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

SEPTEMBER 2019

Greetings from the Chair

by Rod West



Hello from WAFLPN!

On 1-7 September, we observed the [2019 National Child Protection Week](#), which begins on

the first Sunday on September every year. Coordinated by NAPCAN, the aim of the week is to engage members of the community in supporting families and protecting children. In 2019, the National Child Protection Week focused on introducing a 'child development' communication framework, an evidence-based way to talk about parenting and child wellbeing. NAPCAN recommends using the [Navigating Waters: Talking About Parenting](#) toolkit, which draws on the Frameworks Institute research commissioned by the Parenting Research Centre, for practitioners to communicate with and engage parents.

It has also been a busy month for us here at WAFLPN. On 10 September, Fadzi Whande delivered her Beyond Cultural Diversity Masterclass, which was extremely well-received by our members. Read our recap of the workshop on the [next page](#).

We also have more professional development opportunities coming up before the end of the year. On 31 October, we will be partnering with Legal Aid WA to deliver an information session on the ban on

personal cross-examination in family law proceedings where allegations of family violence have been raised.

WAFLPN is also pleased to announce a full-day workshop on Child-Inclusive Practice with Jon Graham on 12 November. More details will be available soon, so keep an eye on your emails!

Recently, we opened registrations for a new Family Violence Restraining Order: Walk in Their Shoes tour of the Perth Magistrates Court, which was fully booked out within 45 minutes and has now incurred a lengthy waitlist. We thank everyone for their support and we hope to work with the Perth Magistrates Court to organise more tours in 2020.

Read on for WAFLPN's selection of [events](#), [research](#) and [news](#) relevant to those working in the family law sector. Until next month!



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in the
Family Law System*

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REVIEW OF PAST WAFLPN EVENTS

Recap: Beyond Cultural Diversity Masterclass with Fadzi Whande

This month, WAFLPN had the privilege of having Fadzi Whande give a half-day Beyond Cultural Diversity Masterclass on 10 September at the Swan River Rowing Club in Perth.

Fadzi shared her lived experiences and knowledge in a very engaging, accessible and thought-provoking manner, sparking participants to reflect on topics such as belonging, culture, diversity and inclusion and to discuss their views and ideas in small groups.



Fadzi Whande asking masterclass participants to reflect on the question "how much is my life impacted by race?"

Many attendees were intrigued by uncovering their own biases and their triggers and enjoyed gaining clarity about the differences between race, racism and prejudice. Participants also walked away with knowledge about the tools of Glenn Singleton's *Courageous Conversations About Race* and how to use them in their daily personal and professional life.

Fadzi received overwhelmingly positive feedback with attendees describing her workshop as "eye-opening", "powerfully-presented" and "being delivered with great compassion, empathy and knowledge". The majority of participants reported to have increased their knowledge, skills and confidence regarding supporting CaLD clients.

The video recording from Fadzi's workshop, as well as some additional materials, will be made available in the [Member Area of the WAFLPN website](#).

Recap: Seminar with Dr Philip Stahl

On 27 August, WA Family Law Pathways Network in partnership with Legal Aid WA and the Family Law Practitioners Association hosted a 2 hour seminar with Dr Philip Stahl on the topic of *Personality Traits of Parents; High Conflict and Alienation; and Developmentally-Based Parenting Plans*.

Dr Stahl provided an engaging and informative presentation as he explained potential personality dynamics; boundary issues with children; alienation/refuse-resistant matters of high conflict parents.

Dr Stahl gave the audience consisting of lawyers, ICLs, psychologists and mediators who work in the family law sector valuable insight into how to support families and professionals who work with this group of clients.

Materials from Dr Stahl's seminar can be assessed via the [Member Area of the WAFLPN website](#).

If you attended this event and require legal CPD points, please contact admin@flpawa.com.au.



Seminar attendees WAFLPN Steering Committee Member Mandy Drommer (left) and Perth FRC Manager Irina Spadbury (right) with Dr Philip Stahl.

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@relationshipsWA.org.au

Information Session: Personal Cross-Examination Ban

From 10 September 2019, personal cross-examination will be banned in family law proceedings in certain circumstances where allegations of family violence have been raised. WA Family Law Pathways Network and Legal Aid WA will be running an information session with Julie Jackson, Director Family Law Division at Legal Aid, to improve service providers' and legal professionals' understandings of these law changes. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session.

31 October 2019
4.00pm-5.30pm
Legal Aid Office
32 St George's Terrace
Perth WA 6000
Free event, registrations essential
www.trybooking.com/BFPJG

Save the Date: Workshop on Child-Inclusive Practice with Jon Graham

WA Family Law Pathways Network is pleased to announce a full-day workshop on child-inclusive practice with family law mediation expert Jon Graham. This workshop will focus on new and safe approaches to increasing the prominence of children's voices in family law processes.

12 November 2019
9.00am-5.00pm
Tompkins on Swan
632 Canning Hwy
Alfred Cove WA 6154

Further information and ticketing details will be announced on the [WAFLPN website](http://WAFLPN.org.au) in early October.

Intersectionalities in Domestic Violence Conference

Stopping Family Violence and The Women's Council for Family and Domestic Violence are proud to be bringing together a broad cross section of the community services sector to discuss and consider the strengths and challenges of delivering FDV informed practice across the broad spectrum of services that intersect with women, children and men impacted by FDV.

Featuring keynote speakers Allan Wade and Rosie Batty.

Conference: 15-16 October 2019
Pre-Conference Workshops:
14 October 2019
Crown Perth

[More information and register here.](#)

Save the Date: 29th Annual Silent Domestic Violence Memorial March

10.30am: Rally with speakers
12 noon: Silent March through the City

22 November 2019
Supreme Court Gardens,
cnr Barrack St & Riverside Dr

For more information, contact Carolyn at 9420 7264 or carolyn@womenscouncil.com.au

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 & 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

Love (still) makes a family: A report into discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+-parented families when accessing Australian Government services

Building on the 2017 Rainbow Families NSW *Love Makes a Family* report, this report looked at the experiences of members of the LGBTIQ+ community when accessing services provided through the Australian Government. It was found that families still face exclusion and discrimination in the most basic day-to-day interactions with government – from forms that don't reflect the makeup of LGBTIQ+-parented families, to schools who can exclude children because of who their parents are or have the right to fire individuals because of who they love and who they are. Two things are clear from this report: the power of language to make LGBTIQ+-parented families feel included or excluded; and that family diversity and inclusivity training would go a long way to remove barriers for this community.

[Read full report.](#)

Rainbow Families NSW (2019). *Love (still) makes a family: A report into discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+-parented families when accessing Australian Government services.*

Cumulative Harm in Child Protection: The Hidden Concern

This article reports on a study of cumulative harm in the Victorian child protection system and the factors contributing to recognition of such cases for intervention and decision-making, and how they moved both through the child protection system, and were responded to by the courts. An audit of case files from Victorian child protection offices and a series of focus groups was conducted April to October 2017. Cumulative harm cases generally closed at intake because no immediate or significant risk to the child, in legal terms, could be established or support for ongoing statutory concern justified. Greater clarification around the definition and urgency of cumulative harm in legislation and best interest principles is suggested, to allow a more holistic understanding of harm and the impacts of long-term maltreatment, emphasising early intervention before there is cumulative impact.

The study findings recognise the significance of cumulative harm as a major child protection concern needing better accommodation by legislative and judicial contexts. Child protection practice must address the significance of cumulative harm and implement more effective and earlier protective interventions. Child protection, community agency, and legal frameworks must be better aligned to remove the uncertainty and ambiguity around cumulative harm and the lack of priority given to the best interests of this cohort of vulnerable children.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Sheehan, R. (2019). *Cumulative Harm in Child Protection: The Hidden Concern.* *Australian Social Work*, 72(4), 434-446.

Less House, More Home: Adolescent and Young Adults' Experiences of Home Following Parental Separation

Drawing on interviews with adolescents and young adults (N=17), this qualitative study explored experiences of home following parental separation. Children's sense of home was primarily constituted through the emotional connection with parents and a sense of belonging. A "transition space" between two households was identified. Children's sense of home was fluid and two themes emerged as creating ambiguity in their sense of home. First, ongoing co-parental conflict, comprising denigration of the other parent, difficulties in sharing care of children, and withholding of financial resources. Second, parent-child relationships following parental re-partnering. Ongoing co-parental conflict appeared to tie together poorer experiences of children's sense of home. Our preliminary work tentatively concluded that it is not the amount of time, but potentially the quality of relationship with members of each household, that contributes to children's sense of home following parental separation.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Francia, L & Milliar, P. (2019). *Less House, More Home: Adolescent and Young Adults' Experiences of Home Following Parental Separation.* *Family Law Review*, 8(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 Parliamentary Inquiry into Family Law and Child Support

On 17 September 2019, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that the Government will undertake a Joint Parliamentary Committee of both the House and the Senate to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry into the family law system.

The Select Committee aims to inquire and report by 7 October 2020 on specific areas where there may be scope for improvement in the family law system, the courts or other policy areas such as child support.

[Read full media release and proposed terms of reference.](#)

Unpacking Violence: A storytelling resource for practitioners

To support people working to prevent violence against women in Australia, Our Watch has produced multi-purpose practitioner resources.

The resources include [Unpacking Violence: a storytelling resource for understanding non-physical forms of abuse and the gendered drivers of violence against women](#), and four accompanying [animated videos](#).

[For more information and to access the resource, visit the Our Watch website.](#)

Inquiry into the Magistrates Court of Western Australia's management of matters involving family and domestic violence

The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee will inquire into and report on the Magistrates Court of Western Australia's management of matters involving family and domestic violence.

In particular, the Committee will consider:

1. The challenges experienced by the Magistrates Court of Western Australia and court users in matters involving family and domestic violence, including:
 - a. Ease of access
 - b. Cost of access
 - c. Access to advice, support and programs
2. How other jurisdictions manage matters involving family and domestic violence, including examination of non-adversarial models.
3. Ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Magistrates Court of Western Australia's management of matters involving family and domestic violence.

Submissions close midnight 11 October 2019.

[More information and details on lodging submissions.](#)

Personal Cross-examination Ban in Family Law Proceedings with Family Violence Allegations

From 10 September 2019, personal cross-examination has been banned in family law proceedings in certain circumstances where allegations of family violence have been raised.

[Read info sheet produced by the Attorney-General's Department.](#)

Service Wait Times

If you are often referring to clients to family law services in your role, you may find the WAFLPN compilation of service wait times useful.

Each month, WAFLPN collates the wait times for government-funded family law services in the Perth metropolitan area and some parts of regional WA.

In the document you can find up-to-date waiting periods for services like children's contact centres, family dispute resolution, parenting programs and men's behaviour change programs.

To view the current service wait times on the WAFLPN website visit <https://wafllpn.org.au/Resources/Service-Wait-Times>

FEEDBACK

If you have any suggestions on how we could improve this bulletin please email them to sofia.kouznetsova@relationshipsWA.org.au

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