



**Family Law**  
**PATHWAYS**  
**NETWORK**

**WESTERN**  
**AUSTRALIA**

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

MARCH 2021

## Greetings from the Chair

by Karen Barker

Hello from WAFLPN!



I am very excited to announce that [registrations are now open for our Annual Conference!](#)

The conference will be taking place on 25 May 2021, with a post-conference workshop on 26 May 2021.

With the theme 'Shaping the Future of Family Law in 2021: Ideas, Innovation, Inspiration', the conference will showcase innovative practices currently occurring in the family law sector in WA and explore ideas for further improvements that can be made to the system going forward.

The conference on 25 May will feature presentations by Professor Victoria Hovane, FDV Perpetrator Response Consultant Kate Jeffries, a Children's Court Pilot Court panel, a panel from the Family Court of WA, and a lived experience presentation on the journey through the Family Court.

The workshop day on 26 May will be a two part FDV Informed professional development workshop designed to be suitable for a range of professionals working to assess and reduce the risk of Family and Domestic Violence.

Don't forget to register before **16 April** to take advantage of early bird ticket prices!

For more information about the conference and to purchase tickets, visit [wafpn.org.au/2021-conference](http://wafpn.org.au/2021-conference) and sign up for [Conference eNews](#) to receive all the latest updates.

Aside from organising the annual conference, on 18 March WAFLPN was part of an insightful and very well-received webinar with Zoe Rathus on the difficult topic of parental alienation, presented in collaboration with other FLPNs across Australia.

Continue reading this eBulletin for more information about the next webinar in the National FLPN Webinar Series and other upcoming events, a selection of current research in family law, and the latest news and resources from the sector.

On a final note, in light of International Women's Day taking place earlier this month, I would like to acknowledge the immense contributions made by all the women working as part of and alongside the family law system

Wishing everyone a lovely Easter holiday break, and hope to see you at the conference!



**TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**



**Shaping the Future of Family Law in 2021**

IDEAS. INNOVATION. INSPIRATION.



WWW.WAFLPN.ORG.AU/2021-CONFERENCE  
PH: (08) 6117 5520 | EMAIL: EVOLVE@EVOLVEVENTS.COM.AU

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Upcoming training and networking opportunities**

If you are running a training event and would like it included in our next eBulletin please contact

[WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au)

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW:  
WAFLPN 2021 Annual  
Conference & Workshop Day**

The WA Family Law Pathways Network invites you to join us for our Annual Conference and Workshop Day to be held on 25 & 26 May 2021 respectively, at the beautiful Burswood on Swan. With the theme 'Shaping the Future of Family Law in 2021: Ideas, Innovation and Inspiration', this year's conference will be of interest to professionals from a range of disciplines working in, or alongside, the family law system.

Conference: 25 May 2021  
Workshop: 26 May 2021  
9am-4.30pm  
Burswood on Swan, 1 Camfield Dr, Burswood WA  
Ticketing information: [waflpn.org.au/2021-conference/registrations](https://waflpn.org.au/2021-conference/registrations)

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS  
(25 May 2021) INCLUDE:**

- Victoria Hovane, Professor, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia
- Kate Jeffries, Consultant, FDV Perpetrator Response
- Family Court Panel with Chief Judge Sutherland, Magistrate Anderson and Registrar French
- Children's Court Pilot Court panel : Innovative Practices in the Children's Court
- Lived experience speaker on the journey through the Family Court.

**WORKSHOP DAY (26 May 2021)**

An informative two-part FDV Informed professional development workshop, suitable for diverse professionals, working to assess and reduce the risk of Family and Domestic Violence.

- Towards Men's Behaviour Change led by the WA Men's Behaviour Change Program Network
- FDV Informed Family Assessment led by Stopping Family Violence

Visit our conference website [waflpn.org.au/2021-conference](https://waflpn.org.au/2021-conference) and subscribe to our [conference eNews](#) for updates.

**National FLPN Webinar - Dispute Resolution Events in the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia: What every practitioner needs to know**

In 2021 the courts will offer significant family dispute resolution events and practitioners can expect to see orders for such events made with increasing frequency. In this session the Courts' Executive Director of Dispute Resolution, Senior Registrar Anne-Marie Rice, will provide an overview of these and other court-based ADR events and provide tips on what to expect and how best to prepare.

*WAFLPN members should note that due to WA having a state-based family court system, information presented in this webinar specifically relating to the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia would not apply for WA.*

Tuesday, 27 April 2021  
11.00am-12.30pm AWST  
Online webinar  
Free, registrations essential  
[Register here](#)

More details on the [WAFLPN website](#).

**FDV Conference 2021 -  
Bringing Children and Young  
People into View**

[External/non-WAFLPN event]

Join Stopping Family Violence and the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing at this important three day event in September 2021, which will bring together non-government community services, the government sector and the broader community to critically examine, discuss and explore policy and practice responses to better support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence.

13-15 September 2021  
8.30am-5.30pm  
Crown Perth, Burswood WA  
Tickets starting from \$125

For more information and to register, visit [fdvconference.com.au](https://fdvconference.com.au).



BRINGING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE INTO VIEW

**MORE TRAINING AND EVENTS**

Check out the 'Resources' section on our website for more relevant training and events.

<https://waflpn.org.au/resources/other-relevant-training-and-events>

## RESEARCH &amp; PRACTICE

## The latest contributions to evidence-based practice in family law

If you are undertaking research in the field of family law that you think may be of interest to WAFLPN members, please contact us to have it included in our eBulletin.

[WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au)

### Building evidence for family group decision-making in child welfare: operationalizing the intervention

Family group decision-making (FGDM) is a system reform strategy that positions family groups as decision-making leaders in family meetings, based on family-centered, strength-based, culturally relevant principles. Evidence of outcomes of family meetings is equivocal due to the differences in models and insufficient operationalization of core components. An important phase of intervention research mandates the importance of clearly operationalizing the intervention before efficacy or effectiveness can be evaluated. Using the framework for building evidence in child welfare, this paper reports on operationalization of core components of FGDM designed to serve three target child welfare populations.

[Read abstract or purchase article](#)

Lalayants, M., DePanfilis, D., Merkel-Holguin, L., Baldwin, M., Schmidt, M., Treinen, J., Zuñiga, D., Mackereth, C. & Anderson, T. (2021). Building evidence for family group decision-making in child welfare: operationalizing the intervention. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*.

### The Hague Convention and Transnational Custody Disputes

Adopted on October 24, 1980, the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction was designed to address the problem of international parental child abduction. The Convention places a premium on prompt return in circumstances where a child was removed from one jurisdiction by a parent – the jurisdiction of “habitual residence” – in breach of the custody rights of the “left behind” parent. Once returned, custody can be determined by the relevant authorities in the jurisdiction of habitual residence. Habitual residence is central to the operation of the Convention, since the return mechanism in art. Twelve will only be triggered when a child is wrongfully removed from their State of habitual residence. The Supreme Court of Canada applies the “hybrid approach” to determining habitual residence, which treats the circumstances of the children and the intentions of the parties as factors to be considered in achieving a just result which fulfills the objectives of the Hague Convention. Under the hybrid approach, the court has the task of determining the focal point of the child’s life immediately prior to the removal or retention. The child’s perspective is thereby put squarely at the centre of Convention applications. Canada’s approach represents an evolution from the formalism of early cases to a recognition that the best interests of children generally is not a substitute for the best interests of the particular children before the court.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Abella, J.R.S. & Plant, J. (2021). The Hague Convention and Transnational Custody Disputes. *Family Court Review*.

### Intensive intervention with families experiencing multiple and complex challenges: An alternative to child removal in a bi- and multi-cultural context?

In New Zealand, families facing possible child removal experience multiple challenges including poverty, family violence, parental mental health and substance abuse issues and historical and inter-generational trauma. Lack of resources to facilitate the intensive intervention needed to address such complexity increases the risk that removal is seen as the only way to ensure safety. Criticism of increasing removal rates for young children with significant over-representation of indigenous children has led to allocation of funding to establish Intensive Intervention services. New Zealand has a history of importing ‘evidence-based’ models from other countries. A review of what is currently known about intensive intervention with families where there is risk of a child removal was undertaken to explore the challenges that might arise in our bi- and multi-cultural environment. Critical factors for effective intervention are discussed before concluding with consideration of implications for other countries with histories of colonization and culturally diverse populations.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Atwool, N. (2021). Intensive intervention with families experiencing multiple and complex challenges: An alternative to child removal in a bi- and multi-cultural context? *Child & Family Social Work*. 2021: 1-9..

## 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@relationships.wa.gov.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.gov.au)

### Joint Select Committee on Australia's Family Law System Releases Second Interim Report

The Joint Select Committee on Australia's Family Law System was appointed by resolution of the Senate on 18 September 2019 and resolution of the House of Representatives on 19 September 2019.

The committee was originally due to present its final report on or before 7 October 2020. On 31 August 2020, both Houses of Parliament agreed to extend the reporting date to 25 February 2021.

The committee tabled its [first interim report](#) on 7 October 2020.

The committee tabled its [second interim report](#) on 15 and 16 March 2021. The second interim report details the committee's views and recommendations on the family law system. This concludes the committee's inquiry into the family law system.

On 22 and 23 February 2021, the Parliament agreed to extend the presentation of the final report until 30 June 2021. The committee intends that the final report will outline the committee's views and recommendations on the child support system and its interaction with the family law system.

For more information about this inquiry, visit [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/Family\\_Law\\_System/FamilyLaw](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Family_Law_System/FamilyLaw)

### Consultation Paper Released: Establishment of an Accreditation System for Children's Contact Services

The Government is committed to ongoing improvements to the family law, courts and legal assistance systems to ensure that they help families separate in a safe, child-centred, accessible, and timely way. To this end, the Attorney-General's Department is pleased to announce the release of the consultation paper; *Establishment of an Accreditation Scheme for Children's Contact Services*.

The consultation paper is available now on the department's website at [www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/consultations/establishment-accreditation-system-childrens-contact-services](http://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/consultations/establishment-accreditation-system-childrens-contact-services)

The paper is intended to start a dialogue between the department and the family law services sector in order to establish the key issues within the industry and begin developing options for an accreditation scheme. As WAFLPN is made up of family law service practitioners, the department is interested in the views of the Network and its members.

The consultation period commenced on **21 March 2021** and will run until **14 May 2021**. Family law service practitioners are invited to participate in the consultation process and provide their feedback.

If you have any questions or require further information, the project team can be contacted at [ccsaccreditation@ag.gov.au](mailto:ccsaccreditation@ag.gov.au)

[More information about the consultation here.](#)

### FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

Follow [@FamilyPathwayWA](https://twitter.com/FamilyPathwayWA) on twitter for the latest information and interesting articles relating to family law

### New resource from Emerging Minds and the FrameWorks Institute: Reframing children's mental health – a communications toolkit

The words we use make a difference. Research shows that child mental health experts and practitioners working with children, parents/adults and families have different understandings about children's mental health. How we communicate our messages is key to bridging this gap.

This [toolkit](#), by the FrameWorks Institute and the Emerging Minds: National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health (NWC), has been developed for this purpose. It is based on research about how practitioners understand children's mental health, and how their understanding impacts their support for policies to promote better mental health outcomes for Australia's children. It is intended to support child mental health experts and organisations who communicate about children's mental health to create messages that resonate and inspire positive change.

[Access the toolkit here.](#)

[More about Emerging Minds.](#)

[More about the FrameWorks Institute.](#)

### DISCLAIMER

Content included in this eBulletin originates from a range of sources including contributors from the wider community. The opinions and viewpoints contained do not necessarily reflect those of WAFLPN or its affiliates.