

## Advice services

Duo provides confidential advice and information on, for example, intercultural relationships, family life and parenthood. People who meet intercultural couples and families through their work can also contact us. The advice service can be contacted by phone or through email.

For the telephone advice service phone 044 543 8972, Wed 9.30am–11.30am, for the cost of a mobile phone call. The calls are answered in English and in Finnish.

For the email advice service email us at [duo@familiaclub.fi](mailto:duo@familiaclub.fi). The emails are answered in English and in Finnish.

## Training

Duo offers its expertise to others through training, lectures, consultation services and partnership. Duo provides tailored training solutions, for example, to social workers and kindergarten teachers about the special characteristics and challenges of intercultural families.

Duo also trains voluntary discussion group facilitators. The group facilitator training gives basic skills as well as readiness to facilitate groups, increases self-knowledge and interaction and conflict resolution skills.



*Duo forms part of the activities of Familia Club ry. Familia Club is a politically and religiously unaligned association founded in 1988. People from over 40 different countries are involved in its activities. Familia Club's and Duo's funding comes mainly from RAY (Finland's Slot Machine Association) and City of Helsinki.*

## Further information

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– for intercultural  
couples and families

## Duo for intercultural couples and families

Duo offers various activities to the 60 000 intercultural families living in Finland today. The activities include intercultural family training and discussion groups just to name a few. Duo's main aim is to foster the resources and well-being of people living in intercultural relationships. Duo works together with different organisations and city councils.

### Discussion groups

Discussion groups form an important part of Duo's activities. The groups are based on peer support which is born from the open communication and mutual understanding of people sharing the same life situation. Duo's groups provide a place for people to share their thoughts and experiences in a friendly and confidential environment. The discussions concentrate on the positive, but there is room for honest talk about difficult things as well. The participants get new insights and ideas, which they are able to use in their day-to-day lives. Participating in a group also provides a natural opportunity to make new friends.

*"The group has been a wonderful and relaxing experience since the beginning. It is immensely liberating to be able to talk with people who genuinely understand."*

*"The atmosphere of the group is relaxed and open. I don't have to be nervous about coming to the meeting."*

### Family training

When parents from different cultural backgrounds bring up a child together, two parenting styles as well as two cultures will merge. Successfully combining two cultures requires the ability to negotiate and discuss matters openly. The aim of Duo's family training is to provide a place for expecting couples to share mutual experiences and feelings about becoming a parent. The couples will also get information and new ideas, for example, about how to support children's multilingualism and identity. The groups are also a natural place to get to know other couples who share the same life situation. Duo's family training complements the family training provided by maternity guidance centers (neuvola) but does not replace it.

*"I enjoyed all the subjects. Best thing is to hear experiences of other people."*

*"The subject on children's identity was useful. It gave me an insight into how multiethnic child might be treated in Finland and the questions such a child might have."*

*"Definitely I got more confident about how I should deal with all this and that the thoughts we had were going towards right direction rather than wrong."*

*"Everything felt relevant. It was nice to meet other couples in a similar situation."*

*"It was great; well organised and inspiring!"*

### Relationship coaching

Duo's relationship coaching is aimed at intercultural couples wanting to develop their relationship skills and find new views to everyday life. The aim of relationship coaching is to strengthen the interaction and conflict resolution skills of couples, and to give them an opportunity to get to know each other better. Instead of concentrating on cultural differences Duo intends to promote the concept of a third culture within a family. Third culture combines the best of both worlds as well as creates new ways. The third culture is shaped by the couple's experiences and different phases of life.

*"It was good to have the time and opportunity to concentrate on some specific topics with my partner."*

*"It felt like being on a holiday with my partner!"*

*"I learned new ways to take care of our relationship."*

*"I learned different techniques to solve conflicts."*

