



# Family Law PATHWAYS NETWORK

# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

FEBRUARY 2018

## Greetings from the Chair

by Kate Jeffries

Hello from WAFLPN and welcome to the first eBulletin of 2018. I hope you had a relaxing break with your loved ones and are feeling refreshed and ready for a new year.

Many of you will know me from my work at Communicare, where I most recently held the position of Director Family Violence and Justice Services. I am sad to say that after nearly twelve years I have moved on from Communicare, but pleased to announce that as of 22 January I am with Anglicare WA in the role of Practice Development and Strategy Manager (Mental Health, Family Violence and Justice). I am looking forward to continuing to work with you all in the sector in my role at Anglicare WA, and continuing as the Chair of WAFLPN until July 2018.

February has been a busy month for us already! You can check out some of the events that have been happening on page 2 of this eBulletin. I encourage all members



to get involved in WAFLPN events – many of which are now delivered by webinar across the state, and most of which are free. We have had some excellent speakers already in February. Mick Gooda visited Port Headland on 13th February to discuss the findings of the Royal Commission into the Child

Protection and Youth Detention Systems of the Northern Territory.

In partnership with Stopping Family Violence, Dr Debbie Brown from SARC presented a twilight seminar on Non Fatal Strangulation on February 6<sup>th</sup>.

Magistrate Gluestein visited Broome on 5<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the justice response roll out with the Family Violence Lists occurring across Metropolitan regions. You can read more about these events on page 2 of this eBulletin.

Looking forward to an exciting events and networking calendar for 2018, keep an eye on our eBulletins and check [our website](#) for all the details.

# February events

Recap on our recent WAFLPN events

## Broome twilight seminar with Magistrate Gluestein

On Monday, February 5, a group of 40 professionals from the family law sector met in Broome to hear Magistrate Gluestein discuss the new developments in the justice response to family violence in the Perth metropolitan area.

The seminar is the first of a few that WAFLPN is presenting in partnership with Magistrate Gluestein whilst he is travelling on the regional circuits. Keep an eye out for him in South Hedland in September!

WAFLPN thanks Magistrate Gluestein for donating his time and our regional rep Astrid Gerrits of Anglicare WA for assisting us in continuing to develop our regional activities and provide good quality professional development and networking opportunities to professionals in regional areas.

## Non-fatal strangulation with Dr Debbie Smith

On Tuesday, February 6, WAFLPN was pleased to partner once again with Stopping Family Violence to present Dr Debbie Smith of SARC, with her presentation Non-fatal strangulation in sexual assault: A study of clinical and assault characteristics highlighting the role of intimate partner violence.

Around 50 people for across the WA family law and family violence sectors gathered at the South of Perth Yacht Club to hear Dr Smith present, and 25 people joined in by webinar. If you were unable to attend, the webinar recording and Dr Smith's presentations are available on the 'Members Section' of the WAFLPN website. Head to <https://waflpn.org.au> for all the details.

## Mick Gooda in Port Hedland

Community and professionals gathered in Port Hedland on Tuesday 13 February to hear Royal Commissioner Mick Gooda present on the findings of The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory.

Participants enjoyed lunch and a thought-provoking discussion with Mick on the role of the community and pathways forward for child protection following the Royal Commission.

WAFLPN would like to thank the Aboriginal Family Law Services Port Hedland, particularly Stephanie Brahim and Latorshia Brockman for all their assistance in planning and promoting this event.



Magistrate Gluestein address Broome seminar attendees



Dr Debbie Smith at the South of Perth Yacht Club

## 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@relationshipspswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshipspswa.org.au)

### Save the date! WAFLPN Conference 2018: Supporting positive childhood attachment

Save the date for the 2018 WAFLPN Annual Conference. This year's conference theme is 'Supporting positive childhood attachment', and alongside previously announced speakers, The Hon. Jane Crisford and Keenan Mundine, we are pleased to announce Adah Sachs of the Bowlby Centre UK who will be presenting a plenary at the conference and a post-conference workshop on 1 June.

31 May 2018  
University Club of Western Australia, Crawley  
Registration opens February 2018

### WAFLPN Post-Conference Workshop with Adah Sachs

WAFLPN is pleased to announce a full-day post-conference workshop with conference plenary speaker, Dr Adah Sachs of the Bowlby Centre UK. The post-conference workshop is titled *Attachment theory in one day: the evolving concept of attachment*.

The workshop will:

- Survey the historical development of attachment theory from its forerunners (starting with Darwin) to the present
- Explain the main concepts and terms of the theory and their relevance to how families function.
- Invite participants to bring case examples (anonymised) to be discussed from an attachment perspective.

1 June 2018  
University Club of Western Australia, Crawley  
Registration opens February 2018

### International Women's Day Sparkling High Tea 2018

The Women's Council presents an opportunity to celebrate International Women's Day and raise money for Funds for Freedom.

9 March 2018  
3.00pm – 5.00pm  
Duxton Hotel Ballroom  
1 St Georges Tce, Perth  
Ticket price \$85

For more details or to register visit <http://www.womenscouncil.com.au/funds-for-freedom-high-tea.html>

### WALK IN THEIR SHOES TOURS

WAFLPN'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@relationshipspswa.org.au](mailto:jane.azzopardi@relationshipspswa.org.au)



*Working Together  
in the  
Family Law System*

[wafpn.org.au](http://wafpn.org.au)



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## 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)

### Rethinking discourses of family instability

Recent research suggests that an increasing number of children around the world live with parents who experience serial romantic relationships. Studies of these increasingly common family transitions has focused almost exclusively on the association between “family instability” and elevated levels of stress leading to children’s poorer social, cognitive, and academic outcomes. In this article the authors challenge the use of the term family instability that pathologizes relational family patterns that have become normative. Specifically, the authors’ review evidence from studies of families in transition to discern (1) children’s individual coping strategies used to deal with their parents’ serial monogamy, (2) external protective processes that improve children’s experiences of these transitions (children’s resilience), and (3) whether family transitions confer possible advantages to children’s psychosocial development. Evidence suggests that there is a need to distinguish aspects of family transitions that cause stress and instability from normative—and potentially beneficial—changes that occur when a child experiences different adult caregivers over time. This shift in discourse may help to advance an applied research agenda

that has pertinence to the resilience of modern families.

[Read abstract or purchase full article.](#)

Hadfield, K., Ungar, M., & Nixon, E. (2017). Rethinking discourses of family instability. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 1-16.

### Does shared parenting by separated parents affect the adjustment of young children?

The changing family roles and evidence that most infants form attachment relationships with both of their parents have sparked a debate about parenting arrangements when the parents of infants and toddlers separate. Misunderstanding of attachment theory and the available empirical evidence has obscured rather than clarified evidence-based decision-making. This report closely examines the five studies most frequently referenced in this context and show what they do and do not tell us about the ways in which children’s adjustment can be promoted when their parents separate. Consistent with attachment theory, the evidence suggests that children benefit when parenting plans allow them to maintain meaningful and positive relationships with both of their parents.

[Read abstract or purchase full article.](#)

Lamb, M. E. (2018). Does shared parenting by separated parents affect the adjustment of young children?. *Journal of Child Custody*, 1-10.

### Allegations of child sexual abuse in parenting disputes: An examination of judicial determinations in the Family Court

### of Australia

This study examined Family Court of Australia (FCA) judicial determinations in parenting disputes when allegations of child sexual abuse (CSA) are made by an interested party, usually the mother. For the study, 156 published judgments from 2013–2015 were examined to measure how often allegations of CSA are substantiated, suspected to be true, and disbelieved. The characteristics most common in substantiated versus unsubstantiated cases, evidence of abuse presented, and resulting parenting orders were assessed. Findings indicate that, against international comparisons, FCA judges substantiate cases very conservatively, with rates of substantiation much lower than in other studies. Allegations made by mothers against fathers were disproportionately unsubstantiated, as were those which did not fall under the Magellan case management system. Cases where the only evidence of CSA was a child’s disclosure and parent’s allegation were common in both substantiated and unsubstantiated cases, meaning that a lack of other evidence does not preclude a positive finding of risk of CSA by the FCA. Those cases also involving a protection order against the accused were more likely to be substantiated. Confirmation biases and a judicial tendency to err on the side of false negatives are discussed.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Ferguson, C., Wright, S., Death, J., Burgess, K., & Malouff, J. (2018). Allegations of child sexual abuse in parenting disputes: An examination of judicial determinations in the Family Court of Australia. *Journal of Child Custody*, 1-23.

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

### Australian Law Reform Commission Review of the Family Law System eNews

On 9 May 2017 the Turnbull Government announced its intention to direct the ALRC to conduct the first comprehensive review into the family law system since the commencement of the Family Law Act in 1976, with a view to making necessary reforms to ensure the family law system meets the contemporary needs of families and effectively addresses family violence and child abuse.

You can keep up to date with the latest developments of the Review via the eNews on the Australian Law Reform Commission's website. WAFLPN will link to the latest eNews in our eBulletin each month and on our website <https://waflpn.org.au>

[View the latest eNews.](#)

### ANROWS Webinar: What the NCAS is, how it's useful, and what's to come

In the lead-up to International Women's Day, ANROWS and VicHealth will be hosting a webinar on the National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) This webinar will interest those working in the prevention of violence against women in a range of settings, from policy and practice to education and advocacy.

If you've ever found it difficult to find the evidence you need to challenge commonly held myths around violence against women or explain the link between violence against women and gender inequality, this webinar will help. What the NCAS is, how it's useful, and what's to come in 2018 will provide an overview of the NCAS and its findings, discuss how the survey can be useful in your work through practical examples, and talk about the exciting changes and new components of the next NCAS. There will also be a Q&A session at the end of the webinar.

7 March 2018  
10.00-11.00am

[Register here.](#)

### Invitation to work towards #safesystems

The Safe Systems Coalition invites you to participate in a survey to further progress their campaign to ensure that our systems hold perpetrators accountable and support the safety, health and wellbeing of women and children affected by family and domestic violence.

[Get more information and access the survey.](#)

#### FEEDBACK

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

#### UNSUBSCRIBE?

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