

## COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

Report NINA LAMPARSKI



# Anger management

Let's be honest: we've all been guilty of storming out on our partner after an ugly screaming match and refusing to sort out the matter until they come crawling back to us. If only we listened to Roman philosopher Horace's wise musings that "once a word has been allowed to escape, it cannot be recalled". Our inability to communicate is reflected in bleak divorce figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. While 160,400 marriages were registered in 2003, courts also granted

53,100 divorces – a 10 per cent increase since 1993. On the one hand we now possess tools to communicate more effectively than ever before. Yet, ironically, this evolution leads us to shorten our words and end romances via a text message or email.

If your love life is in a verbal cul-de-sac, a counsellor may be able to help. Phone Relationships Australia on 9387 4211 or visit [www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)

They are in Suite 1902, Tower 1, 500 Oxford Street, Bondi Junction.

## Read of the week

How often have you desperately tried to understand why your baby was crying? Parents are faced with a tough task when it comes to communicating with their bubs. Jackie Durnin's book *Australian Baby Hands* is a fascinating step-by-step guide (endorsed by Deaf Children Australia) to teaching you how to converse with pre-verbal kids using Australian baby sign language. Your child can learn to sign words like "eat", "drink" or "change". Scientific studies indicate that babies may later benefit with higher IQs, advanced early literacy skills and improved memory. Get your copy for \$29.95 from Dymocks, 1 Newland Street, Bondi Junction, or visit [www.australianbabyhands.com.au](http://www.australianbabyhands.com.au)



## Forget-me-nots

Here are few hints on how to fall in love all over again if the flame is in danger of sizzling out:

1. Never assume, always ask. No matter how close you are, you cannot read your partner's mind.
2. Think ahead. Suppress the urge to blurt out spontaneously and be clear about what you want to say.
3. Express yourself. Use statements like "I need", "I want" and "I feel".
4. Listen up. Be open and willing to hear your partner's side of things.
5. Make time. Close the door, don't answer the phone and give each other undivided attention. It's important to leave the outside world outside.

## Get giggly

Laughter has got to be the most infectious way of communication among humans. Not only does it make you feel better but the fun can spread to others and improve their mood, too. A daily dose of laughter may also be good for the heart because, like exercise, it helps blood vessels to work more efficiently. Research has shown that kids

