



# WAfamily pathways network

## WA Family Pathways Network eBulletin

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

AUGUST 2015

## Greetings from the Chair

by Kathryn Lawrence

Hello from WAFPN! It's a busy time for the sector and I hope this bulletin will help you navigate the current issues.

The Royal Commission on Family Violence in Victoria has been holding a public hearing over the last few weeks and a number of interesting issues have arisen. We are going to be taking a closer look at perpetrator interventions in particular a little bit later in the year with a one-day event. We will have more details about that in next month's eBulletin. For more information on the Royal Commission on Family Violence, see the 'Notice Board' section of this bulletin.

The Family Law Council is seeking submissions around enhancing decision-making and support for the

growing number of client families with multiple and complex needs within the family law system. Full details of how to submit are available in this bulletin. The deadline for submissions is September 15.

WAFPN is pleased to be partnering with Communicare and South West Counselling Inc. to be presenting a one day South West conference: 'The intersection between post-separation services and the Family Court' in Busselton on August 31. A number of our WAFPN steering committee members are speaking and one of our favourite speakers, Principal Registrar David Monaghan is the keynote. For more details see the 'Events' section of this bulletin.

As usual if you have any queries about anything in this eBulletin,



please feel free to get in touch with Jane  
[jane.azzopardi@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@relationshipswa.org.au)

Or join a conversation with us on Twitter [@FamilyPathwayWA](https://twitter.com/FamilyPathwayWA).

# Family Law Council Terms of Reference

## Call for Submissions

The Attorney-General, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC, has asked the Family Law Council to report on ways of improving responses to families with complex needs who use the family law system. The reference reflects the evidence that many families who seek to resolve their parenting disputes are affected by multiple and complex risk issues – including concerns about child abuse, family violence, substance abuse and mental illness – and that addressing the needs of these families can be complicated or frustrated by the interaction and division of State, Territory and Federal laws.

The terms of reference ask Council to examine the benefits for families of enabling the family courts to exercise the powers of relevant state and territory courts, including Children's Courts, and vice versa.

Council has also been asked to investigate the opportunities for enhancing collaboration and information-sharing between the family courts and relevant services such as child protection agencies, family violence services, and drug and alcohol services.

Council is currently seeking submissions about questions 3 and 4 of the reference, which are concerned with enhancing decision-making and support for the growing number of client families with multiple and complex needs within the family law system. Responses to the following questions will be used to inform a Discussion Paper that will

be released later in 2015. The following questions are provided to guide submissions on these issues:

- How can the exchange of information between the family courts and family relationship services (such as family dispute resolution services, counselling services and parenting order programs) be facilitated in a way that maintains the integrity of therapeutic service provision?
- What opportunities exist for ensuring the early assessment of risk to children in family law matters?
- How can services such as mental health, family violence, and drug and alcohol services make relevant information available to the courts to support decision-making in cases where families have complex needs?
- What services are needed to support families and children who use the family law system where child safety concerns are identified?

- How can there be enhanced interaction between the family courts and relevant services, including family violence, mental health services, drug and alcohol services and support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families?
- What opportunities exist for developing integrated responses to families with complex needs who use the family law system?
- Is there a need for a specialist case co-ordination approach to families with complex needs, and what opportunities exist for developing such an approach?

**The deadline for submissions on these questions is 15 September 2015.**

For more details or to submit visit <http://www.ag.gov.au/FamiliesAndMarriage/FamilyLawCouncil/Pages/FamilyLawCounciltermsofreference.aspx>

### Change of WAFPN email addresses

Relationships Australia WA, WAFPN's auspice organisation, has changed its website to [relationshipsaustralia.org.au](http://relationshipsaustralia.org.au) as of July 1.

This means the following WAFPN email addresses have changed:

Jane Azzopardi, WAFPN Network Development Officer email address is now [jane.azzopardi@relationshipsaustralia.org.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@relationshipsaustralia.org.au)

WAFPN general enquiries email address is now [wa.familypathwaynetwork@relationshipsaustralia.org.au](mailto:wa.familypathwaynetwork@relationshipsaustralia.org.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)

31 August 2015  
8am-4.30pm  
Busselton Community Resource Centre

For more information and to register visit

<http://www.communicare.org.au/index.php/intersection2015>

Seminar Room, Grace Vaughan House  
227 Stubbs Terrace Shenton Park  
Gold coin donation

For more information or to register visit

<http://www.leadriama.org/events/event/WASIGEvent-FDRPs-24august>

**Conference: The Intersection between Post-Separation Services and the Family Court**

WAFPN, Communicare and South West Counselling Inc. present a one day conference: 'The intersection between post-separation services and the Family Court' in Busselton on August 31.

The sharing of information between community agencies and the family court often provides a complex challenge for many professionals working across the family law sector. This one day conference will hear from industry professionals as they share information on the service needs of families after separation and the link between agencies and the family law system

Keynote speakers include:

- David Monaghan - Family Court of WA
- Julie Jackson - Legal Aid WA
- Paul Kerin - Family Court Counselling & Consultancy Service
- Rebecca Burns - Edith Cowan University
- Kate Jeffries - Communicare Inc.

**WA Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners Special Interest Group**

The WA FDRP Special Interest Group (SIG) invites FDRPs to this event which is the third in a series of events on FDRPs obligations to inform. Regulation 28 of the Family Law FDRP Regulations requires FDRPs to inform participants about legal advice, confidentiality, admissibility of FDR evidence in Court, qualifications, fees, certificates, the effect of refusal of FDR, when FDR is mandated, and complaints.

Please join us in exchanging insights and discussion around the following:

- Issues of Section 601(8) certificates
- The effect of these certificates
- Complaints mechanisms

The WA FDR SIG focuses specifically on the interests of FDRPs in private practice, providing a space for enjoyable, collegial interactions, with opportunities to enhance knowledge and improve service.

24 August 2015  
5.30-6.30pm

**WALK IN THEIR SHOES TOURS**

WAFPN's popular Family Court tours fill up fast! This is a fantastic opportunity to experience the pathways families take when attending the Family Court of WA.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST TO ATTEND  
[jane.azzopardi@relationships.wa.org.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@relationships.wa.org.au)

**Our Aim**

Improve collaboration and coordination between organisations operating in the Family Law system

To assist separating families obtain appropriate services

## 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 WAFPN members please contact us to have it included in our eBulletin

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

### National mapping and meta-evaluation outlining key features of effective "safe at home" programs that enhance safety and prevent homelessness for women and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence: State of knowledge paper

This state of knowledge paper discusses the history and development of "safe at home" approaches, and the corresponding policy and practice context. It outlines current safe at home approaches in Australia and overseas and common program elements across jurisdictions. The paper presents four philosophical pillars as the platform on which "safe at home" responses were founded: 1) promoting safety; 2) operating as an integrated response; 3) promoting economic security; and 4) preventing homelessness. It also provides a preliminary mapping of current services and initiatives in Australia and overseas, and how legislative and policy contexts influence such programs.

Full article:

[http://issuu.com/anrows/docs/3.1\\_fin\\_al\\_safe\\_at\\_home\\_24\\_7\\_2015/33?e=15370348/14371083](http://issuu.com/anrows/docs/3.1_fin_al_safe_at_home_24_7_2015/33?e=15370348/14371083)

Breckenridge, J., Chung, D., Spinney, A., & Zufferey, C. (2015). National mapping and meta-evaluation outlining key features of effective "safe at home" programs that enhance safety and prevent homelessness for women and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence: State of knowledge paper. ANROWS Landscapes.

### Family Peacemaking with an Interdisciplinary Team: A Therapist's Perspective

Interdisciplinary teams provide an unparalleled opportunity for peacemaking in families within the consensual dispute resolution continuum. This interdisciplinary environment was born out of the integration of Collaborative Law, in which lawyers limit the scope of their services to settlement by way of a signed agreement, and Collaborative Divorce, a team approach to divorce services that includes a lawyer for each party along with a Collaborative Divorce Coach for each party, a neutral financial specialist, and a neutral child specialist. Taken together, Interdisciplinary Collaborative Practice supports the resolution of legal issues out of court as well as addressing any emotional, relational, or behavioural problems that create obstacles to the successful resolution of the separation process.

Abstract:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/fcre.12159/abstract>

Gamache, S. J. (2015). Family Peacemaking with an Interdisciplinary Team: A Therapist's Perspective. *Family Court Review*, 53(3), 378-387.

### Research Review: Engaging men: a multi-level model to support father engagement

While there is a growing body of work on using fatherhood as an opportunity to engage men in strategies to prevent child maltreatment and further acts of domestic violence, there is limited research on engaging fathers in strategies to prevent domestic violence from occurring. This paper explores existing father engagement frameworks used in child and family services and supports a multi-level model of father engagement for domestic violence primary prevention. Drawing together evidence about father engagement from a range of studies, including the more general parenting literature, it describes factors that influence father engagement based on an analysis of the literature.

Abstract:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cfs.12250/abstract>

Pfitzner, N., Humphreys, C., & Hegarty, K. (2015). Research Review: Engaging men: a multi-level model to support father engagement. *Child & Family Social Work*.

## NOTICE BOARD

## AIFS Webinar - National Children's Commissioner: Children affected by family & domestic violence

Learn about the role of Megan Mitchell, Australia's first National Children's Commissioner, and the development of her 2015 Parliamentary report into children's rights. The report had a substantive focus on how children aged 0-17 are affected by family and domestic violence. This webinar is a unique opportunity to have your say, participate in the discussion, or listen and learn.

12 August 2015  
1pm AEST

To register and for more information visit:

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/2015/07/28/webinar-national-childrens-commissioner-children-affected-family-domestic-violence>

## Royal Commission into Family Violence

The Royal Commission into Family Violence public hearings commenced on Monday, July 13. A number of experts, practitioners and lay witnesses have testified to their experiences of how family violence is managed in the state of Victoria.

Topics covered have included the effect of family violence on children – intervention and response, financial abuse, homelessness, perpetrator behaviour change programs, risk assessment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence, alcohol and drugs, and mental health.

You can watch the proceedings live here:

<http://www.rcfv.com.au/Public-Hearings>

The hearing concludes on Friday, August 14.

## NEWSWORTHY: Headlines that caught our eye this month

[Labor takes fight against 'divorce tax' to the federal court](#) from The Guardian

[Family violence abusers continue to stalk victims through legal system](#) from The Age

[Family violence royal commission: 'Take complaints seriously or risk a death', senior cop warns colleagues](#) from ABC News

[Family violence commission: five things we've learned about perpetrators](#) from The Guardian

[Family violence royal commission: the seven lessons learned so far](#) from The Guardian

[Family violence royal commission turns attention to role of men](#) from ABC News

[Submissions to family violence royal commission reveal a fragmented system](#) from The Conversation

## Follow WAFPN on Twitter!

If you want to keep up to date with info and articles we find interesting, follow WAFPN on Twitter:

[@FamilyPathwayWA](https://twitter.com/FamilyPathwayWA)

## FEEDBACK

If you have any suggestions on how we could improve this bulletin please email them to [jane.azzopardi@relationshipswa.org.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@relationshipswa.org.au)

## UNSUBSCRIBE?

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