



KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH NEWS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES IN WA FAMILY LAW

January 2023

## Greetings from the Chair

by Mark O'Hare

Happy New Year and welcome to 2023 everyone.

This year we have partnered with the State Library of WA and planned six forums using the Aboriginal seasons (Noongar Bonar) as a catalyst for their topics which include adolescence, adulthood, fertility, conception, birth and the young.

The Network has committed to bringing the eSafety Commissioner's Leonie Burnham to Perth, Geraldton and Bunbury in February to deliver their Technology Facilitated Abuse Family Violence Workshops.

And the regions won't be missing out as Legal Aid's Sharon Pedley works her way around the Kalgoorlie, Albany, Bunbury, Broome and Geraldton circuit with the touring Family Court Magistrate in January, February, May, July and October.

Sharon will deliver a one hour talk on [coercive control](#).

WA has also been nominated along with the ACT Network

to coordinate the National FLPN webinars with the first talk on the [Lighthouse Project airing Tuesday 21 February](#).



I would also like to welcome Jazmin to the admin team as our events officer. Jazmin has recently graduated from South metropolitan Tafe, Bentley with a diploma of Event Management.

While you are here, please take the time to register as a member - receiving the eBulletin is different from being a member.

[Free membership](#) gives you access to the members area containing information from past events such as photographs, articles and power point presentations that are otherwise inaccessible



on the general website which we are currently working on updating.

All the best,  
Mark

### **Birak**

First summer

December-January

**Season of the young**

Dry and hot

Burning time



## SPOTLIGHT



## FREE Parenting Program

### Bringing Up Great Kids

'Bringing Up Great Kids' is a six week reflective parenting program developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation.

The program will help you identify and communicate the important messages you want to give your child and better understand the meaning of your child's behaviour.

**Where:** Centrecare Midland, 45 Yelverton Drive  
**Dates:** Every Wednesday morning for six weeks - March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5 (2023)  
**Time:** 10.00 am – 12.00 pm  
**Cost:** Free

For further information or to register please contact Centrecare Midland on (08 9436 0600)



The Children's Matters Stakeholder Forum is held in Geraldton 3 times per year, in conjunction with the Family Court circuit.

Our aim is to provide a forum for networking, information sharing and education sessions for stakeholders, including legal practitioners, FDRPs, Children's Contact Service, Family Court of WA on circuit, local Courthouse staff, family violence support workers, Ngala and other interested parties and organisations.

At the January 2023 Children's Matters Stakeholder Forum, we plan to address the topic of "Incarceration and the Family Unit" - there will be a panel featuring agency representatives sharing information about the services they currently deliver at Greenough Regional Prison followed by some general discussion around the importance of and link between family connections and recidivism.

This topic will be followed by discussion/questions with a panel comprising of:

- Chris Gablish - oversees the Reintegration and Homelessness programs of Regional Alliance West
- Sandra Nairn - from Communicare who run a Men's Behaviour Change program at the prison

- Sandy from Centacare Counselling Services

- Glenys Ulrich from Desert Blue Connect

- Dean Wellman/Nicholas Mitchell from the Greenough Regional prison

## Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Webinar:

### The Lighthouse Model & it's Expansion

Tuesday, 21 February 2023,  
10:00 - 11:30 pm AWST

You're invited to join the National Family Law Pathways Network for a webinar discussing the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia's (FCFCOA) Lighthouse Model and it's expansion.

During this webinar, a representative of the FCFCOA will provide you with an overview of the elements of the Lighthouse Model, what this means for the experiences of families entering the courts, what the courts have learnt, what changes to expect and where to go for information and resources.

**REGISTER NOW**

## RESEARCH

## System for enforcing parenting orders is ineffective and needs to align with Children's best interests, ANROWS research finds

Giving children an opportunity to participate in family law decision-making and remaining flexible and responsive to their changing needs over time are critical to ensuring parenting arrangements are in the best interests of all children.

A new study published by ANROWS, [Compliance with and enforcement of family law parenting orders: Final report](#), has found that the majority of professionals and parents it surveyed consider the existing scheme for enforcing family law parenting orders to be ineffective. For example, the professionals said that the financial costs, personal costs, and the complexity of court processes mean the contravention scheme does not meet the needs of families.

The large mixed methods study, led by Australian Institute of Family Studies researchers Dr Rae Kaspiew and Dr Rachel Carson, found an inherent tension in the contravention scheme between acting in the best interests of child(ren) and upholding the authority of the court.

### [Read More](#)

Carson, R., Kaspiew, R., Qu, L., De Maio, J., Rhoades, H., Stevens, E., Horsfall, B., Press, L., & Dimopoulos, G. (2022). Compliance with and enforcement of family law parenting orders: Final report (Research report, 20/2022). ANROWS.

## WEBINAR



## How to support clients exposed to technology-facilitated coercive control

Coercive control is the overarching context that intimate partner violence occurs within. Coercive control involves ongoing, repetitive and cumulative tactics that impact the victim-survivor's autonomy, liberty and equality.<sup>1</sup>

In technology-facilitated coercive control, various forms of technology are used to extend the perpetrator's ability to monitor and maintain surveillance of the victim-survivor. Technology also provides avenues to harass, threaten and shame victim-survivors, manipulate their social relationships and ensure compliance with demands.

Victim-survivors commonly experience a combination of technology-facilitated and face-to-face psychological, physical, sexual and/or financial abuse. An important consideration for practitioners is that victim survivors may not know that what they are experiencing is abuse and may not have the ability to access support because they are being monitored.

Drawing on the latest research and practitioner insights this webinar:

Describes what technology-facilitated coercive control looks like in practice.

Provides examples of the different ways that victim-survivors might experience technology-facilitated coercive control.

Suggests strategies for face-to-face and telehealth practice.

### [Watch here](#)

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. (2021). Defining and responding to coercive control: Policy brief (ANROWS Insights, 01/2021). ANROWS.

### [Extended Q&A](#)

Join presenters: Dr Evita March, Niamh O'Connor and Kristen Poel, for from the webinar above

It is recommended that you watch the webinar to get the most out of the next session which is pre-recorded and facilitated by Dr Jasmine B. MacDonald and Melissa Willoughby

### [Register here](#)

**Date: Wednesday,  
15 February 2023.**

**Time: 10am-10:30am**

## WHAT'S NEWS



**Australian Government**

**Attorney-General's Department**

## Consultation on draft Family Law Amendment Bill 2023

**The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP**

The Albanese Government has released draft legislation to make the Family Law Act simpler and safer for separating families and their children.

Recent inquiries, including the 2019 Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry and the 2021 Parliamentary Joint Select Committee inquiry, have highlighted the challenges facing the family law system.

Extensive court delays, protracted litigation, inaccessible support services and inadequate protection for people at risk of family violence are just some of the issues that have dogged the family law system for many years.

The Albanese Government's draft Family Law Amendment Bill places the best interests of children at the centre of the family law system.

These long overdue proposed reforms replace the often confusing law around parenting arrangements with a simpler child-focused framework that will guide parents who can agree on their own post-separation parenting arrangements. It will also streamline the process for courts who determine the minority of parenting disputes where agreement has not been reached.

Currently, custody arrangements require the court to consider two primary factors and thirteen additional factors; and be guided by four objects, five principles and one presumption. The proposed reforms replace these with six simple 'best interests' factors for courts to decide what the best parenting arrangements are for each child.

Recent inquiries have shown that the presumption of 'equal shared parental responsibility' provisions are widely misunderstood, causing prolonged litigation and conflict. The draft legislation repeals these provisions, making clear that the best interests of children are paramount.

The draft legislation also:

- Introduces a requirement for Independent Children's Lawyers (ICLs), when they are appointed, to meet directly with children;
- Increases judicial discretion to appoint ICLs in matters under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction;
- Provides courts with greater powers to protect parties and children from the harmful effects of protracted and adversarial litigation;
- Provides a definition of 'member of the family'

in the Family Law Act that is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts of family and kinship;

- Simplifies compliance and enforcement provisions for child-related orders; and
- Creates regulation-making powers to enable Government to establish schemes that set requirements for family law report writers.

These draft amendments implement recommendations from the Australian Law Reform Commission's 2019 report and elements of the Government Response to the 2021 Joint Select Committee on Australia's Family Law System.

In the nine years the former government was in office there were at least two dozen reviews into the family law system, with hundreds of recommendations that were simply ignored. The Albanese Government will be acting this year to legislate a simpler and safer Family Law Act for families and their children.

A consultation paper released to accompany the draft legislation seeks feedback from stakeholders on the amendments in the Bill to improve the drafting and implementation of the reforms.

Submissions on the Bill are due on 27 February 2023.

Information on how to make a submission is available at

[Family Law Amendment Bill 2023 consultation page.](#)

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**NOONGAR BONAR  
BUNURU FORUM -****Join us for our second  
seasonal topic**

Teenagers in Family Court:  
the ethical considerations  
of including children in the  
Family Court process.

**WHERE:** State Library of WA**WHEN:** Wed 15 March 2023**TIME:** 3:45 PM- 5:30 PM**COST:** Free

REGISTRATIONS OPEN  
SOON



**WAFLPN  
CONFERENCE  
9 & 10 MAY 2023**

**Join us to celebrate International Women's Day!**

# CRAFTER NOON

**3-6pm  
Friday 10/03/23**

A chance for the committed women in our sector to take time out to

**connect, chat and create!****Level 6, 445 Hay St, Perth**

Refreshments will be served

**Donation on entry (to cover costs)****[REGISTER HERE](#)**

NOTICE BOARD

What’s happening around town

If you or your organisation has something to announce, pin it on the board! Submit an article for the notice board by emailing: [WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipswa.org.au)

Service Wait Times

Find waiting periods for WA Family law services on our website [here](#)

Walk in Their Shoes Tours



They’re here!

FVRO Walk in Their Shoes Tours of the Magistrates Court of WA

Thursday  
02 March 2023

Register [here](#)

Walk in Their Shoes Tours



The next tour will take place on 09 February 2023 at the Family Court of WA Register [here](#)

Register your service

The FLPN Service Directory is an online referral tool. It is an easily accessible database containing information on government-funded & organisation-run services which work with families who are separating, or have separated Register your service [here](#).

Disclaimer

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Feedback

If you have any suggestions on how to improve our ebulletin, please email them to [annette.marie@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:annette.marie@relationshipswa.org.au)

