



**Family Law**  
**PATHWAYS**  
**NETWORK**

**WESTERN**  
**AUSTRALIA**

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

MAY 2019

## Greetings from the Chair

by Rod West



Hello from WAFLPN! The countdown is almost over - we are just one week away from our annual conference! We are so excited to hear from the various expert speakers and to partake in thought-provoking discussions with everyone in attendance.

Although registrations for the conference have now closed, there are still a few places left for the post-conference workshop and the regional sessions next week.

It has not only been a busy month for us here at WAFLPN, but for the sector as a whole. May is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, which aims to raise community awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence and the support available to those affected.

National Law Week, which took place 13-19 May, brought the community and the legal profession together to build a shared understanding of the law. It was a lively week full of informative events and celebration of the legal profession. This year, the Law Society of Western Australia's 'Lawyers Make a Difference' social media campaign sought to recognise the different ways that lawyers are making a difference in our community.

The Law Society of Western Australia also launched a new "[For the Public](#)" resource on their website, which addresses common queries, concerns and legal needs of the Western Australian public.

Next month, WAFLPN will be meeting to discuss our plans for the 2019-2020 financial year. We already have some exciting events and projects in the cards and we cannot wait to share them with you. We always welcome any feedback and suggestions from our members, so if you have any ideas or comments that you would like to share with us, please email [sofia.kouznetsova@relationshipsqa.org.au](mailto:sofia.kouznetsova@relationshipsqa.org.au).

Enjoy the May eBulletin, and look out for next month's issue, which will feature photographs and a review of the conference. Hope to see you next week!



**WA FAMILY LAW**  
**PATHWAYS NETWORK**  
**ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**No One Is Perfect:**  
*Exploring the connection between parenting capacity and children's wellbeing*

**THURSDAY 30 MAY 2019**

**ONE DAY WORKSHOP**  
**FRIDAY 31 OF MAY 2019**

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



**WESTERN**  
**AUSTRALIA**

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

### One Day Workshop: Making the Conversation Matter: Talking About Parenting, Children and Family with Parents who Live With Mental Health Challenges and/or Learning Disability

Being able to have collaborative conversations with parents with mental challenges and/or learning disability about their parenting, especially during critical times such as when parents are involved in family law matters, can be vital.

Presented by Rose Cuff and Dr Margaret Spencer, this workshop will provide invaluable learning and practical strategies to child protection workers, lawyers, advocates and clinicians to support them in this approach.

Participants will have the opportunity to consider the concept of engagement, using an innovative conceptual engagement framework (Spencer 2015) and discuss how to have collaborative conversations, through the use of two collaborative conversational tools – Let's Talk about Children (Solantaus et al, 2010., Maybery et al, 2019) developed for parents with mental health challenges, and the Understanding and Planning Support (UPS) Guide (Spencer & Llewellyn 2008).

31 May 2019  
9.00am-4.00pm  
University Club of Western Australia, Crawley  
Tickets: \$75  
[Register here](#)

**Engaging Parents with Cognitive Disabilities in Family Law Matters**

Join us for an evening session with Dr Margaret Spencer to gain a better understanding of parents with cognitive disabilities and learn practical strategies to support and engage them in family law matters.

27 May 2019  
4.30pm-7.00pm  
The Mangrove Hotel  
47 Carnarvon Street, Broome  
Free event, registrations essential  
[www.trybooking.com/BCBYU](http://www.trybooking.com/BCBYU)

**Making the Conversation Matter: Talking about parenting, children and family with parents who live with mental health challenges**

This morning workshop with 2019 WAFLPN Annual Conference Keynote Speaker Rose Cuff will provide participants with practical strategies and resources to facilitate conversations that matter with parents with mental health challenges.

28 May 2019  
9.00am-12.00pm  
Western Australian Centre for Rural Health (WACRH)  
167 Fitzgerald Street, Geraldton  
Free event, registrations essential  
[www.trybooking.com/BBZXI](http://www.trybooking.com/BBZXI)

**WAFLPN Conference Livestream**

We are pleased to offer our regional and remote members and opportunity to livestream the conference from home or attend a livestream event.

Geraldton Conference Livestream  
30 May 2019  
8.30am-5.00pm  
Western Australian Centre for Rural Health (WACRH)  
167 Fitzgerald Street, Geraldton  
[Register here](#)

**Geraldton Children's Matters Stakeholder Forum**

Join the Geraldton FRC and WAFLPN for an informal discussion and networking session in conjunction with the Family Court of WA (FCWA) circuit, featuring a presentation by FCWA Family Consultant Fran Willix.

18 June 2019  
5.00pm-7.00pm  
Mary Ryan Centre  
1 Maitland Street, Geraldton

Please RSVP to Nicola James at [frcadmin@centacaregeraldton.org.au](mailto:frcadmin@centacaregeraldton.org.au)

**Kalgoorlie Family Court Circuit Twilight Networking Event**

Join Family Court of Western Australia Magistrate Neil Anderson, Team Manager at the Family Court Counselling and Consultancy Service Stephen Clarke and Family Consultant Sharon Pedley to talk about the *Djidji Nyitti* initiative and network with professionals in the Kalgoorlie region.

26 June 2019  
5.00pm-7.00pm  
Rydges Kalgoorlie  
21 Davidson St, Kalgoorlie  
(venue may be subject to change)  
Free event, registrations essential  
[www.trybooking.com/BCYWJ](http://www.trybooking.com/BCYWJ)

**MORE TRAINING AND EVENTS**

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

<https://waflpn.org.au/FPNWA-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@relationships.wa.org.au](mailto:WA.FamilyPathwayNetwork@relationships.wa.org.au)

### Children's experiences and needs in relation to domestic and family violence: Findings from a meta-synthesis

This paper reports on the findings of a meta-synthesis, which explored qualitative research about children's experiences of domestic and family violence. Thirty-two studies, including from the United Kingdom, North America, and Australia were included for review. The meta-synthesis found that children describe domestic violence as being a complex, isolating, and enduring experience that often results in disruption, losses, and challenges to their significant relationships. Children's common feelings of fear, worry, powerlessness, and sadness were also uncovered, in addition to the strategies they employed to try and facilitate the safety and emotional wellbeing of themselves and their family. Children's wants and needs are also highlighted. The findings demonstrate that despite the increasing interest in children's experiences of domestic and family violence, qualitative research remains limited, with many gaps evident. Implications for research, policy, and practice are considered.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Noble-Carr, D., Moore, T. & McArthur, M. (2019). *Children's experiences and needs in relation to domestic and family violence: Findings from a meta-synthesis*. *Journal of Child & Family Social Work*. DOI: 10.1111/cfs.12645

### Relationship Separation and Help-seeking: Reporting on an Agency Study

Despite promotion of specialist services such as mediation and child-centred services, which seek to assist separating families to navigate what is a complex interaction between public and legislative structures, there is little known about the potentially broader array of supports and information people use following separation. Better understanding of help-seeking behaviours for separating couples enables more effective targeted policy and service delivery. Surveying individuals with children accessing a nongovernment-funded program for support during separation, it was found that help-seeking for legal services was more common than seeking help for self-care, but that both were important for many people in the sample. Friendship networks, and medical and health professionals were the most common sources of information and support. This article argues that social work has a role in promoting and supporting parents who are separating to access a broader range of informal support networks and professional services.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Howard, R., Dunk-West, P. & Natalier, K. (2019). *Relationship Separation and Help-seeking: Reporting on an Agency Study*. *Australian Social Work*. DOI: 10.1080/0312407X.2019.1599404

### The Role of Illicit Drug Use in Family and Domestic Violence in Australia

Drug use has been shown to interact in complex ways with the occurrence and prevalence of family and domestic violence (FDV), with illicit drug use being associated with an increased risk for FDV. This study investigated the role of illicit drugs in intimate partner violence (IPV), family violence (FV), and other violence (violence between people other than partners or family) within an Australian sample. It was found that respondents who reported having used any illicit drug in the past 12 months (with or without alcohol use) had over three times the odds of experiencing any violence in the past 12 months compared with those not using illicit drugs. Furthermore, drug involvement in FDV (IPV or FV) was significantly more likely than other violent incident types. For the most recent FDV incident, age group was the only significant demographic predictor of drug involvement at this incident; younger age groups were over twice as likely to report drug involvement than those over 65 years of age. Drug involvement at the most recent FDV incident was also associated with over twice the odds of injury and significantly greater negative life impact. The findings that drug use increases both the risk for and impact of FDV indicate the need for policy that advocates for interventions addressing both drug use and violence in combination.

[Read abstract or purchase article.](#)

Coomber, K., Mayshak, R. & Liknaitzky, P. (2019). *The Role of Illicit Drug Use in Family and Domestic Violence in Australia*. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. DOI: 10.1177/0886260519843288

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

### Final Report Released: Australian Law Reform Commission Review of the Family Law System

On 10 April 2019, The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) report, Family Law for the Future: An Inquiry into the Family Law System, was tabled in Parliament by the Attorney-General, the Hon Christian Porter MP.

The ALRC has made 60 recommendations for reform.

*Family Law for the Future: An Inquiry into the Family Law System (ALRC Report 135)* and the *Summary Report (ALRC 135 Summary)* are available for viewing or free download at <https://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiries/family-law-system>.

### Image-based Abuse (Revenge Porn) Now a Crime in WA

The Criminal Law Amendment (Intimate Images) Bill came into effect on 15 April 2019, making the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, or 'revenge porn', a crime which attracts jail time of either 18 months or three years and/or a fine of up to \$18,000.

For more information and to make a report, visit [esafety.gov.au/iba](http://esafety.gov.au/iba)

### Tenancy Law Changes In Effect

The Residential Tenancies Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Bill 2018 came into effect on 15 April 2019.

The amendments are aimed at giving the victim better choices, including whether to stay in the tenancy or move to safer accommodation, or remove tenancy-related concerns, which are barriers to leaving a violent relationship.

For more information, visit [the Safe Tenancy WA page \(Consumer Protection\)](#).

[View video footage from WAFLPN's Family Violence Amendments Training on 15 February 2019.](#)

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

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.

If any of the following circumstances apply, the ban will apply automatically:

- either party has been convicted of, or is charged with, an offence involving violence, or a threat of violence, to the other party.
- a family violence order (other than an interim order) applies to both parties.
- an injunction for the personal protection of either party is directed against the other party under sections 68B or 114 of the Family Law Act.

The court may make discretionary judgements to enact bans even if those circumstances do not apply.

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

### State Government commences consultation to reduce family and domestic violence

The Department of Communities has commenced State-wide consultation to inform development of a strategy to reduce family and domestic violence in the Western Australian community over the next 10 years.

There is a range of ways people can get involved and have their say including:

- an on-line survey;
- written responses to a consultation paper;
- a short 'Message to the Hon Simone McGurk, MLA Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence'; or
- face to face forums and workshops (dates and locations to be announced in early 2019).
- Tailored face to face engagement, and other on-line formats, will also be used to support access and engagement for people with disability, or from diverse cultural backgrounds or geographic locations.

For further information and to have your say, go to [www.communities.wa.gov.au/fdv](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/fdv)

If you have any questions please direct them to [FDVStrategy@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:FDVStrategy@communities.wa.gov.au)



## Attitudes towards violence against women and gender equality among Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)

On 16 May, ANROWS launched the *Attitudes towards violence against women and gender equality among Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)* report.

This report explores the responses of the 342 NCAS respondents who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The report found that most Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders have a good understanding of violence against women, support gender equality and do not endorse attitudes supportive of violence against women.

Respondents to the survey who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander were asked additional questions relating to their understandings of the causes of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, and their views on reporting violence to the police. Dr Kyllie Cripps, Pallawa woman and lead author said: "These additional questions were developed with the input of an expert panel. The inclusion of these questions is very important because previously there was no known national survey research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into their views of factors contributing to violence against women and girls."

Accordingly, this report provides valuable and much needed insight from within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

[Read the report.](#)

## 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://waflpn.org.au/Resources/Service-Wait-Times>

## UNSUBSCRIBE?

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## FEEDBACK

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

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in the  
Family Law System*

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