



Family Law PATHWAYS NETWORK

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

APRIL 2021

Greetings from the Chair

by Karen Barker

Hello from WAFLPN!



Can you believe that our Annual Conference is just around the corner? Here at WAFLPN, we are really looking forward

to connecting with fellow professionals at the conference and learning from the expertise of the presenting speakers and panelists. This is why in this month's edition of the eBulletin, we are running a special 'Meet the Speakers' feature on [pages 3 and 4](#) of this eBulletin to introduce our lineup of speakers for 25 May.

Although all in-person tickets for the conference and workshop day are now fully sold out, tickets are still available for **online attendance only**. If you are interested in accessing the full conference program online, you still have a chance to [purchase tickets here](#).

I am also excited to announce [free conference livestream events in Bunbury, Geraldton and Carnarvon](#). These livestream events have been organised in partnership with the WAFLPN Regional Representatives and their respective host organisations to facilitate better access to training opportunities for members located in regional areas. Please contact the listed contact persons for the respective events for further information.

Additionally, the National FLPN Webinar series continues next month with a presentation on Legal Systems Abuse and Coercive Control by Professor Heather Douglas on 26 May at 11 am AWST. Please turn to [page 6 of this eBulletin](#) for more details about the event.

Members who will be attending the post-conference Workshop Day on 26 May will note that this webinar coincides with the workshop. However, a recording of the webinar will remain available to registrants for a period of time after the session ends, so make sure to sign up if you're interested in viewing the webinar at a later time.

That's all I have for now. Hope to see you at the conference in a few weeks' time!



*Working Together
in the
Family Law System*

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WA FAMILY LAW PATHWAYS NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

Shaping the Future of Family Law

IDEAS. INNOVATION. INSPIRATION.

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.

With the theme '**Shaping the Future of Family Law: 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 PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE:

- > Panel session: Innovative Practices in the Children's Court
- > Kate Jeffries: Building an FDV Informed Family Court – Here's a good place to start!
- > Professor Victoria Hovane: Two Laws Talking: Reforming responses to Aboriginal children in the Family Court of WA
- > Panel session: Innovations and reflections of the Family Court
- > Marilyn Metta: a lived experience story of intimate abuse, coercive control and navigating the Family Court system

WORKSHOP DAY: An informative two part FDV Informed professional development workshop, suitable for diverse professionals, working to reduce 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

Conference:
Tuesday 25 May 2021

Workshop:
Wednesday 26 May 2021

Venue: Burswood on Swan
with online registrations
also available

Conference registration:
> Standard \$150

Workshop:
> Standard \$85
See website for other options.

Register now:

[www.waflpn.org.au/
2021-conference](http://www.waflpn.org.au/2021-conference)

Final sales close 10 May

Conference Keynote Speakers



Two Laws Talking: Reforming responses to Aboriginal Children in the Family Court of WA

Professor Victoria Hovane
Professor, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia

Professor Victoria Hovane is an Aboriginal woman from Broome in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. She belongs to the Ngarluma, Gija and Gooniyandi peoples.

She has a PhD in Psychology aimed at informing a cultural dimension in psychological theories of sexual offending against children and also holds First Class Honours Degree in Psychology.

Professor Victoria Hovane is an experienced consultant and practitioner having worked in a number of social welfare, legal, victim and offender services, research projects and advisory roles and she sits on a number of boards and advisory bodies relating to Aboriginal safety and wellbeing.



Building an FDV Informed Family Court - Here's a good place to start!

Kate Jeffries
Sector Development Manager, Stopping Family Violence

Kate Jeffries has worked across the Family Law Service System including specialist FDV informed court reporting and ongoing training and consultation with family law service providers. She was the previous Chair of WAFLPN (2016-2018), an executive board member for the Women's Council Domestic and Family Violence (WA), and a founding member of WA Men's Behaviour Change Network.

Her broad experience across perpetrator interventions, women's specialist support services and children's therapeutic programs can translate into the practical application of practice and safety for FDV and non-FDV workforce development.

Her current role is as Sector Development Manager for Stopping Family Violence, the peak body for perpetrator response WA and she also consults through her own business.



A lived experience story of intimate abuse, coercive control and navigating the Family Court system

Marilyn Metta

Marilyn was a victim and survivor of intimate abuse and coercive control who went through the family court system from 2005 with her two young children.

She is a Malaysian-born Chinese Australian who now works as a trauma counsellor and an academic at Curtin University.

Welcome to Country



Shaun Nannup is a Noongar man who works towards reconciliation and the healing of trauma by connecting people through stories. An artist, digeridoo player, facilitator and educator, Shaun is a charismatic and insightful speaker who will welcome us to Country

Conference MC



Malcolm Dix is a qualified youth worker with a strong background with community sector organisations, who has also worked as a professional comedian. With tertiary qualifications in leadership, youth work, men's health, Malcolm is an insightful and skilled MC who has hosted a range of conferences and now works as a leadership coach and corporate educator.

Panelists - 'Innovations and Reflections of the Family Court of WA'



From left to right: Registrar Simon French, Chief Judge Gail Sutherland and Magistrate Anderson

Chief Judge Gail Sutherland attended UWA and practised predominantly in family law. In 2008 joined the Legal Practice Board of WA as a senior lecturer in its Articles Training Program. Her Honour joined the Family Court in 2009 and was then appointed as a Family Law Magistrate in 2010, and as a Judge of the Court in 2018 and Chief Judge from 2019. She also received a dual commission to the Family Court of Australia on 16 March 2018.

Registrar Simon French attended the University of Western Australia and was admitted to practice in 1976. He was a Partner at Dwyer Durack from 1977 – practising in Family Law from 1995. Registrar French is a former President of the Family Law Practitioners' Association and was accredited as a mediator in 2013. He has been a Family Court Registrar since July 2019.

Magistrate Anderson was admitted to practice in 2000 and worked in private practice in WA and Queensland until he joined the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA ("ALSWA") as a senior family lawyer in 2010. He also commenced practice as an Independent Children's Lawyer in 2008. Magistrate Anderson was appointed manager of the ALSWA Family Law Unit in 2014. His career as a lawyer focused on family law and child protection, with an emphasis on cases involving disadvantaged and vulnerable people and children. Magistrate Anderson was appointed as a Magistrate of the Family Court in 2019.

Panelists - 'Innovative Practices in the Children's Court'

Magistrate Wendy Hughes completed a Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws at UWA and was admitted into practice in. She worked at the DPP and the then Aboriginal Legal Service including 2 years as the solicitor in charge of the criminal law unit, before going into private practice as a sole practitioner including a short time sitting on the Liquor Commission and as an Arbitrator for WorkCover. Her Honour is currently a Magistrate in the Children's Court.

Ms Melisa Cox is a proud Noongar woman who is also a former child taken into care with her siblings at Roelands Mission in the early 70s. She successfully completed an Aboriginal Business Traineeship through DEET and has worked in a variety of roles at the Family Court of WA, including being Court Officer (2014- 2020) to Magistrate Mark Calverley. Melisa is currently the Court Officer to the Pilot Court.

Mr Daniel Taylor is Daniel is an Italian Noongar man whose noongar people are from the Yued region of Noongar Boodja. He has worked in the government and non-government sectors as an Aboriginal police liaison officer, police officer, youth worker and alcohol and other drugs counsellor. He is currently the Aboriginal Liaison Officer for the Department of Communities based at the Perth Children's Court.

Sean Woods is a Worra Worra man, whose people originate from the Fitzroy Crossing region living on Whadjuk Noongar land working as a Family Engagement Officer at the Perth Children's Court. His work history includes working across various Court Houses in WA along with various business areas in the Department of Justice. His current duties include offering outreach support and liaison work to the families participating in the Pilot Court in Protection and Care proceedings, aiming to assist families address any issues such as housing, domestic violence, drug and alcohol and helping to bridge the gap between the Department of Communities and young families.

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

2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference Regional Livestreams: Bunbury, Geraldton & Carnarvon

Family law professionals in Bunbury, Geraldton & Carnarvon who are unable to attend the 2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference in person are invited to attend the livestream events organised in their respective regional areas. The livestream events are a great opportunity to learn and network without travelling to Perth to attend the conference. These events will be a free of charge, fully catered event featuring a live video stream of the Perth Conference on 25 May 2021.

More information about the conference is available at <https://wafpln.org.au/2021-conference>

2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference Livestream - BUNBURY

WA Family Law Pathways Network and Anglicare invite you to join us for a livestream of the 2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference.

Tuesday, 25 May 2021
8.30am-5.00pm
Location to be confirmed
Free, registrations essential
[Book your place here](#)

Should you have any queries or require any further information, please contact Cathy Mills at cathy.mills@anglicare.org.au.

2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference Livestream - GERALDTON

WA Family Law Pathways Network and Regional Alliance West invite you to join us for a livestream of the 2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference.

Tuesday, 25 May 2021
8.30am-5.00pm
1st Floor Conference Room, Lotteries House Geraldton, 114 Sanford St, Geraldton
Free, registrations essential - see instructions below

To book your place, visit <http://bit.ly/wafplnlive21> and select 'Conference Registration (Standard)' and enter discount code REGIONALGUEST.

Should you have any queries or require any further information, please contact Alison Muller at alison@raw.org.au or 9938 0600.

2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference Livestream - CARNARVON

WA Family Law Pathways Network and Regional Alliance West invite you to join us for a livestream of the 2021 WAFLPN Annual Conference.

Tuesday, 25 May 2021
8.30am-5.00pm
Regional Alliance West - Carnarvon
7 Stuart Street, Carnarvon, WA
Free, registrations essential - see instructions below

To book your place, visit <http://bit.ly/wafplnlive21> and select 'Conference Registration (Standard)' and enter discount code REGIONALGUEST.

Should you have any queries or require any further information, please contact Samantha Perry at samantha@raw.org.au.

National FLPN Webinar: Legal Systems Abuse and Coercive Control

Join Family Law Pathways Networks across Australia for a webinar presented by Professor Heather Douglas. Drawing on interviews with women who have engaged with the legal system as a result of domestic violence, this presentation explores how women's engagement with the legal system is frequently experienced as an extension of their abusive partner's coercive control. It shows how legal processes provide an opportunity for abusive partners to continue and even expand their repertoire of coercive and controlling behaviours post-separation.

Wednesday, 26 May 2021
11.00am-12.30pm AWST
Online webinar
Free, registrations essential
[Register here](#)

For more details, see flyer on the next page.

RESEARCH & 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

Parenting – It's a life: Where and how youth learn about establishing paternity, child support, and co-parenting

This study examined youth's knowledge of establishing paternity, co-parenting, and child support using data from 1713 students in middle and high schools who attended one or more Parenting: It's a Life modules in their school. Youth reported low existing knowledge on establishing paternity, co-parenting, and child support compared to other topics. Parents/caregivers were the most frequent source of information on these topics. Youth reported significant increases in knowledge regarding parenting topics following exposure to Parenting: It's a Life curriculum. School-based parenting programs focused on these topics may help educate youth about these important parenting topics before parenthood.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

McCurdy, B., Weems, C., Rouse, H., Jeon, S., Bartel, M., Melby, J., Goudy, K. and Lee, J. (2021). Parenting – It's a life: Where and how youth learn about establishing paternity, child support, and co-parenting. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 126.

Beneficial and Ethical ODR for Family Issues

Technology is revolutionizing the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) field. Despite the long-held assumptions that increasing understanding, building empathy, and crafting resolution are only possible in-person, effective ways have emerged for assisting the resolution of the exploding number of disputes that have burgeoned online. Technology has become the "fourth party" in dispute resolution through the growing field of online dispute resolution (ODR), which includes use of technology and computer-mediated-communication (CMC) in negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and other dispute resolution processes. ODR is infiltrating family law, and even courts are starting to employ ODR in family cases. Expediated divorces and tracking parenting plans with little court involvement garner appeal amidst growing expectations that everything should be available with a few "clicks" or "swipes" on our technological devices. These expectations and opportunities place new responsibilities on the field and its practitioners. How can we best integrate technology into ADR—both online and off? How can we prevent the rush to digitization from ignoring due process and transparency in the name of efficiency? Accordingly, this Article will discuss the value of ODR for family disputes and highlight key concepts and ODR standards to consider for ethical design and employment of technology in family dispute resolution.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Schmitz, A.J. and Wing, L. (2021). Beneficial and Ethical ODR for Family Issues. *Family Court Review*, 59: 250-267.

Post Separation: How Can FDR Positively Influence the Impact of Culture on the Lives of Children? – Dr Bethaina Dababneh and Mieke Brandon

The article is based on the premise that Culture by its nature is often deeply personal to the individual, that cultural differences have the potential to cause conflict and that in order to foster co-parenting relationships and encourage parental communication post separation, one must be able to understand difference, accept difference and respect difference. With an appreciation that culture impacts the knowledge, understanding and value systems of individuals, the authors ask whether FDR practitioners should recognise the importance of culture for the child post family breakup and help disputing parents develop culturally sensitive parenting agreements. The article also suggests that in practicing FDR, a subculture of tolerance, respect and understanding about diverse cultural practices must be developed as this will influence its ability to bring about lasting co-parenting outcomes that consider how the cultural background, in which the children grew up, is to be continued in the children's best interests.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Dababneh, B. and Brandon, M. (2021). Post Separation: How Can FDR Positively Influence the Impact of Culture on the Lives of Children? *Australasian Dispute Resolution Journal Update*, 31(1).

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

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

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

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

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

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.

FEEDBACK

If you have any suggestions on how to improve our ebulletin, please email them to sofia.kouznetsova@relationshipswa.org.au

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