



**Family Law**  
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KEEPING YOU IN TOUCH WITH NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES IN WA FAMILY LAW

JUNE 2018

## Greetings from the Chair

by Kate Jeffries

It's hello and goodbye from me this month, as I introduce my final eBulletin as Chair of WAFLPN. It has been an absolute pleasure to hold this position for the past two years, and I am very proud of everything that WAFLPN has achieved in that time.

We have had a huge push to increase our activity in regional areas over the past few years, and with the help of the Regional Subcommittee and our dedicated regional representatives we have had a huge increase in events taking place in and streaming to regional WA.

We have launched the [WAFLPN website](#), a useful resource for practitioners in the sector and a handy place to go to for all our conference and event materials.

We have developed strong partnerships and run great events in collaboration with other organisations, such as Stopping Family Violence and the Women's Council.

The WAFLPN Steering Committee has worked hard to plan many successful events, notably last

month's WAFLPN Annual Conference, which has received excellent feedback so far. You can read about the Annual Conference on page 2 of this eBulletin.

I would like to thank Kathryn Lawrence, former Chair of WAFLPN, for giving me such a smooth handover. I would also like to thank my supportive Deputy Chairs, Rhonda Griffiths in 2016-17, and Neil Anderson in 2017-18. Finally, I would like to thank Kevin Hanavan who has been instrumental in working with me to plan the annual conferences in 2017 and 2018.

The WAFLPN Steering Committee is in the process of finalising the incoming Chair for 2018-2019, and you can expect an announcement from them in next month's eBulletin.

Thank you to all the WAFLPN members who have come to events and given feedback over the past few years, it has been a pleasure to work with you all. I look forward to continuing my work on the WAFLPN Steering Committee, and I am sure I will continue to see you all at



WAFLPN events, as well as in my work with Anglicare WA and through my work on the Executive Committee of the Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence (WA) and the Men's Behaviour Change Network WA.

## Recap: Annual Conference 2018

On 31 May 2018, approximately 250 professionals from across the WA family law sector gathered at the University Club of Western Australia for the WAFLPN Annual Conference. This year's theme was *Supporting Positive Childhood Attachment*, a topic suggested by multiple WAFLPN members following the 2017 conference.

The day began with an inspiring Welcome to Country by Nigel Wilkes accompanied by his wife Alice Kearing. Nigel and Alice told personal stories to illustrate the importance of coming together as a group to solve complex problems in the community, and iterated their pride in welcoming attendees to the conference for this purpose. Nigel finished by wowing the audience with an incredible digeridoo performance.

It was then time for the official opening of the conference, presented by The Honourable Jane Crisford, who was formerly a judge at the Family Court of WA and is now Chair of Legal Aid WA. Her Honour charmed delegates with stories of her work in the Kimberly and how that changed her views on attachment, particularly in Aboriginal families.

The first keynote presentation came from Keenan Mundine of the Inside Out Aboriginal Justice Consultancy, who told his incredibly moving story of losing both his parents as a child, moving from a foster home to the streets of Redfern, to prison, all in search of familial attachment. Keenan's story was heartbreaking and uplifting, and by the time the conference broke for morning tea, there wasn't a dry eye in the auditorium.

After enjoying a short break with muffins and hot coffee, delegates returned to the auditorium for the second keynote presentation by Dr Adah Sachs of the Bowlby Centre UK. Dr Sachs presented familiar concepts of attachment in a new and captivating way, contextualising the information using compelling stories from her practice. Dr Sachs presented fresh and innovative research on attachment, currently being progressed by herself and her peers, and even the veteran psychologists in the room learned a few new tricks!

Too soon for the delegates, who were bursting with questions for Dr Sachs, it was time to break for lunch. The rain was coming down heavily outside and delegates warmed themselves with some hearty hot food and delicious chocolate mousse.

After lunch the group split for the afternoon breakout sessions. In the auditorium, Kevin Hanavan of the Family Court of WA presented an entertaining session on fathering and attachment. In Seminar Room One, Lesley Bracebridge and Yuyun Tan of Anglicare WA and Linda Jackson of Relationships Australia WA teamed up to present an insightful talk on attachment in the context of supervised contact centres. Over in Seminar Room Two, Laura Nigro of Department of Communities delivered a fast-paced and engaging presentation on attachment in a multicultural context.

After a quick break for coffee and some biscuits, delegates returned to the main auditorium for the final session, welcoming Dr Sachs back to the stage for reflection on the day.

Dr Sachs, was enamoured of Kevin Hanavan's prior presentation, invited him to join her for this final session. It was an interactive and engaging session with spirited conversation flowing between the audience, Dr Sachs and Kevin Hanavan.

At the close of the day, conference MC and Chair of WAFLPN, Kate Jeffries, lead a mural reflection with artist Cameron Jones. Throughout the day to the left of stage, Cameron had been working on a developing mural based on the key topics of discussion raised throughout the day. The finished piece featured a small caricature of each speaker and a summary of their key points. Kate and Cameron talked through each session of the day, highlighting discussions and learning from each.

Finally, Kate closed the conference with thanks to the WAFLPN Steering Committee, and the Committee and a few delegates enjoyed the clearing skies and a few celebratory drinks on the patio of the University Club Café.

If you missed the WAFLPN Conference this year, you can access a video of the day, plus all the speaker's presentations on the 'Members Section' of our website <https://waflpn.org.au>



# Gallery: WAFLPN Annual Conference 2018





## Recap: Albany Workshop with Dr Adah Sachs

On Wednesday, May 30, a group of 30 professionals from the family law sector attended Dr Adah Sach's workshop '*Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma: An Attachment Perspective on Vulnerability and Resilience*' at Le Grande Motel, Albany.

Dr Adah Sachs provided a comprehensive overview of attachment theory and invited participants to share case studies and examples from their own practice. Attendees also enjoyed some light refreshments and nibbles. The feedback from the event has been overwhelmingly positive, with many finding the topic very applicable to their work.

WAFLPN would like to thank our regional representative Antonia Grasso from Relationships Australia for her assistance in organising and promoting this event.

Materials from Dr Sachs' workshop are available on the 'Members Section' of the WAFLPN website. Head to <https://wafpn.org.au> for more details.



## 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@relationshi  
pswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshi<br/>pswa.org.au)

### Kalgoorlie Family Court WA Circuit Twilight Seminar

You are invited to join us in Kalgoorlie for drinks and nibbles for family law professionals located in the Goldfields region and travelling from Perth on the Magistrates circuit of the Family Court of Western Australia.

Featuring Acting Magistrate Cohen and Family Consultant Kevin Hanavan delivering presentations on parental alienation and fathering & attachment.

Prior to coming to the Court, A/M Cohen worked almost exclusively as an Independent Children's Lawyer. Her areas of interest include working with at risk Indigenous children, sexual abuse allegations in the context of high conflict in Family Court proceedings and alienation. She is a mad ice hockey fan and has 3 weeks to go until she becomes a grandmother.

Kevin is a Registered Psychologist with a breadth of experience in working with children, adolescents and adults. Over the last 20 years, Kevin has worked with young people at risk of social and psychological harm and their families.

Kevin has also specialised in the area of family and domestic violence working with both women and men. Kevin has a particular interest in working with men to maintain their psychological wellbeing but also in their role as husbands and partners or fathers. He also has experience in the area of men's groups as well as in teaching both children and adults.

27 June 2018  
5.30-7.30pm  
Kalgoorlie School of Mines  
WMC Conference Centre  
95 Egan St, Kalgoorlie

For more information [visit our website](#) or register now through [trybooking.com](http://trybooking.com)

### Mandurah Twilight Seminar: Family Violence and the Magistrates Court – Is there a future?

WA Family Law Pathways Network invites you to join us for a twilight

seminar with Magistrate Brian Gluestein. Discussion will focus on current practices in the family violence sector, perpetrator accountability, and whether Family Violence Restraining Orders have changed anything. Participants will have a chance to ask questions and network with other professionals over drinks and canapes.

12 July 2018  
4.30-6.00pm  
Mandurah Lotteries House  
7 Anzac Place, Mandurah

For more information [visit our website](#) or register now through [trybooking.com](http://trybooking.com)

### 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.

FIND DATES AND REGISTER TO ATTEND  
<https://wafvpn.org.au/en/events/walk-in-their-shoes>

### MORE TRAINING AND EVENTS

Check out the 'Resources' section on our website for more relevant training and events.

<https://wafvpn.org.au/Resources/Other-Relevant-Training-and-Events>

## 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@relationshi  
pswa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationshi<br/>pswa.org.au)

### Signs of effectiveness of signs of safety? – A pilot study

The Signs of Safety (SoS) approach has been designed as a tool for professionals to support families and children referred to child protection services, aiming to prevent child maltreatment in early stages. The current study was conducted to give in-depth information on how the SoS approach is applied to foster parental empowerment and build a cooperative partnership, and to examine the effectiveness of SoS in terms of reducing the risk of child maltreatment and increasing parental empowerment.

Quantitative results suggested that three months after a care plan had been made, SoS did not outperform regular care in reducing the risk of child maltreatment and increasing parental empowerment. Overall, parental empowerment was, at trend level, associated with a reduction in the risk of child maltreatment.

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

Reekers, S. E., Dijkstra, S., Stams, G. J. J., Asscher, J. J., & Creemers, H. E. (2018). Signs of effectiveness of signs of safety? – A pilot study. *Children and Youth Services Review*.

## Children and young people in separated families: Family law system experiences and needs

This report sets out findings from the Children and Young People in Separated Families: Family Law System Experiences and Needs project, a qualitative study commissioned and funded by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (AGD). This study aimed to investigate the experiences and needs of young people whose parents had separated and had accessed the family law system.

The study was comprised of in-depth, semi-structured interviews carried out between May 2017 and April 2018, with 61 children and young people aged between 10 years and 17 years (supplemented by interviews with 47 parents of these children). The interviews with 47 parents of these children were undertaken by telephone to enable the collection of demographic information by way of background to the data provided by the children and young people. These data enabled the research team to understand the services accessed by the parents and the pathways used to resolve their family law matters. Against this backdrop, the data from the interviews with children and young people provided rich insights into the experiences and needs of children and young people whose parents had separated and had accessed the family law system.

In this report, the authors make extensive use of direct quotes in order to provide a direct voice for participating children and young people and to ensure that, as far as possible, their perspectives are made available in their own words. This enables a deeper

understanding of how children and young people articulate their views and experiences in this context.

#### [Read full article.](#)

Carson, R., Dunstan, E., Dunstan, J., & Roopani, D. (2018). *Children and young people in separated families: Family law system experiences and needs*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

## Children's rights and gender equality in Swedish parenting support: policy and practice

The aim of this article is to explore how 'children's rights' and 'gender equality' are articulated in parenting support policies in Sweden, and how these policies are enacted in practice with respect to the two perspectives mentioned. The analysis builds on key policy documents and interviews with civil servants working on parenting support on local, regional and national levels. The results show that despite national ambitions to enhance and achieve gender equality among parents, gender equality are downplayed in local settings. Important reasons are to be found in a lack of concrete strategies and instructions how to work with gender equality perspectives in cooperation with children's rights perspectives, but also the different interpretations of gender equality and 'good parenting' made by the civil servants.

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

Eklund, L., & Lundqvist, Å. (2018). Children's rights and gender equality in Swedish parenting support: policy and practice. *Journal of Family Studies*, 1-16.

## 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://wafpn.org.au>

Review of the Family Law System – Issues Paper 48 was released on 14 March 2018.

[View Issues Paper.](#)

## 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 commonly used 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://wafpn.org.au/Resources/Service-Wait-Times>

## 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?

If you would like to stop receiving the WAFLPN monthly eBulletin please send an email with the subject "unsubscribe" to [WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au)



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in the  
Family Law System*

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