



# WAfamily pathways network

## WA Family Pathways Network eBulletin

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

JUNE 2015

## Greetings from the Chair

by Kathryn Lawrence

Hi all! It's great to be back following a very busy month here at WAFPN! We hosted our annual conference on May 14, and it was a great success, with some very insightful and thought-provoking speakers and excellent discussion generated throughout the day.

Our pre-conference workshop with David Mandel was a fantastic opportunity to delve into the different expectations we as a society, and a system, have of men and women as parents, and the part this plays in our role as practitioners.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to David Mandel, Catherine Boland, Principal Registrar David Monaghan, Acting Commissioner Jenni Perkins, Julie Jackson, Jennie Hannan, Chloe Merna, Linda Jackson and Sallyann Nevill for speaking at the conference. Also a huge thank

you to our WAFPN conference committee, without whom this event would not be possible. It was a great day and we at WAFPN are getting excited already for 2016!

We have also had some great news from the Department of the Attorney General, and that is our funding has been extended until 2019. This means we can look forward and plan big for the next few years with the blessing of funding certainty!

We are looking forward to focusing more on the regional areas of WA in 2015-16 and as of next month we will have a regional section in this bulletin to keep you in touch with what is happening across the whole state.

In the meantime we are happy to hear any feedback you have on the conference or pre-conference



workshop – please contact Jane Azzopardi

[jane.azzopardi@wa.relationships.com.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@wa.relationships.com.au)

# WAFPN Annual Conference 2015

When children resist contact: How does the family law system respond?

WA Family Pathways Network Annual Conference took place on Thursday May 14 at Technology Park Function Centre Bentley.

230 delegates from across the sector gathered to explore the difficult topic of children and contact.

The conference was opened by the Acting Commissioner for Children and Young People, Jenni Perkins, who highlighted the importance of this issue for all of us working with children and young people in WA.

The keynote speaker, David Mandel, provided interesting insight into the experiences of women in the family law system, and the many ways in which violence against a mother is also harmful to the child.

Catherine Boland followed with her provocative discussion of parental alienation; when a child expresses negative feelings toward a parent that are disproportionate the child's actual experiences with the parent.



Catherine shared some fantastic insight from her experiences as a clinician.

After lunch we were joined by Principal Registrar David Monaghan who outlined some situations in which the Family Court may order that a parent have no contact with a child. Some very interesting stories were shared and it was an eye-opener to learn of some of the difficult cases handled by the Family Court of WA.

The day closed with an option of two breakout sessions. In the theatre, Sallyann Neville from Youth Focus discussed how high-conflict parental separations can affect young people.

In the main room the panel discussion consisted of representatives from the major child contact services – Anglicare, Centrecare and Relationships WA – as well as Legal Aid and the Family Court of WA. The hypothetical scenario developed as each party on the panel described their role and how they would manage a difficult contact situation.

WAFPN would like to thank everyone who attended the conference as well as our excellent speakers.



You can view the webinar from the event and access the presentations on the conference website <http://www.wafpn.com/>

Or check out our live tweet feed from the conference via the hashtag [#WAFPN15](https://twitter.com/WAFPN15)



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

**Children: A Resource Most Precious 2015 Conference**

The 3rd National Conference on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect will be held in Perth, Western Australia at the Edith Cowan University on the 24-26 June 2015.

The Children's Conference Committee is pleased to present the opportunity to partner with The Department for Child Protection and Family Support, the lead agency for implementing mandatory reporting. Other agencies involved include The Department of Education and Training, Education Services, Health Departments and the Western Australia Police.

The National platform for "The Children a Resource Most Precious: "Collaboration – Communities, Government and Non-Government Organisations Working Together conference 2015, consists of three days of engagement. It is an exciting time for all involved in this conference as we continue to grow and adapt, remaining always flexible, motivated and responsive to the theme for the conference: "Children, young people and families across Western Australian communities: focusing on collaborative prevention strategies,

initiatives and programs for minimising harm".

Registration is via the conference website

<http://www.childrenwa.org.au/>

24-26 June 2015  
Registration 8am  
Edith Cowan University  
270 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup  
Registration \$499

For more information contact [enquiries@childrenwa.org.au](mailto:enquiries@childrenwa.org.au)

**World Society of Victimology 15<sup>th</sup> International Symposium 'Victimisation, justice and healing: challenging orthodoxies'**

Victims Support Australia in partnership with angelhands Inc. present the 15th International Symposium of the World Society of Victimology (WSV).

The overarching theme is Victimisation, justice and healing: Challenging orthodoxies. The theme is designed to provide a focus on sharing best practice, emerging responses, and critical reflection on contemporary conceptualisations of victimisation and justice in various settings and disciplines – from the world of 'ordinary' crime, to post-colonial and post-conflict settings, and to transnational, cyber and institutional environments.

The 15th International WSV Symposium will provide a unique opportunity for international engagement with victimologists, victim services practitioners, the

judiciary, policing, researchers, non-Government organisations and policy makers.

5-9 July 2015  
Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre  
Full registration \$870

For more information and to register visit

<https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/victimology2015/>

**Postgraduate Course 'Victims: Law, Policy and Practice'**

This intensive four day diploma course on Victimology will be taught by some of the world's leading practitioners and researchers in the area of victim's rights & victims and the law.

1-4 July 2015  
Law School, University of Western Australia  
Cost \$450

To register email [Tara.Mclaren@uwa.edu.au](mailto:Tara.Mclaren@uwa.edu.au)

**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@wa.relationships.com.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@wa.relationships.com.au)

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

## Fathers matter: involving and engaging fathers in the child welfare system process

Research suggests that children with involved and engaged fathers tend to have more positive outcomes relative to physical, cognitive, and social emotional health. Of children who become involved in the child welfare system, involving multiple parents in the case (e.g. mother and father) often results in a greater chance of a child returning home, fewer placement episodes, and reduced trauma that may be caused by separation anxiety. With the rise of single parenting homes (which are mostly maternal) in the United States, child welfare agencies are examining the efficacy of engaging multiple caregivers (esp. fathers) in the child welfare process. Research suggests that in order to involve fathers in child welfare processes, practices and policies must be intentional in implementing systems and protocols that encourage involvement of all parents regardless of relationship status of the parents. However, few child welfare agencies are required to inquire about fathers or involve fathers in the child's case.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight efforts of the Connecticut Comprehensive Outcome Review (CCOR) process and discuss challenges and lessons learned from interviews and listening forums/focus groups that included social workers and fathers who are involved in the child welfare system in the state of Connecticut.

Abstract:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740915001036>

Campbell, C. A., Howard, D., Rayford, B. S., & Gordon, D. M. (2015). Fathers matter: involving and engaging fathers in the child welfare system process. *Children and youth services review*, 53, 84-91.

## Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Program

Divorce education programs are conducting increasingly rigorous impact evaluations to assess if their curriculum improves parenting practices, reduces conflict in the co-parenting relationship, and improves outcomes for children. This article presents a 6-month follow-up evaluation of the online version of Parents Forever, an 8-hour divorce education course developed by the University of Minnesota Extension.

Abstract:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10502556.2015.1025900>

Becher, E. H., Cronin, S., McCann, E., Olson, K. A., Powell, S., & Marczyk, M. S. (2015). Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Program. *Journal of*

*Divorce & Remarriage*, 56(4), 261-276.

## Whose expectations? Care orders: towards a relational harm approach in the test of reasonable parental care

This paper presents findings from an empirical study in England and Wales, examining the test of harm in care proceedings under the Children Act 1989. Drawing on free association narrative interviews with young adults who have lived in care, the study presents a case for a presumption of relational harm in the court's finding of unreasonable parental care. Relational harm focuses on the harm for the child caused by the loss of the birth family, once the child is taken into care. Through the lens of a humanistic approach to legal criticism, this paper focuses on the harm for the child arising from the child's experience of the complex and entrenched difficulties that mothers endure. It makes recommendations for an intersubjective approach to assessing harm, such as the impact on the child of the mother's difficulties. This is in the threshold test of harm, the care plan and decisions about contact.

Abstract:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2015.1028154>

Richardson, V. (2015). Whose expectations? Care orders: towards a relational harm approach in the test of reasonable parental care. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, (ahead-of-print), 1-15.

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

## Community Development and Justice Standing Committee - Legislative Assembly

Call for submissions: inquiry into methods of evaluating WA Police performance. The new focus of the inquiry will be: **How WA Police evaluates whether it is providing adequate protection to the victims of family and domestic violence**, with the following terms of reference:

- What audited and internal measures are in place and whether these are sufficient.
- Victims' perceptions of how police respond to family and domestic violence.
- How WA Police evaluates its training programs to ensure that officers have the skills and knowledge to deal effectively with family and domestic violence victims.
- How WA Police evaluates the effectiveness of the use of technology in countering family and domestic violence.

The Committee invites written submissions on matters relating to the above terms of reference.

Submissions should be lodged no later than Friday, 3 July 2015. For more information including contact details and how to submit please follow this [link](#).

## NEWSWORTHY: Headlines that caught our eye this month

[How police navigate the complex terrain of domestic violence](#) from ABC News

[The most dangerous time: Five women tell their stories of leaving an abusive relationship](#) from The Guardian

[Domestic violence victims to be allowed to give evidence via video link under new measures in NSW](#) from ABC News

[Dad banned from contact with daughters](#) from The West Australian

[New app for family violence intervention orders](#) from The Age

[Domestic violence: ability to check partner's past considered by NSW](#) from The Guardian

[Domestic violence multi-agency fight showing success in SA, authorities say](#) from ABC News

## Follow WAFPN on Twitter!

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## UNSUBSCRIBE?

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## FEEDBACK

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



## Our Aim

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

To assist separating families obtain appropriate services