



WAfamily pathways network

WA Family Pathways Network eBulletin

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

JUNE 2016

Greetings from the Chair

by Kathryn Lawrence

Hello from WAFPN! It was lovely to see you all at our annual conference last month! What an excellent day and I'd like to extend my thanks to the WAFPN conference sub-committee who did such a great job putting it all together.

The big news from me this month is it is time for me to step down from my role as chair of WAFPN. The chair position is a two year role, and that means my time is up! I have had an excellent time in this role, and I'm proud of what WAFPN has achieved over the last two years. I'm looking forward to continuing to be part of the WAFPN steering committee as the representative for the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Our current deputy chair, Kate Jeffries, will be stepping up to take my place. Many of you will know Kate as she has been involved in the sector

for many years, and is currently working with Communicare. I wish Kate all the best in her role as chair of WAFPN. Look out for a big write-up about Kate in next month's eBulletin.

The role of deputy chair, previously held by Kate, will now be held by long time WAFPN steering committee member and representative of the Family Law Practitioners Association, Rhonda Griffiths. As Rhonda has now found herself in semi-retirement, she is looking forward to taking on a bigger role with WAFPN, and we are all looking forward to having her wise input at WAFPN.

That's all from me for my final eBulletin, thanks for staying in touch with WAFPN and I look forward to seeing you at future events.



WAFPN Annual Conference Recap

WAFPN is pleased to announce another successful annual conference for 2016. More than 250 delegates from across the WA family law sector filled the stunning University of WA Club in Crawley on May 26 for 'Are you hearing me? Listening to the voice of the child in the family law system'.

Featuring exhibitions from the WAFPN Kiosk, Anglicare, Centrecare, Citizens Advice Bureau, Communicare, Relationships Australia, Legal Aid, FLPA and the Aboriginal Family Legal Services, delegates enjoyed a coffee in the morning, helping themselves to ample freebies from the exhibition stands.

MC Stephen Clarke kicked off proceedings, and once again we were delighted to have the Welcome to Country delivered by the inspiring young Montanna and Savanna, a highlight for many delegates, and our very first 'voice of the child' for the day.

The opening address was delivered by His Honour, Justice Simon Moncrieff, and was followed by a

short video prepared by the young people of Cafcass UK's Family Justice Young People's Board.

Justice Moncrieff returned to the stage and gave an interesting and in depth presentation, with useful insight into how a family court judge can listen to the voice of the child in family law proceedings.

Following an interesting Q&A session with Justice Moncrieff, it was time for morning tea, and with the weather fining up, delegates spilled out onto the terrace and enjoyed a hot coffee and some delicious mini muffins.

Returning to the theatre, it was time to hear from Commissioner of Children and Young People Colin Pettit. The Commissioner gave excellent real life examples of children's voices that were much appreciated by the audience.

It was then time for a change of pace, as up next was Sydney-based psychiatrist and single expert witness Dr Peter Krabman. Dr Krabman delivered a witty and captivating presentation, providing useful knowledge for all in the room, particularly the counsellors.



With the morning already behind us it was time to enjoy a delicious lunch on the terrace, chat and network with old colleagues and new friends.

The first session for the afternoon was delivered by Anglicare's Tunya Petridis, featuring a special guest. Mikayla Baker is a 17 year old with lived experience of FDV and as a child involved in the family court. Mikayla stunned the audience with her eloquent and frank appraisal of the family system, and her beautiful analogy of being "forced to eat tomatoes" will be memorable for many of us.



Tunya gave some excellent examples of the voices of children she has heard in her work and challenged us in the system to think about how we listen to and respect the voice of the child.



It was then time to head to the breakout sessions, where delegates could choose to hear another presentation from Dr Krabman, or a presentation from the Family Court Counselling and Consultancy Services, or a presentation from a panel of local FDRPs. While this session was a little rushed for time, delegates appreciated having three great sessions to choose from, with many saying they found it hard to choose!

After an afternoon tea break featuring some delicious homemade biscuits, it was time to return to the theatre for the final session. As the delegates entered the theatre they were told they would need their smart phones – it was time to get involved with an interactive hypothetical! MC Stephen Clarke led

the delegates through a scenario where they had the opportunity to vote on how they thought the situation should be managed. An expert panel featuring Justice Moncrieff, Lynette Hill (ADR, Legal Aid), Kevin Hanavan (Family Court Counselling and Consultancy Service), Nicole Leggett (CPFS) and Katelyn Betti (FDRP, Relationships Australia) were able to respond to the results.

Despite a few technical difficulties, the crowd was energised and we had the opportunity to apply what we had learnt throughout the day, hear from other experts in the room and share knowledge.

With the proceedings at a close, a few members of the network and steering committee ended the day by sharing a drink on the terrace.



Next year marks the 10th annual WAFPN conference, and planning is already underway. If you have any suggestions of themes for next year's conference, please send them to

jane.azzopardi@relationshipsaustralia.org.au

Geraldton Live Stream Event

By Alison Muller, Geraldton Regional Rep

For the fourth year in a row about a dozen family law professionals in Geraldton joined together to view the live stream of the annual WA Family Pathways Network Conference.

This year the live stream worked extremely well with none of the technical glitches experienced in previous years.

All of the conference presentations were relevant and interesting and the Geraldton participants appreciated the opportunity to enjoy the Conference locally in a collegiate, group atmosphere, rather than just sitting in front of their computers.

Refreshed by a well catered morning and afternoon tea and lunch the participants were able to share the conference experience together and network in the breaks.

We appreciate the support of WA Family Pathways Network to not only put together a high quality conference but make it accessible in a cost effective way to regional professionals.

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

National Mediation Conference 2016

Early bird registration for the National Mediation Conference 2016 closes July 4.

This year's National Mediation Conference theme is: "Thought, Innovation and Creativity: The Next Decade". It will showcase: what we know and how we know it; think about our thinking; reflect on how we innovate, educate and train practitioners across the wide spectrum from self determination to determinative processes; how we can become more flexible and creatively facilitate processes in response to the diverse needs of our clients to provide a future of best practice in all we do to manage our own and other peoples disputes.

11-15 September 2016
Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre
2684 – 2690 Gold Coast Highway
Broadbeach, QLD
Full early bird registration \$890

For more information or to register visit
<http://www.mediationconference.com.au/>

Association of Family and Conciliation Courts AFCC Australian Chapter Third Annual Conference

This year's AFCC theme is 'Assessing and determining children's best interests in the flood of family violence claims'.

18-20 August 2016
Brisbane Conference and Entertainment Centre
Southbank, Brisbane
Early bird registration \$760

For more information or to register visit <http://afccnet.org.au/afcc-2016-conference/>

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



Our Aim

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

To assist separating families obtain appropriate services



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.org.au

Gender and Evidence in Family Law Reform: A Case Study of Quantification and Anecdote in Framing and Legitimising the 'Problems' with Child Support in Australia

Despite claims of 'evidence based policy', the place of empirical evidence in family law reform is ambiguous. There is ongoing socio-legal analysis of the differential value and uses of quantitative data and anecdote in detailing women's experiences and advocating for change. In this paper, we engage with these issues through a focus on how data were constructed in a key government report, *Every Picture Tells a Story*, which was used to officially define the problem and outline recommendations in the controversial 2006-08 reform of the Australian Child Support Scheme. Our discussion focuses on two questions: what legitimacy is accorded to different kinds of evidence in family law reform processes?; and, how is this legitimacy gendered? We applied feminist critical discourse analysis to the type, source and claims of the data included in the child support chapter of the report. Our findings indicate that both quantitative data and

anecdote were used to privilege fathers' financial interests and autonomy; in contrast, women's voices and interests were marginalised. Thus, we argue the legitimacy of data is ascribed through its relationship to the gendered definition of the 'problems' of child support, rather than the type of data per se.

Link to abstract:

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10691-016-9317-9>

Cook, K., & Natalier, K. Gender and Evidence in Family Law Reform: A Case Study of Quantification and Anecdote in Framing and Legitimising the 'Problems' with Child Support in Australia. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 1-21..

Are interventions supporting separated parents father inclusive? Insights and challenges from a review of programme implementation and impact

This paper reviews divorce-related parenting programmes, assessing the extent to which fathers are included and whether father inclusion influences outcomes. The paper also discusses limitations of the research evidence and implications for future intervention and evaluation design. Thirteen programmes met the criteria in the review period 2005–2012 but only four had been evaluated using randomized control trials or with independent measures from mothers and fathers. Analysis of these four programmes shows modest evidence of reduced couple-conflict, improved coparenting and some evidence of improved child outcomes. Key issues raised are the need for improving the quantity and quality of demographic data about fathers; the importance of incorporating analysis by

gender of parent into evaluation design and the value of developing and routinely using father-related indicators to measure programme impact on men's parenting, fathering and co-parental relationships.

Link to abstract:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cfs.12299/abstract>

Philip, G., & O'Brien, M. (2016). Are interventions supporting separated parents father inclusive? Insights and challenges from a review of programme implementation and impact. *Child & Family Social Work*.

Children's Participation in Legal Proceedings: Stress, Coping, and Consequences

Participating in legal proceedings can be highly distressing and potentially detrimental to children's well-being, both immediately and over time. In this review, we discuss how children cope with such participation. We focus primarily on children's experiences and coping when they witnessed or endured crimes and are subsequently involved in criminal or dependency cases, though when possible we include evidence of children's coping when involved in divorce cases.

Link to abstract:

http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-29406-3_6

Milojevich, H. M., Quas, J. A., & Yano, J. Z. (2016). *Children's Participation in Legal Proceedings: Stress, Coping, and Consequences*. In *Advances in Psychology and Law* (pp. 185-216). Springer International Publishing.

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.org.au

Future Focus of Family Law Services

The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department has commissioned a report from KPMG on the Future Focus of Family Law Services, to provide advice on how the future needs of the Australian community for family law services can be best met over the long term.

View the full report [here](#).

ICYMI - National Press Club Address - Family Violence Forum - Rosie Batty and Danny Blay

The National Press Club presents a Family Violence Election Forum with the 2015 Australian Of the Year, Rosie Batty and Danny Blay, Men's Behaviour Change Program facilitator.

View the program [here](#).

ICYMI - Family Court decisions can lead to 'diabolic' situations, says Rosie Batty

The Sydney Morning Herald reports: domestic violence campaigner Rosie Batty has blasted the Family Court of Australia, accusing the system of often failing to recognise the impact of abuse.

Ms Batty called for a new domestic violence test in custody cases to determine whether it's safe for children to spend time with either parent.

Read the full article [here](#).

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

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If you have any suggestions on how we could improve this bulletin please email them to jane.azzopardi@relationships.org.au

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