At this age, the most important thing is modelling. How you speak about people of all genders, and how you handle disagreement with your co-parent, is more powerful than any conversation about online content.



Young People Aged 11 to 14

This is the age group most likely to encounter manosphere content for the first time. TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels are the primary channels. The algorithm escalates content gradually: the entry point may be gym motivation or money tips before more extreme material is introduced.

Signs to watch for:

- New dismissive language about women or girls
- Repeating influencer phrases ('sigma grindset', 'women are hypergamous', 'red-pilled')
- Sudden shame or anxiety about appearance, status, or sexual experience
- Withdrawal from offline friendships, spending increasing hours alone online

Tip: These are signals to get curious, not to panic or punish. A reaction that shames or bans can close the conversation down permanently. Approach it as: 'I'm interested in what you're watching. Tell me about it.'

Young People Aged 15 to 18

Older teenagers may be more deeply embedded in these communities and more resistant to direct challenge. Ofsted inspections from 2022 to 2025 have documented rising sexism among boys in secondary schools. NHS data shows significant increases in mental health referrals for adolescent boys correlating with anxiety, self-harm and school refusal.

For girls in this age group: the impact is often less visible but equally real. Navigating peer groups and relationships in which these ideas are normalised is exhausting and often invisible to adults.

Ask open questions. Take what she tells you seriously.

Tip: The best conversations are ongoing, not one-off lectures. Even if your teenager does not respond much right now, they are listening. Your calm, non-reactive presence over time is building something.



What To Do

Have the conversation

Understanding what your child watches online is the starting point. You do not need to be a tech expert. You need to ask, and listen before responding.

Model what you want to see

The adults in a child's life modelling respectful, emotionally honest behaviour are a more powerful counterweight to the manosphere than any single conversation.

Align across both homes where possible

Consistent expectations across two homes around devices, screen time, and respectful behaviour reduce confusion for children and prevent inconsistency from amplifying problems. The goal isn't identical households, it's shared core values.

[2]

Know the red flags online

Creators mocking women or girls.
Talking about 'red pill' versus 'blue pill'.
Ranking men by 'alpha/sigma/beta'.
Blaming feminism for male unhappiness.
Dismissing consent. Content that glorifies physical or emotional control over women. [1]

Co-parenting issues?

Focus discussions on your child's specific wellbeing, school behaviour, and relationships rather than ideological disagreement. Share evidence calmly, including Ofsted guidance, school letters, or the research cited in this guide.

Should I ban certain apps or influencers?

A mixed approach works better: age-appropriate limits, content filters, clear reasons for banning specific creators who promote violence or abuse, combined with open, ongoing conversation.

Supporting Your Child's Mental Health

What the research says

Children experiencing parental separation face higher emotional and behavioural risks not because of the separation itself, but due to ongoing conflict and inconsistent parenting[3]. Manosphere messages that shame boys for feeling and position girls as subordinate add an extra layer of strain.

What helps

- Model emotional openness by naming your feelings, showing it's a strength.
- Prioritise offline activities and relationships to support mental wellbeing.
- Recognise and validate the challenges of living between two homes.
- Create consistency and routine to provide stability.
- Support strong relationships with both parents, as this leads to better outcomes.



Seek help if you see: persistent withdrawal or isolation, significant changes in eating or sleeping, escalating anger or aggression, self-harm, glorification of violence, marked changes in school attendance or academic performance, or loss of interest in things they previously cared about.

First contact points

- Speak to your child's school (form tutor, head of year, or safeguarding lead)
- See your GP and ask for a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Contact Childline: 0800 1111 (for your child, free and confidential)
- YoungMinds crisis text line: text YM to 85258
- Kooth (free online mental health support for young people): kooth.com
- [10 healthy and 10 unhealthy signs of a relationship' resource as a conversation starter for parents](#)



BRIGHTER FUTURE MEDIATION

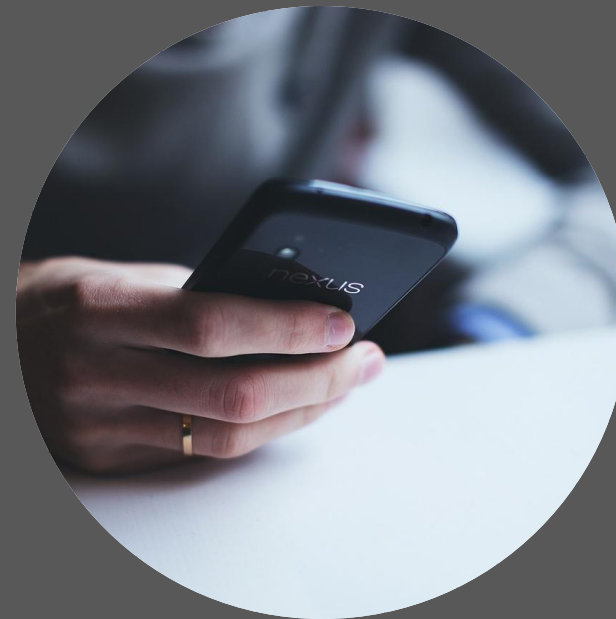
Supporting Directory

- **Childline** (free, confidential, 24 hours) — childline.org.uk / 0800 1111
- **YoungMinds** (mental health support for young people) — youngminds.org.uk / crisis text: text YM to 85258
- **Kooth** (free online counselling for young people) — kooth.com
- **Stem4** (mental health charity for teenagers) — stem4.org.uk
- **Place2Be** (school-based counselling) — place2be.org.uk
- **NSPCC helpline** (for parents with concerns about their child) — nspcc.org.uk / 0808 800 5000
- **CAMHS** (via GP referral) — nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults

For You

- **Brighter Future Mediation** (family and workplace mediation, FMC registered) — brighterfuturemediation.co.uk / 03332408038
- **£500 government family mediation voucher scheme** — gov.uk/guidance/family-mediation-voucher-scheme
- **Relate** (relationship and family counselling) — relate.org.uk / 0300 100 1234
- **Gingerbread** (single parents) — gingerbread.org.uk / 0808 802 0925
- **OnlyMums and OnlyDads** (support for separated parents) — onlymums.org / onlydads.org
- **Families Need Fathers** (support for dads) — fnf.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice** (rights, legal information) — citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Resolution** (qualified family lawyers) — resolution.org.uk

- Tip: LMK do excellent work with schools on relationship health. We have worked with them directly and their 10 signs tool is a brilliant way to start a conversation with a young person - [10 healthy and 10 unhealthy signs](#)



Online safety

- **UK Safer Internet Centre** (platform-by-platform guidance) — saferinternet.org.uk
- **Internet Matters** (parental controls by age and platform) — internetmatters.org
- **NSPCC online safety hub** — nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety
- **Thinkuknow / CEOP** (for reporting online harm) — thinkuknow.co.uk / ceop.police.uk

For your teenager (see separate guide)

- **Brighter Future Mediation teen guide** (free download) — brighterfuturemediation.co.uk
- **Childline** (for young people to contact themselves) — childline.org.uk / 0800 1111
- **YoungMinds** (young person-facing resources) — youngminds.org.uk



Reference And Resources

[1] Resource: NSPCC online safety hub (nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety) has platform-by-platform guidance on monitoring and reporting harmful content.

[2] £500 government family mediation voucher: You may be eligible for a £500 voucher towards the cost of family mediation for child arrangement matters. Check eligibility at gov.uk/guidance/family-mediation-voucher-scheme

[3] Amato, 2000; Harold and Leve, 2012

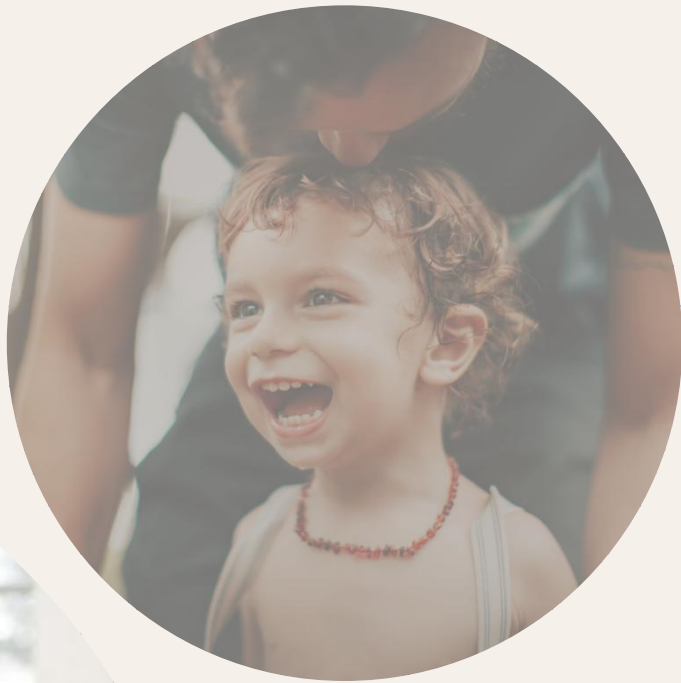
[4] Louis Theroux documentary, the BBC Men of the Manosphere, the 2.7 billion TikTok views study,

[5] 2022 Andrew Tate research

[6] Ofsted 2022 to 2025

[7] NHS referrals data

[8] Cummings and Davies 2010.



You do not have to get this perfectly right. You have to stay present, stay curious, and keep the relationship open. The research is unambiguous: a warm, consistent adult in a child's life is the most powerful protective factor available. That adult can be you.

Brighter Future Mediation | brighterfuturemediation.co.uk | 03332408038 |
info@brighterfuturemediation.co.uk

Instagram @brighterfuturemediation | Facebook: Brighter Future Mediation Limited |
LinkedIn: Brighter Future Mediation Limited | TikTok @brighterfuturemediation

This guide is for information only and does not constitute legal advice. Brighter Future Mediation Ltd, Company No. 16018531. Registered address: 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4NE.