



WAfamily pathways network

WA Family Pathways Network eBulletin

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

OCTOBER 2016

Greetings from the Chair

by Kate Jeffries

Hello from WAFPN! I hope you are enjoying this warm weather now that spring has actually finally arrived, and that things are not too hectic at work in the lead up to the year's end. The holidays will be here before we know it!

I would like to thank everyone for the huge amount of interest we have had in the Royal Commission into Family Violence Workshop we are holding on November 10, featuring Deputy Chief Magistrate Broughton and barrister Rachel Ellyard. As often happens with events like this, it sold out in less than a day, so our apologies to everyone who missed out! We are looking into options for video recording the session and posting it online following the event, and we will keep you updated on that.

In this eBulletin you will get to meet our new CLCA representative, Linda Saverimutto, whom many of you may already know very well as she has been a friendly face at WAFPN events for many years. Also hear from Mandy Drommer as she recounts her experience of the National Mediation Conference in Brisbane late last month, find a job opportunity at Gosnells CLC, read new research, find events to attend and more.

A reminder once again to save the date for our annual conference. We will be returning to the UWA Club on Thursday, 25 May 2017. Theme and speakers to be announced soon: watch this space!



Meet Linda, our new steering committee member

by Linda Saverimutto

Principal Solicitor, Gosnells Community Legal Centre

I am the Community Legal Centre Association Representative on the WAFPN Steering Committee. I am the Principal solicitor of Gosnells Community Legal Centre and also a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner and supervise the FDR Service at GCLC.

The CLC Association is the peak organization representing and supporting 28 Community Legal Centre's in WA. The Association is committed to providing the CLCs with the support necessary to provide quality services to our disadvantaged community.

The Association is also part of a national network of CLCs, the national Association of Community Legal Centre's.

Each Community Legal Centre is a community based not for profit organization that delivers services to meet the needs of their local community.

A full list of CLCs who are members of the Association is available [here](#).

We have generalist CLCs and Specialist CLCs. Most of the CLCs deliver holistic services to the disadvantaged community. Legal assistance is provided by Solicitors and Paralegals supervised by Solicitors. Legal assistance provided may differ between Centres according to the funding received from the government. Legal assistance includes advice, drafting of legal documents and

representation in court to resolve client issues. CLCs also assist the community with community legal education as a preventative mechanism. Due to reduced funding CLCs make use of volunteers to assist with their work. Law students and community service students get practical training at CLCs.

Most CLCs deliver services in the areas of family law, child support, domestic violence, financial counselling, tenancy, employment Law, migration and Family Dispute Resolution.

The CLC Association of WA organizes quarterly network meetings and professional development for the CLC members. The professional development sessions assist the solicitors in getting their annual CPD points required by the Legal Practice Board.

I am Sri Lankan born and migrated to Perth Australia in 1988. I joined the Gosnells Community Legal Centre in 1991 as a Family Lawyer. Currently GCLC has 7 solicitors and other paralegals and admin staff. The services at Gosnells are Family Law, Children's issues and property, Child Support, Domestic Violence, Tenancy, Financial Counselling, Criminal Injuries Compensation and Family Dispute Resolution. We also have 4 in-house FDRP's. Our DV solicitors represent women victims in the Magistrates Court for Restraining Order matters. Every alternative Monday one of our solicitors attends



at a duty law service at the Magistrates Court Armadale.

Our brand new service is a CLE presentation to Respondents in domestic violence matters at the court in Armadale prior to the mention order hearings.

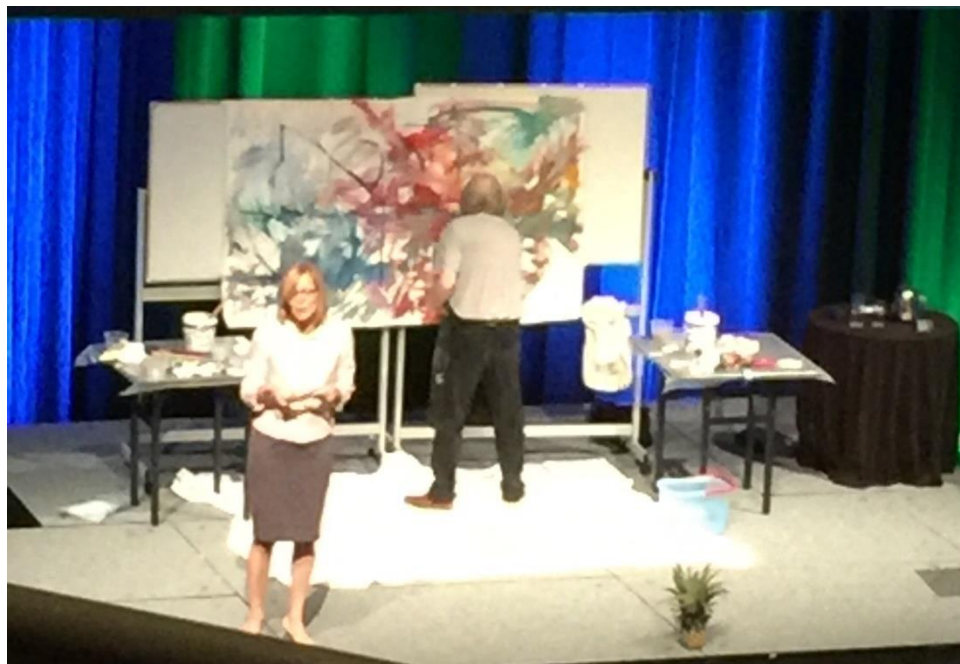
Due to funding restraints, we have also started charging a nominal fee for some of our services.

I am happy to be on the Steering Committee and look forward to working with the members in organizing conferences and other events and also to share knowledge and information to assist our community.

Review: National Mediation Conference

by Mandy Drommer

The 2016 National Mediation Conference had the theme "Thought, Innovation and Creativity: The Next Decade". Mieke Brandon, co-convenor promised us some "wow" moments throughout the conference. This was delivered, commencing with Professor Nadja Alexander on day one with her presentation on Mediating Beautifully: The Alchemy of aesthetics in a fragmented age. The "wow" factor came with the combination of an amazing artist who painted Nadja's words, as she delivered her captivating talk. (See the photo of the canvas being developed).



Throughout the conference the presence of mindfulness was evident, from the opportunity to participate in early morning yoga, as well as presentations on mindfulness from a number of speakers, including Dr Craig Hassard from Monash University.

For FPN members as a follow-on from our own annual conference you

may be interested in the presentation from Jon Graham and Dr Lori Yaserik, on "Including children in family mediation: A child-centred continuum model from Canada and Australia".

For myself and Dr Frances Britton, we were delighted to have had the opportunity to present "Men's lived

experience and the implications for mediation services into the future".

Papers and power point presentations from the conference are now available at www.mediationconference.com.au/program/conference-presentations



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.gov.au

It's No Secret: Sexual Assault, Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence National Conference

The topic of violence and abuse in Australia is at the forefront both politically and socially.

Nationally, there is a need to make a difference but how do we, what can we do better, what needs to change?

Waratah presents a full and dynamic program that will meet the diverse interests and professional requirements of the multitude of people working in the community with victims of abuse and violence. The conference will explore what is being provided in different states and territories of Australia to meet the needs of victims of abuse and violence, the community, and to direct change at a social and political level.

24 & 25 November 2016
Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre
Registration \$490

For more information or to register visit
<http://www.waratah.asn.au/view/about-us/events>

Australian Stop Domestic Violence Conference

With an improved focus and awareness on the effect of Domestic and Family Violence within Australia, the Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association is providing a national unified platform to discuss the strain of Domestic Violence on Australian resources and facilities.

With a focus on building skills within the sector, this conference will include discussion and presentations around policy, research and practice with a particular emphasis on innovative and emerging responses.

5-7 December 2016
Mercure Brisbane
Early bird registration from \$580

For further information or to register visit
<http://stopdomesticviolence.com.au/>

Globalisation: Challenges for Young People and the Community

PCYC presents the inaugural Youth and Community Justice Conference with the aim to present, highlight and provide a better understanding of how positive and negative global factors shape and impact the lives of young people and society. Keynote speakers will explore the impact that organised crime, child abuse, drug proliferation, domestic violence, radicalisation and cybercrime has on young people, minority groups, families and communities. Speakers

will also explore the challenges that these issues present to the law enforcement bodies such as the WA Police and the Court System and the impacts and challenges associated with the implementation of effective engagement and intervention approaches.

26 & 27 October 2016
Burswood on Swan
Registration \$385

For further information or to register visit
<http://www.wapcyc.com.au/content/page/youth-and-community-justice-conference.html>

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.gov.au

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

Chaotic experiences and low-income children's social-emotional development

Development in early childhood is increasingly likely to take place in multiple contexts. Continuity and discontinuity in children's experiences across multiple contexts have important implications for their development. This study examines the extent to which children experience chaos in their homes and in their preschool settings is linked with their social-emotional development over the course of the preschool year. Data from a large, representative sample of low-income preschool children attending Head Start was used to test a series of multi-level models. Children whose experiences of their homes were highly chaotic, regardless of the how chaotic their experiences of their classroom were, decreased in their social-emotional skills over the preschool year. Chaotic experiences in the home environment thus appear to have more influence on children's development than do chaotic preschool experiences.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

[Bobbitt, K. C., & Gershoff, E. T. \(2016\). Chaotic experiences and low-income](#)

[children's social-emotional development. Children and Youth Services Review, 70, 19-29.](#)

The role of parental communication, child's wishes and child's gender in social workers' custody recommendations

Social-workers' custody recommendations are influenced by professional and personal factors. In this study, we examine three factors: parental-communication, child's-wishes, and child's-gender. An experimental-survey-design was implemented, using case-descriptions, as well as professional-characteristic of the social-workers. Data were collected from 120 Israeli social-workers. The study findings reveal that inter-parental communication plays a significant role in the social worker's decision. Whereas deficient inter-parental communication leads to bias in the decision to award parental custody according to the parent's gender, with a preference for the mother over the father, as hypothesized, intact inter-parental communication increases the likelihood of joint custody, but still gives preference to the mother. Social workers tend to consider the children's wishes as long as their preference is for maternal custody. When children express a paternal preference, their wishes carry no weight. Furthermore, child's gender does not influence social workers' parental custody recommendation. In cases where the preference for sole maternal custody may appear as biased or untoward, a preference was awarded to joint-custody rather than to paternal-custody. The findings highlight that traditional-social-norms impact social-worker's decision. We emphasize the importance organizational mechanisms

and standards that provide more efficient and egalitarian decision-making.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

[Nouman, H., Enosh, G., & Niselbaum-Atzur, P. \(2016\). The role of parental communication, child's wishes and child's gender in social workers' custody recommendations. Children and Youth Services Review, 70, 302-308.](#)

Examining the validity of parental alienation syndrome

"Parental alienation syndrome" (PAS) is a phrase first coined by Dr. Richard Gardner. Since its inception several scholars have reviewed and criticized this construct, and it has never been accepted by the scientific community as a legitimate scientific construct, as a syndrome or as a mental disorder. Despite its general rejection as unscientific, the construct of PAS at times continues to be used in legal settings as if it has an adequate foundation within science, clinical, or forensic practice. This commentary briefly reviews past critiques of PAS and describes several additional problems that have occurred with the use of this construct.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

[O'Donohue, W., Benuto, L. T., & Bennett, N. \(2016\). Examining the validity of parental alienation syndrome. Journal of Child Custody, 13 \(2-3\) 113-125.](#)

COMMUNITY 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.org.au

Webinar: Elder abuse - Recent research and effective responses

Elder abuse—which involves the physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse of an older person by someone in a trusted relationship—presents complex challenges to the Australian community.

In this webinar, AIFS in partnership with Greater Melbourne Family Law Pathways Network present observations from recent studies on elder abuse. The speakers will discuss key elements of effective responses for practitioners working with older people who have been abused or mistreated, and highlight the importance of considering ageist attitudes and family dynamics that may be involved, and the right of the older person to seek redress. The speakers will also outline important gaps in these responses where further research can be directed.

24 October 2016
10.30-11.45am WST

For more information or to register visit www.aifs.gov.au/cfca/events

Job opportunity: Mediation Service Co-Ordinator

Gosnells Community Legal Centre will be recruiting an accredited Family Dispute

Resolution practitioner to co-ordinate the Centre's mediation service. This position will be 3 days per week and involves initial assessments, conducting mediations and co-ordination of the neighbourhood and FDR services.

The position will commence in January 2017.

For further information please contact Marion Leach, Centre Manager at marion@gosclc.com.au or phone 9490 1163.

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

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Our Aim

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

To assist separating families obtain appropriate services

