



**Research Conference
Programme**

***What Do Children Need?
Working with Families Involved
with the Family Court***

27 February 2009





Introduction

At a time of renewed uncertainty and some gloom about our profession, it is good to remind ourselves that research-led and evidence-informed practice has made a significant contribution to professional development in recent years, and has helped innumerable practitioners to manage their complex role and tasks. The Cafcass Research Conference is an eagerly awaited event in our annual calendar and one that participants invariably enjoy and learn from. The range of issues being covered this year is impressive and designed to reflect some of the big issues practitioners and those supporting them are obliged to consider in every case with every child. There are sessions on most aspects of family court work - work that never ceases to fascinate or amaze, however long you have been doing it. It has been my privilege to have worked in this field for over thirty years, yet each day is still different, each day is a challenge and each day is rewarding because of the large number of vulnerable children and young people we are able to help, through the skills and sensitivities of our practitioners. Research helps all of us in our roles, and I look forward to another very successful conference.

Anthony Douglas
Chief Executive Officer
Cafcass

Outline Programme

09:15	Registration and Refreshments	
09:45	Welcome Anthony Douglas (Chief Executive Officer, Cafcass)	15 minutes
10:00	Plenary Presentation Dr Donald Forrester "Parental Substance Misuse and Child Welfare: Issues in Engaging Parents and Assessing Risks for Children"	45 minutes
10:45	Tea/Coffee Break	25 minutes
11:10	Parallel Sessions (see p 4 to 28 for details)	90 minutes
12:40	Lunch	60 minutes
13:40	Parallel Sessions (see p 4 to 28 for details)	90 minutes
15:10	Tea/Coffee Break	25 minutes
15:35	Plenary Presentation (45 minutes) Prof. Sue White "Tales from the Trenches: Rationing and Reasoning at the 'Front Door' of Children's Social Care. What Does This Mean for Referrals?"	45 minutes
16:20	Conference Summary Anthony Douglas (Chief Executive Officer, Cafcass)	10 minutes
16:30	Close of Conference	

Please note: The conference organisers reserve the right to alter the programme and presenters as needed.

Morning Parallel Session Choices

Room 1

Kate Morris and Paul Nixon

“Family Decision-Making: Rights Based Practice and the Evidence Base for Family Group Conferences”

Anthony Douglas

“Partnership Working”

Room 2/3

Prof Judith Masson

“Understanding Care Proceedings: Messages for Practice under the Public Law Outline”

Dr Liz Trinder

“Dispute Resolution and Private Law Conflict: Processes, Outcomes and Future Directions”

Room 15

Judy Corlyon and Claire Sandamas

“Improving Children’s Lives by Supporting Non-Resident Parents”

Sarah Woodhead and Benjamin Hitch with a member of the Cafcass Children’s Rights Team

“Does the Involvement of Young People in their Case have an Effect on the Overall Outcome?”

Room 16

Polly Baynes

“Social Work with Violent Men: What Has Changed?”

Ravinder Thiara and Rosemary Aris

“Child Contact in the Context of Post-Separation Violence: Issues for Black and Minority Ethnic Women and Children”

Room 17

Susanna Abse and Leezah Hertzmann
“Conflict or Collaboration? Why You Can’t Ignore the Couple. ‘Parenting Together’ – a New Therapeutic Service”

Teri Rogers
“Creativity, Reflection and Effective Practice”

Room 18

Community Care Inform
“Finding Relevant Research to Inform Practice”

Colleen Eccles
“Evidence Matters: Gaining the Confidence of Children and Families through Excellence in Analysing Evidence”

Afternoon Parallel Session Choices

Room 1

Dr Beverley Prevatt-Goldstein
“A Model of Good Practice for Working with Black and Other Children and Families”

Prof Jan Horwath
“Believing and Belonging: Faith, Parenting and Assessment”

Room 2/3

Prof Allison James
“Cultures of Childhood: a Critical Appraisal”

Dr Sue McGaw
“Assessment of Parents with Learning Disabilities”

Room 15

Phillip Gilligan and Martin Manby

“The Common Assessment Framework: Does the Reality Match the Rhetoric?”

Sandra Maxwell

“Implementing the Common Assessment Framework”

Room 16

Christine Smart and members of the Cafcass Children and Young People's Board

“The Health and Well-Being of Children in Care”

Christine Robbie

“Examining the Methods and Techniques for Eliciting the Wishes and Feelings of Children (aged 5 – 11) in the Middle of Parental Disputes in the Family Courts”

Room 17

Elaine O'Callaghan

“The Role of Expert Evidence in Resolving Disputed Child Contact Cases”

Jane Glover and Rebecca Fowler

“Mediation in a Family Court Setting - Does it Work?”

Room 18

Ann Potter

“The Right to be Seen as Well as Heard? Contemplating the direct involvement of children and young people in family proceedings”

Bridget Godfrey

“What Works with Parents with Alcohol Problems: a service users' perspective”

Helen Scholar and Steve Myers

“A ‘Case Planning’ Model for Private Law Applications in a North West (England) Family Court: Findings of an Evaluation Study”

Abstracts for Presentations and Workshops

(in alphabetical order by first author surname)

Abse, Susanna

Director/Couple Psychotherapist, Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships and Hertzmann, Leezah

Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships
“Conflict or Collaboration? Why You Can’t Ignore the Couple. ‘Parenting Together’ – A new therapeutic service”

Presentation

The Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships is in its 60th year of operations. It is renowned as a centre of excellence for research, training and clinical services aimed at the needs of adult couples. As part of our clinical services, we have developed a service for couples experiencing difficulties with their parenting. In particular we have been working with parents who are in chronic and acute conflict about parenting issues and the aim of the therapy is to develop and strengthen the parenting alliance. High conflict produces poor outcomes for children (Dunn 2007). This service although in its infancy, has shown the enormous demand there is for a therapy that can work with a separated couple who cannot make collaborative arrangements to parent their children. Whilst there are many agencies who will offer help to the children of a conflicted couple, solicitors, clinical psychologists, social workers and other professionals are desperate to find help for the parental couple when mediation is not appropriate. During the first year of this service we have worked with some very complex cases, many of whom are either involved with the courts or on the verge of legal processes. Some of these cases have involved ongoing liaison with other services including child protection professionals. TCCR is developing this pioneering therapy, which uses a mentalisation-based approach with support from Professor Peter Fonagy and Dr Mary Target (Anna Freud Centre/UCL). Mentalisation Based Therapy has been evaluated as effective with patients suffering from borderline personality disorder – couples engaged in these conflicts are often in highly emotionally aroused states and benefit from a structured approach to the therapy to help them manage their complex and conflicted feelings in order that they can come to collaborative arrangements about their children. The presentation will explore the challenges of working with these couples, demonstrating our new approach and our early evaluation of the effectiveness of this service.

Baynes, Polly

Self-Employed Children's Guardian

"Social Work with Violent Men: What's Changed?"

Presentation

This study reports findings from a small-scale research project that sought to examine whether child protection social work practice with violent men had changed since 1996. The findings are based on the child protection reports and minutes relating to 40 families in one local authority. 63 men were involved in these families in a variety of roles and relationships, and male violence to women and (to a lesser extent) children was common. These men were involved in families in which children were at risk, and had disproportionately high levels of recorded histories of violence (two thirds of cases). This is consistent with other research about serious child abuse (e.g. Brandon *et al* 2007), however it also means the men involved in these families were not typical of men as a whole. The study found low levels of social work engagement with all the men involved in children's lives, particularly non-resident fathers and mothers' partners.

Nonetheless, despite the overall low levels of engagement with men, social workers were found to be more, not less likely, to engage with violent men than with men generally. In a significant shift of practice since 1996 (when *Messages from Research* indicated a social work failure to address male violence) in some cases plans were made to assess, monitor or intervene with their violence. It is beyond the scope of this study to establish whether this increased focus on male violence has improved the protection of children. However, there were some indications that the presence of a violent man in a meeting could limit information sharing.

Male violence frequently triggered child protection procedures in the context of long-standing childcare concerns, but the professional focus rapidly shifted to maternal childcare. Male violence to women remained largely invisible within the data, obscured by sanitised language and lack of specific description, with children constructed as the primary victims of all forms of family violence.

Many men remained absent throughout the process; others were constructed as 'invisible/not responsible', with women ascribed responsibility for the physical care and protection of children. Protection and practical childcare were not constructed as central to these men's roles with children, although some men were required to attend specialist domestic violence treatment programmes. Men's ability to provide practical and emotional care for children remained largely un-assessed, even when their children were at risk of becoming looked after.

The research highlights the gendered nature of parenting and family violence. Men are more likely than women to live apart from their own children and to live with unrelated children. The researcher calls for greater use of specialist tools for assessing the risk of male violence and for the development of a gendered approach to assessing parenting, which differentiates the male partner or father's role from that of the mother's. She raises questions about how best to ensure an appropriate focus on working with men while protecting known victims of male violence from risk of further abuse. This study is of particular interest to social workers, guardians and child protection chairs, with many specific messages for practice.

References

Brandon, M.; Belderson, P.; Warren, C.; Howe, D.; Gardner, R.; Dodsworth, J.; and Black, J. (2007) *Analysing Child Deaths and Serious Injury through Abuse and Neglect: What Can We Learn? A Biennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2003-2005*, Research Report DCSF-RR023. London: Dept for Children, Schools and Families

Dartington Research Unit (1996), *Messages from Research*, London: Dept of Health/The Stationery Office

Community Care Inform

"Finding Relevant Research to Inform Practice"

Presentation

[CC Inform](#) is *Community Care's* new online information service, designed specifically to meet the information needs of social care professionals working with children, young people and families. This presentation, which will be delivered by CC Inform's editorial team, is an opportunity to see how the site works and learn about the wealth of information it gives you access to and why you can have confidence in using it in your day-to-day practice. Come along and take the opportunity to talk to the team about how you can influence how the site develops.

Corlyon, Judy

Principal Researcher, Tavistock Institute

"Improving children's lives by supporting non-resident parents"

Presentation

The proposed presentation draws on a 3-year research study funded by the Big Lottery Fund and due for completion next month, which was

carried out in conjunction with the Fatherhood Institute (formerly Fathers Direct) and with support from Cafcass. The overall aim of the research was to develop an understanding of how mainstream services can facilitate the role of non-resident parents in meeting the needs of children in separated families, and in particular those living in disadvantaged families. The research was carried out in England and Wales.

The presentation will draw on interviews with a range of professionals (including Cafcass staff), resident parents, non-resident parents and their children to explore the support needed or desired by parents and children in separated families. We will then outline what already exists to meet their needs, drawing on examples of good practice where available, explore how existing services might be extended or developed to help non-resident parents to achieve optimal outcomes for their children, and discuss whether there is scope for the development of new interventions, particularly those which complement services aimed at the resident parent and the child. This will be set in the family policy context, exploring whether policy could be developed to enable practice which encourages and supports non-resident parents.

Douglas, Anthony

Chief Executive Officer, Cafcass

“Partnership Working”

Presentation

Partnership working is a crucial means of improving services. However the question is how it can be carried out in practice. This presentation will explore:

- The history of partnership working;
- Why it is important;
- How professionals are already working together;
- How to develop good relationships and address common difficulties;
- How to ensure that partnership working really does result in better practice;
- The future of partnership working.

Eccles, Colleen

Assistant Director, Research in Practice

“Evidence Matters: Gaining the Confidence of Children and Families through Excellence in Analysing Evidence”

Workshop

This workshop distils learning from a change project led by Research in Practice and funded by the DCSF, which aims to improve social work

practice in the family court through the development of evidence-informed practice and research utilisation. The workshop describes the change project model of collaborative enquiry that lends itself to multidisciplinary practice improvement. Findings relating to current practice are given with recommendations for practice improvement across disciplines working in the family court in particular focussing on assessment, risk assessment, analysis in assessment and the role of research in decision-making. The project was primarily focussed on social work practice in local authorities although Cafcass was involved throughout the development and piloting of the project and the issues are just as pertinent to Cafcass practice in both private and public law. The session will include film where examples of how to give good evidence are portrayed. Documentary film, which includes the opinions of Cafcass, Judges, Barristers, Solicitors and Social Workers about the use of research evidence will also be shown.

The project is developed around a research method model (Change Project Method), which includes a scoping study, expert knowledge exchange, collaborative practitioner research, peer-review and piloting. Therefore the evidence the guidance is built upon is rigorous and satisfactorily comprehensive. Delegates will take away practical information and tools that they can use in everyday management of cases.

For more details of the method see:

<http://www.rip.org.uk/changeprojects/changeStage.asp>

Forrester, Donald

Director of Child and Family Welfare Research Unit, University of Bedfordshire
"Parental Substance Misuse and Child Welfare: Issues in Engaging Parents and Assessing Risks for Children"

Presentation

Parental substance misuse is an issue in a wide range of family situations and for some children it can cause serious harm. It is certainly a social problem that has a considerable impact on children's social services, with most children who come into care being affected by parental substance misuse. Yet until recently there has been little research on the issue and there is limited evidence about what works in helping such families. This presentation considers some of the challenges inherent in such work, and in particular the difficulty of assessing risk and the challenge of engaging parents. It then outlines key elements involved in effective responses. It reflects on lessons from 3 recent studies carried out by Dr. Forrester and colleagues. These were a study looking at social work communication skills, one exploring the potential of Motivational Interviewing (MI) for helping families and one evaluating the impact of an Intensive Family Preservation Service ("Option 2") that uses MI in serious child protection

situations. In conclusion it is argued that understanding what works in helping families affected by parental substance misuse provides an opportunity for radically improving children's social services in three important ways. Firstly, it provides an opportunity for social work and social care to learn from the research traditions of the substance misuse field. Secondly, it offers promising approaches that work with difficult behaviour change issues that are likely to be of wider usefulness. Thirdly, and most importantly, it offers a new vision for how services and policies should be designed and delivered. This vision focuses on "rehumanising" social work through attention to client/worker relationships and the structures required to support workers to deliver "evidence based" interventions. This is contrasted with the managerial/bureaucratic and market-based visions for social services that currently dominate policy.

Gilligan, Philip

Senior Lecturer, University of Bradford, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities

and Manby, Martin

Director, Nationwide Children's Research Centre, Huddersfield

"The Common Assessment Framework: Does the reality match the rhetoric?"

Presentation

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is part of the procedures envisaged in the Every Child Matters: Change for Children (ECM: CFC) programme. Implementation of CAF, in particular, raises many important questions, not least those arising from the inconsistencies apparent between government rhetoric around the development of multi-agency services provided to all children with 'additional' needs and the actual experiences of children, young people, parents/carers and practitioners in 'real world' situations. This session will explore the extent to which the actions of practitioners and the experiences of service users with regard to CAF mirror or differ from those which would be expected in view of the content of government guidance and policy documents. The data used in the inputs will be taken, largely, from an evaluation of CAF processes in two locations in northern England over a period of 6 months. This indicated that very small numbers of children and young people actually received the service; that, despite genuine enthusiasm from practitioners for them to be so, the processes observed could not yet be described as fully 'child centred'; that fathers were insufficiently involved; and that CAF was, in reality, another service 'rationed' according to resources available and according to agencies' priorities.

Glover, Jane

Policy & Research Officer, Barnardo's
and Fowler, Rebecca

Assistant Policy Researcher, Barnardo's

"Mediation in a Family Court Setting – Does it Work?"
Workshop

There is a growing consensus that in comparison to court hearings, family mediation improves outcomes for parents and children, in cases of child contact and residence dispute. However, in practice, government data shows that only 20 percent of couples accessing legal aid for family breakdown cases in the United Kingdom use family mediation (National Audit Office, 2007).

An evaluation of a Barnardo's Family Centre mediation service in one Health and Social Service Trust area in Northern Ireland found that agreement rates in mediation were higher than the national average, and that there were clear and quantifiable time and resource savings for the Health and Social Services Trust.

The model of practice, and the results of the evaluation will be presented in the workshop to stimulate further discussion about family mediation in the United Kingdom.

Godfrey, Bridget

Parent

"What Works with Parents with Alcohol Problems: a service users' perspective"
Presentation

Social work services for children and families need to find ways to engage effectively with parents to meet their needs in order to provide an effective service to children and their families. They have not always done this (CSCI 2006). This presentation offers one service user's perspective about what would assist professionals to engage with parents, and work sensitively and supportively with them, while still maintaining a position which places first, children's need for good care. The presenter is a parent who, in the past, received services from both the local authority and Cafcass. Her personal experiences as a parent are used to illustrate examples of helpful and unhelpful practice with children and parents. By working in positive yet realistic ways, they can help to bring new strength and new hope to children and their parents.

CSCI (2006) *Supporting Parents, Safeguarding Children: Meeting the Needs of Parents with Children on the Child Protection Register*, Commission for Social Care Inspection, February

Horwath, Jan

Professor, Department of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield

“Believing and Belonging: Faith, Parenting and Assessment”

Presentation

To date practitioners have been provided with negligible national guidance when it comes to assessing the influence of religious beliefs and practices on family life. Bearing in mind the publicity that has been given to abuse by clergy and the links between religious beliefs, practices and maltreatment practitioners can be forgiven for focusing purely on the negative impact of religion on family life. However, focusing on the negative influences alone can lead to a distorted assessment. Within this session consideration will be given to the challenges encountered by practitioners when attempting to assess the influence of religious beliefs and practices on children in need and their families. Drawing on a search of the literature and a study completed in Bradford between 2006- 2008 suggestions are put forward as to how practitioners can ensure that they take into account both religious beliefs and practices when exploring the developmental needs of a child, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors.

James, Allison

Professor, Department of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield,

“Cultures of Childhood: a Critical Appraisal”

Presentation

This paper considers the arguments that childhood should be regarded as primarily a social, rather than biological category. Examining changing historical and cultural ideas about childhood and what ‘the child’ is, it argues that to see childhood as simply a developmental phase in the life course is, potentially, to ignore the needs of many children. Developmental models of childhood postulate a universalism that may not appropriately address the diversities of children’s lived experiences in different social contexts. The paper argues, therefore, for the need to address the many cultures of children that shape the childhoods that they inhabit. The paper is illustrated, throughout, with material drawn from research with children.

Masson, Judith

Professor of Socio-legal Studies, University of Bristol

“Understanding Care Proceedings: Messages for Practice under the Public Law Outline”

Presentation

Between 2006 and 2008 Judith Masson lead a team which examined almost 400 sets of care proceedings in Family Proceedings Courts and Care Centres across England. This research – the *Care Profiling Study* MoJ Research Report 4/08 provides detailed information about the children and families who became the subject of care proceedings and how the courts were handing care proceedings before the introduction of the PLO. Drawing on this research and ongoing work on care proceedings, this presentation will explore key issues in contemporary care proceedings practice including:

- The involvement of children’s social care departments before proceedings;
- The timetable for the child and the timescale of proceedings
- The use of experts and judicial decision making;
- Agreements, conflict and contested hearings;
- Relatives as parties, kinship placements and the orders made.

Maxwell, Sandra

Children’s Trust Business Manager, Bracknell Forest Borough Council

“Implementing the Common Assessment Framework”

Workshop

The Common Assessment Framework was introduced with the expressed intention of providing a consistent framework for services to support vulnerable children who otherwise might ‘slip through the safety net’. However, differences have been noted in the ways CAF has been implemented in different authorities (Brandon *et al* 2006). Quite simply, CAF has not completely eliminated dilemmas for practice although it has changed the context for some of the debates. What is planned is an interactive workshop which explores some of these issues, based on the experience of one local authority.

A short presentation will be made about some of the principles of the common assessment and the key benefits and issues that have arisen in relation to using CAF in Bracknell Forest. These experiences will be used to illustrate material about thresholds and eligibility criteria, professional ownership (or not) of CAF, barriers to undertaking common assessments, and the ongoing need for culture change to underpin all areas of policy and practice development (within the broader Every Child Matters agenda,

and the National Children's Plan). The presentation will not be reporting original research but will be reporting the application of current research and policy to practice.

Following this presentation, two common assessments undertaken in Bracknell Forest will be used as a basis for some group work. The recipients of the two common assessments are from the same family and identify some very complex issues which include possible child protection, housing, education, conflicting needs of adults with complex needs of their own, the role of the children as young carers. In addition to this there are some significant cultural barriers as the family are from a Traveller background.

The group work will explore:

When a number of concerns are identified for a child / young person, at what point does this trigger child protection concerns? Who makes that judgement?

What mechanisms could be in place to support better responses from multi-agency practitioners (some of whom may work for Cafcass) whose services use different eligibility thresholds?

How might practitioners consider and respond to cultural differences?

How can the process remain child centred when there are clearly complex issues for the adults which impact on the outcomes for the children / young people? What role should / could adult services and Court-based services play in a family approach to assessment and responding to need?

Reference

Brandon, Marion; Howe, Amanda; Dagley, Valerie; Salter, Charlotte; Warren, Catherine; Black, Jane (2006), *Evaluating the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional Guidance and Implementation in 2005-2006*, Research Brief RB740, April 2006, London: DfES.

McGaw, Sue

Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Cornwall Healthcare Trust

"Assessment of Parents with Learning Disabilities"

Presentation

The pejorative assumptions often held about the capacity of adults with learning disabilities to parent seem to be rooted more in mythology than the scientific evidence which is available from studies. This session highlights the relevant research that challenges many of these erroneous assumptions. Also, models of good practice and significant landmark documents which attempt to address and rectify the existence of these inequalities across services provision for parents with learning disabilities in the UK will be shared in the presentation.

Morris, Kate

Head of Social Work, University of Birmingham
and Nixon, Paul

Assistant Director, Children's Services, North Yorkshire

"Family Decision Making: Rights Based Practice and the Evidence Base for Family Group Conferences"

Presentation

In summer 2008 the American Humane Association commissioned the lead proposer, along with Profs Burford and Pennell from the US and Dr Marie Connolly from New Zealand, to undertake an international review of the evidence exploring the use and impact of family led decision making in child welfare and child protection – in particular the developments of Family Group Conferences in the United Kingdom. This presentation will describe the emerging learning come from this review, and consider the implications for policy, research and practice. The presentation will consider the role of evidence-based practice in a rights-based framework – of particular relevance in the UK given the recent Public Law Outline guidance. The participants will be provided with copies of the material generated by the review. The presentation will consider the implications of this research for local policy and practice.

O'Callaghan, Elaine

PhD Candidate, Department of Law, University of Cork

"The Role of Expert Evidence in Resolving Disputed Child Contact Cases"

Presentation

In law, contact is firmly expressed as being child-centred; contact is a right of the child. But what does that mean? How is a decision concerning a

child's right to contact with his or her parents following divorce or separation reached in practice and how is this right translated into a reality?

It is clear that the importance of procedural rights in such cases cannot be underestimated. The evidence that the court invokes, to ensure that it is in a position to make an informed decision in relation to the family before it, is crucially important and must be capable of constructing a full picture of the reality of the family's life.

The role which expert evidence can play in resolving such disputes, and in particular, intractable disputes, is increasingly evident. This paper aims to examine the need for expert evidence in disputed child contact cases. In particular, this paper will focus on the role of the child psychiatrist and how he may inform the court as regards the needs and rights of children in such cases.

This paper will set out the kind of cases which merit the use of expert evidence as well as the problems which exist as regards obtaining expert evidence from child psychiatrists. This paper will draw on this author's own ongoing qualitative research based on interviews with a number of relevant professionals, including judges, barristers, solicitors and child psychiatrists who work in the area. Furthermore, reference will be made to this author's own observation of disputed child contact cases in the Irish family law courts. While this paper will focus on the Irish family law setting, it will also look at examples from other jurisdictions to illustrate best practice as regards ensuring greater compliance with the needs and rights of the child in the family court setting.

Potter, Ann

Senior Lecturer in Social Work, Manchester Metropolitan University

"The right to be seen as well as heard? Contemplating the direct involvement of children and young people in family proceedings"

Presentation

This paper will address the developing debate about involving children and young people in family proceedings, exploring issues of effective practice with particular reference to the role of the Cafcass officer.

Research and commentary in this area have highlighted tensions between the rights of children to participate and a welfare approach to children's best interests. Suggestions that children come to court raise issues and concerns about rules of evidence, the skills of the judiciary in interviewing children, and the perceived need to protect children and young people from exposure to family court processes. In practice, this has resulted in

very few children having direct involvement in proceedings concerning them (Broshier 2008; Hale 2007; Macdonald, 2008; Parkinson et al 2007; Potter 2008; Timms & Thoburn 2003; Timms et al 2007;). Currently the Family Justice Council proposes that consideration is given to increasing the direct involvement of children and young people in proceedings, where appropriate (FJC Voice of the Child Sub-Group, 2008).

Issues of effective practice by the Cafcass officer in assessing the views of the child, the appropriateness or otherwise of children and young people meeting with the judiciary and/or attending court hearings and advising the court accordingly will be explored. In this context, the need for Cafcass officers to understand the dominant ideologies and theories of childhood, children's rights and legal culture within the family courts, and to be clear in the application of such knowledge when exploring children and young people's wishes about participation will be highlighted, with reference to relevant research and case law.

Case examples from the author's (recent) previous experience as a Children's Guardian will be used to illustrate issues and dilemmas arising in practice.

A creative and flexible approach to understanding children and young people's "participation" throughout a case, in whatever form, will be proposed and the need for further participatory research and evaluation with children and young people involved in proceedings will be emphasised.

References

Family Justice Council (Voice of the Child Sub-Group); March 2008; *Enhancing the Participation of Children and Young People in Family Proceedings: Starting the Debate*; www.family-justice-council.org.uk

Hale, B.; *The Voice of the Child*; International Family Law Journal [2007] IFL 171

Macdonald, A.; *The Voice of the Child: Still a Faint Cry?*; Family Law [2008] 648

Parkinson, P., Cashmore, J. & Single, J.; *Parents' and Children's Views on Talking to Judges in Parenting Disputes in Australia*; International Journal of Law, Policy & the Family [2007] 21 (84)

Parkinson, P. & Cashmore, J.; *Judicial Conversations with Children in Parenting Disputes: The Views of Australian Judges*; International Journal of Law, Policy & the Family [2007] 21 (160)

Speech of Judge Peter Boshier; *"The Inaugural International Family Justice Lecture"*; London 3rd June 2008;
www.justice.govt.nz/family/publications/speeches

Speech of Sir Mark Potter President of the Family Division; *"The Voice of the Child: Children's "Rights" in Family Proceedings"*; Israel 4th May 2008;
www.judiciary.gov.uk/docs/speeches

Timms, J. & Thoburn, J.; 2003; *Your shout! A survey of the views of 706 Children & Young People in Public Care*; London: NSPCC

Timms, J., Bailey, S. and Thoburn, J.; 2007; *Your shout too! A survey of the views of children and young people involved in court proceedings when their parents divorce or separate*; London: NSPCC

Prevatt-Goldstein, Beverley

University of Bristol

"A Model of Good Practice for Working with Black and Other Children and Families"

Presentation

This presentation focuses on effective practice with black minority ethnic families. It combines both themes in identifying effective practice with a group that is vulnerable because of their likely experience of discrimination and disadvantage and because of the assumptions that are likely to underpin practice with them. The model of effective practice identified is likely to be widely applicable as all service users are vulnerable due to their position as service users and many may also be experiencing discrimination and disadvantage such as that based on disability, sexuality and/or class.

This presentation is of significance because:

- It is based on research undertaken in CAFCASS in three teams in different regions with diverse practitioners (20 white, 6 black, 17 women, nine men, 17 with private law experience only, nine with some public law experience) and diverse service users in black and mixed racialised families (four white, 30 black including South Asian, African and Caribbean, of whom 18 were men, 16 women, 18 with residence including four fathers, and 16 with contact including two mothers).
- It is based on practice identified from 92 reports on both contact and residence, written by 35 practitioners.
- It incorporates the views of focus groups of black community members.
- The research and the model it identifies is built around understanding the complexity of practice from the perspective both of practitioners

and of service users and takes into account the legislative and professional imperatives.

- This model focuses on good practice with both adults and children and is applicable to practice in both private and public law.

This presentation will demonstrate an appreciation of the good practice found and the barriers towards sustained good practice and will address the systemic changes that are likely to promote this good practice.

Robbie, Christine

Family Court Adviser, Cafcass

“Examining methods and techniques for eliciting the wishes and feelings of children (aged 5-11) in the middle of parental disputes in the family courts”

Workshop

This proposed workshop is relevant to the conference theme of effective practice. Ascertaining the wishes and feelings of children for the family courts is the key work of Cafcass in the area of private law and the subject raises a number of issues and dilemmas, which have been widely commented upon by James (2004), Mantle(2006) and Piper (1997) etc.

The workshop will be based on (a) some small -scale research funded by the CWDC, completed by the presenter and (b) other research and good practice guidance

My own research project focused on examining the current practice of my own Cafcass “team” in one part of the West Midlands. In particular the study looked at what methods and techniques are used to elicit the wishes and feelings of children (aged 5-11) in the middle of parental disputes for the purposes of “dispute resolution” or writing section 7 reports. The project used a case study approach (largely qualitative), aiming to obtain an in-depth picture of the current practice of one group of practitioners. The research method involved individual semi-structured interviews with each practitioner. Originally the project aimed to include observation of interviews with children, but practical obstacles prevented this, so practitioners kept diaries of their techniques used in interviews instead.

The results of the research would be presented briefly (placed in the wider context of relevant literature) with the major part of the workshop using small group exercises and role plays to explore the following themes:

- 1.The dilemma of balancing the rights of children to be “seen and heard” and “actively involved ”with the right “not to be put under pressure” (“Children’s Rights in Practice” Cafcass 2007).
2. The use of a systemic model and co-working as effective practice.

3. Effective techniques for facilitating the expression of children's wishes and feelings.
4. Effective training for Children and Family Reporters.

References

- James, AL *et al* (2004), "Turn Down the Volume?" *Child and Family Law Quarterly*, 189
- Mantle, G *et al* (2006) "Whose Wishes and Feelings", *British Journal of Social Work*, Advance Access May 2006
- Piper, C (1997) "Ascertaining the Wishes and Feelings of the Child" *Family Law* 796 December 1997

Rogers, Teri

Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of Portsmouth
 "Creativity, Reflection and Effective Practice"
Workshop

The idea of the 'creative practitioner' is much aspired to and is usually linked to methods and tools used in communicating with children and there are a number of tools and technologies available to assist that process but can such tools assist the practitioner themselves in practising more effectively? Can the use of creative methods enable a deeper level of reflection and emotional well being for the practitioner and hence more effective practice? This workshop will explore definitions of creativity and whether the addition of tools such as critical life paths, visual representations and artistic analogy can contribute to and strengthen the normal dialogue of supervision. The workshop will begin with a brief presentation outlining a definition of creativity (Hatton 2007), and drawing from social pedagogy perspectives such as the use of the 'the common third' explore the use of creative tools within supervision, this will be followed by a 'creative exercise' which will then be brought back for group discussion.

Scholar, Helen

Lecturer in Social Work, University of Salford
 and Myers, Steve
 Director of Social Work, University of Salford
 "A 'Case Planning' Model for Private Law Applications in a North West (England) Family Court: Findings of an Evaluation Study"
Presentation

In 2006 Cafcass North West commissioned the University of Salford to evaluate an innovative model of in-court dispute resolution in a Family Court in the North West of England. The model was developed from an

existing scheme operating in the area, but was extended in response to the national debate about private law provision, and practitioner concerns about the service available to families in dispute about their children. The model was designed in partnership with the local judiciary, in accordance with a set of core values (children first; respect for all; each family a unique family; listening and hearing) and principles (effective judicial dispute resolution at the earliest opportunity; court monitoring of outcomes; responding to individual families' needs to ensure flexible outcomes). High priority was afforded to safeguarding, to ensure that cases were suitable for the scheme; and there was a strong emphasis on Cafcass practitioners and judges working together with parents at the first court appointment to achieve an agreement; or where agreement was not possible, a way forward in addressing the dispute, which might involve the preparation of a 'case plan'.

This paper will report the findings of the evaluation, which set out to consider three key issues – the safety of the scheme for children and families; the outcomes; and participants' satisfaction with this way of working. The implications for practice will be considered; comparisons with the findings of studies of other dispute resolution schemes will be referred to; and mention will be made of some of the challenges of the evaluation process itself.

Smart, Christine

Children's Rights Director, Cafcass

with Members of the Cafcass Children and Young People's Board

"The Health and Well-Being of Children in Care"

Presentation

Introduction

We will discuss the outcomes from research initiated by a Children & Young People's Board of an agency that provides statutory social work services. The Board was concerned about alcohol/drug use and potentially unhealthy lifestyles of other young people, particularly those in the care of the local authority. A consultation exercise was undertaken with children and young people across England to ascertain their views and make recommendations to inform policy and service development. The data gathered from the day was then analysed by the Board with the assistance of academic researchers.

Research Aims

- Descriptive study gathering information from young people on their views about their overall health and smoking, drugs and alcohol.

- Results used to make recommendations about what help or services young people need in future (to inform local and central government policy and planning).

Methodology

A “Health and Wellbeing Consultation Day” was held at the National Space Centre in February 2008. Invitations were sent to all local authorities in England asking them to nominate young people as delegates to attend the day; over 150 young people participated. Information about the research project was sent to young people prior to arrival so they understood what they were being asked to participate in. Each young person completed a general questionnaire providing diversity-related information as well as four brief mini questionnaire cards about general health, drugs, alcohol, smoking. In addition, they were asked to participate in at least two focus group discussions about health issues. The focus group discussions were audio-recorded.

Significance of this Project

This project is an example of service-user led research and the ‘children’s rights’ agenda that has been developing under the *Human Rights Act*. This is moving research forward from a model of participation (John 1996) where research questions are formulated by adults and debates within the research world focus on how best adults can communicate with children for adult purposes (i.e. doing research ‘on’ children) to one where children are involved with formulating the questions they want researched for their own purposes as citizens.

The House of Commons itself has recognised that: “If children in general are a vulnerable group, children looked after by local authorities are acutely vulnerable. It is all the more important that their voice should be heard by people in positions of authority” (House of Commons 1998, p. xlviii). This research project provided young people with opportunities to inform central and local government bodies about issues they believe important.

Focus of the Workshop

A brief presentation will be made about how the project was developed and the outcomes of the research (final research report completed in August 2008). This will be followed by facilitated discussion about how service-user led initiatives can inform service development that meets the needs of children and young people more effectively. Some of the young people who developed this project want to co-present this workshop,

although at this point we are unable to say exactly which young people plan to be involved.

References

House of Commons (1998), *Second Report of the Health Select Committee: Children Looked After by Local Authorities* (HC 319-1), London: the Stationery Office.

John, Mary (1996) "Voicing: Research and Practice with the 'Silenced'", in Mary John (ed), *Children in Charge: The Child's Right to a Fair Hearing*, London: Jessica Kingsley.

Thiara, Ravinder

Senior Research Fellow, University of Warwick
and Aris, Rosemary

Senior Research Fellow, University of Warwick

"Child Contact in the Context of Post-Separation Violence: Issues for Black and Minority Ethnic Women and Children"

Workshop

Although scant, existing research has shown that black and minority ethnic (BME) women and children affected by domestic violence face similar as well as additional issues and pressures that compound their situations (NSPCC 2008; Thiara and Breslin 2006; Rai and Thiara, 1997; Mullender et al 2002). While they are just as likely as others to be victims, there are differences in how they respond to domestic violence and how they are treated by services (Thiara 2005). As for many women, child contact and post-separation violence are huge issues for some BME women and children, which have clear implications for their ability to rebuild their lives, as is the threat of and actual child abduction.

In general, issues in relation to child contact for BME women and children are assumed to be similar to those of the general population. Currently, there is no research which has explored issues for BME families affected by domestic violence and the ways in which ethnicity, domestic violence and child contact may intersect and impact in particular ways. In seeking to fill an important gap, our new research project aims to explore the experiences of child contact among South Asian and African-Caribbean women and children in the context of post-separation violence. The following topics will be explored with participants in the workshop:

- What are the particular issues and experiences of BME women and children of child contact in the context of post-separation violence, and how is child contact experienced by women and by children?

- How is the assessment process experienced by women and children?
- How are key support services responding to and experienced by BME women and children? What are the needs of BME women and children in such situations and what service responses are required?
- What gaps have women and children experienced in policy, legislation and available services?

The workshop will be participatory. It is intended that the workshop will enable a sharing of some of the specific issues for BME families in relation to domestic violence and child contact. Participants will be engaged in a discussion about the issues that present in relation to BME groups in their practice settings.

Trinder, Liz

Reader in Family Studies, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

"Dispute Resolution and Private Law Contact: Processes, Outcomes and Future Directions"

Presentation

Over recent years there has been renewed emphasis on dispute resolution as an efficient and proportionate response to managing early stage litigated contact cases. In England the main method of intervening has been what I term a 'negotiation-only' model of intervention. In this paper I draw on three separate studies of 'in-court conciliation' to explore the strengths and limitations of this approach. The three studies are:

- a micro- (or conversation) analytic analysis of audio recordings of meetings exploring what 'actually happens' in dispute resolution
- a quantitative survey of immediate outcomes, including agreement rates and parent satisfaction with the process
- a two year follow up of outcomes, including agreement stability, conflict and parent and child wellbeing

The main message from the three studies is that negotiation-only models focus tightly on the details of contact timetables, and find it difficult to incorporate children's agendas or to assess and manage risk. Moreover there is limited evidence that reaching agreement or (re)establishing contact in itself addresses parental conflict. The new private law pathway may provide an opportunity to focus on children's agendas if practice goes beyond just negotiation-only models.

White, Sue

Professor, Department of Applied Social Science, Lancaster University

“Tales from the trenches: rationing and reasoning at the 'front door' of children's social care. What does this mean for referrals?”

Presentation

As a result of high profile inquiries into the non-accidental child deaths, most recently Baby P., children’s social care services in the UK have been widely blamed for deficiencies in their policies, procedures and practices. After the death of Victoria Climbié, children’s services were subject to a range of measures designed to manage risks, including systems of regulation, proceduralization and metrics. The re-configuration of professional work into formalized “business processes” and a talismanic faith in the power of information technology are mutually reinforcing themes of the change agenda. Translation of professional practice into a range of standardised procedures, protocols, templates and timescales, aims both to produce an audit trail against which key performance targets may be measured, and to reduce variability and hence ‘error’ in decision-making. Many of the audience, either as referrers or as workers, may have experienced the high thresholds in operation at the ‘front-door’ of children’s social care. It is estimated that on average, some 300 referrals face statutory duty and assessment teams every month. The high volume of contacts and referrals and the difficulties in responding to these referrals are compounded by the tight timescales for initial assessment and associated administrative demands. As a consequence, busy teams aim to manage workflow by ‘assessing out’. This paper presents findings of a study funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council and aims to shed some light on the ways in which these decisions are taken and to argue that the current performance regime has increased the likelihood of error in decision-making.

Woodhead, Sarah

Cafcass Children and Young People’s Board Member

and Hitch, Benjamin

Cafcass Children and Young People’s Board Member

with Smart, Christine

Children’s Rights Director, Cafcass

“Does the involvement of young people in their case have an effect on the overall outcome?”

Workshop

This small user-led research project, which was designed by members of the Cafcass Young People’s Board and supported with funding from the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC), links directly to conference theme one: effective practice.

The proposal is to disseminate the findings and recommendations of this project through a workshop using the two young people who were most closely involved with a view to: (i) highlighting awareness of young people's perceptions of the service they receive from Cafcass, and (ii) encouraging more effective participation of young people in their cases.

The views of young people were collated from postcard questionnaires (67 completed), a consultation event in London (7 participants) and telephone interviews (3 participants). The research was facilitated by members of the Cafcass national Children's Rights team working with members of the Young People's Board.

Most of the young people who responded generally felt that being involved in their case positively affected the overall outcome. Not surprisingly, they were unable to say how. In general they also commended the support they had received from Cafcass. Young people who had used the 'My Needs, Wishes and Feelings pack' found it helpful and this tool should be more widely disseminated and utilised.

Practitioners should be invited to evaluate the various tools they use to involve young people in their cases to ensure practice evolves along with changes in society effecting how we interact with young people.

References

Cafcass (2007) Engagement of Children Pathways

Cafcass (2007) National Standards

Timms, J E; Bailey, S and Thoburn, J (2007) *Your Shout Too!* London: NSPCC

Biographies of Speakers
(Rooms 1/2/3 only - in alphabetical order)

Anthony Douglas

Anthony Douglas has been Chief Executive of Cafcass, the specialist national agency representing children and families in family courts throughout England, since 2004. Cafcass supports over 100,000 children in public and private law cases every year. Prior to this he was Director of Social Services in the London Borough of Havering, where he was also Director of Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Neighbourhood Services, and in Suffolk, where he was Director of Social Care and Health Services. He was an economist and then a journalist prior to becoming a social worker. He has written 4 books on UK social care, the last being on partnership working which was published by Routledge in November 2008. He is now writing a fifth on resilience. He has been a school governor and a government adviser on specific programmes. He has led on many specific national programmes, including at present the implementation of the Public Law Outline in England and Wales. He is a Visiting Fellow of the University of East Anglia and Chair of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF). Anthony was awarded a CBE in 2008.

Donald Forrester

Donald Forrester was a child care social worker in inner London from 1991 to 1999. During this time he worked continuously with families in which there was parental substance misuse, and the challenges and opportunities involved in such work have become a central interest since he became an academic. From 1999 – 2002 Dr. Forrester carried out the first study exploring the extent of parental substance misuse in child and family social work cases and outcomes for children over time. His more recent work explores what works in helping families affected by parental substance misuse. This has included the first research on Motivational Interviewing and child protection work, research exploring social work communication skills and an influential evaluation of the “Option 2” intensive family preservation project. Dr. Forrester is a lead consultant for the Welsh Assembly Government who are radically reconfiguring services to address parental substance misuse. He is also the coordinator of the United Kingdom Social Work Research Strategy. If you are interested in further information or have any questions arising from the presentation Donald can be contacted by email on Donald.Forrester@beds.ac.uk

Jan Horwath

Jan Horwath is Professor of Child Welfare at the University of Sheffield. She has a social work background and worked as practitioner, trainer and manager in a range of child welfare settings. Jan has a particular interest in multidisciplinary

assessment policy and practice and contributed to *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and was involved in the development of the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* and the accompanying training materials. Her most recent research has focused on the relevance of religious beliefs when assessing parenting. She is currently revising *The Child's World Assessing Children in Need and Their Families* which should be available in Autumn 2009. Other relevant publications include Horwath, J. *Child Neglect: Identification and Assessment* (2007), London: Palgrave.

Allison James

Allison James is Professor of Sociology at the University of Sheffield and Professor 2 at Centre for Child Research, Trondheim. She is currently Director of the Centre for the Study of Childhood and Youth and of the Interdisciplinary Centre for the Social Sciences at Sheffield. She has been researching and writing in the field of childhood studies since the late 1970s and her latest books include *Constructing Childhood: Theory Policy and Social Practice* (with A.L. James) Palgrave, 2004; *Key Concepts in Childhood Studies* (with A.L. James) Sage 2008; *European Childhoods: Culture, Politics and Childhood in Europe*. (joint edited with A.L. James) Palgrave, 2000.

Judith Masson

Judith Masson studied at Cambridge and Leicester Universities in England, and at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA. Between 1991 and 2005, she was Professor of Law at Warwick University, specialising in child law and socio-legal research. She joined the University of Bristol as Professor of Socio-Legal Studies in January 2006. She teaches Family Law and International Child Law.

Judith is co-author, with Professor Rebecca Bailey-Harris and Rebecca Probert, of a leading text, *Cretney's Principles of Family Law* (8th ed 2008). She has undertaken empirical studies in family and child law, including studies on: adoption by parents and step-parents (J. Masson et al, *Yours, Mine or Ours* (1983)); family property, especially pension rights (J. Freedman et al, *Property and Marriage* (1986)); inheritance practices (J. Finch et al, *Wills, Inheritance and the Family* (1996)); family relationships for children in long term care (J. Masson et al, *Lost and found* (1999)); and representation of children in child protection proceedings (J. Masson and M. Winn Oakley, *Out of Hearing* (1999)). Her recent work has included two studies of emergency intervention in child protection, jointly funded by the NSPCC and the Nuffield Foundation, together published as J. Masson et al, *Protecting Powers* (Wiley, 2007) and a quantitative study of care proceedings for the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, J. Masson et al. *Care Profiling Study* (2008).

Judith has acted as an advisor to Voice for the Child in Care and Women's Aid and a consultant for the Department of Health, Department for Constitutional

Affairs and the Legal Services Commission. In 2003, she was specialist advisor to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. She has served on the Judicial Studies Board and is currently the academic member of the Family Justice Council. Judith is also member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Children's Services* and a regular reviewer for journals including *Child and Family Law Quarterly* and *Adoption and Fostering*.

Sue McGaw

Sue McGaw is a Chartered Consultant Clinical Psychologist with clinical experience in child psychiatry and learning disabilities spanning 25 years. She founded and has managed the Special Parenting Service since its inception in 1988. She completed a PhD with Exeter University on the topic of parents with learning disabilities in 1994. She is an active researcher, an international speaker, trainer of professionals and an author of publications, including the Parent Assessment Manual. She is regarded as a leading expert in this field and has been the British Psychological Society's spokesperson on the topic of parents with learning disabilities for over 18 years.

Kate Morris

Kate Morris is currently Head of Social Work at the University of Birmingham, UK. Kate was part of the initial group piloting FGCs in the UK and has continued to evaluate local UK FGC projects. She is currently part of the group conducting an international review of the evidence of impact of FGCs, along with Marie Connolly (New Zealand), Gale Burford and Joan Pennell (USA). Kate recently led the team producing the Think Family literature review of whole family approaches for the Cabinet Office and has researched and published extensively in the areas of prevention, family involvement and family led decision-making.

Beverley Prevatt Goldstein

Beverley Prevatt Goldstein is a black woman who has worked extensively in the fields of social work practice, social work education, community development and training and consultancy. She specialises in work with children and families, with black led organisations and in enabling individuals and organisations to engage with equal opportunities, sound management and anti-oppressive practice. She is an active researcher and her publications include articles and chapters on black children with a white parent, black perspectives, feminism, evaluation of initiatives in voluntary organisations and social work education. She has been Programme Director of the DipSW at Durham University, Director of BECON (Black minority ethnic community organisations network for the North East region) and a board member of the General Social Care Council. She has recently completed her PHD at Bristol University on 'CAFCASS: Working well with black minority ethnic families?'

Liz Trinder

Dr Liz Trinder is a Reader in Family Studies at Newcastle University, formerly a Senior Lecturer at the University of East Anglia. The prime focus of her research has been on family transitions, mainly in relation to post divorce parenting. At present she is working on two research studies. '*Making Policy for Divorced and Separated Families*', funded by the Nuffield Foundation is taking a case study approach to look at policy formation and implementation in the private law field. The second study, with Alan Firth and Chris Jenks (both Newcastle University), is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The study is using conversation analysis (or micro analysis) to examine fifteen audio recordings of in-court conciliation sessions. The study aims to shed light on exactly how, concretely, agreements arise or not and how allegations of risk are raised and handled.

Contact: liz.trinder@ncl.ac.uk

Sue White

Dr Sue White is Professor of Social Work at the University of Lancaster. Her primary research interest is in ethnographic and discourse analytic studies of clinical and professional decision-making and particularly the moral and emotional dimensions of those domains. Her research has focused principally on the analysis of professional talk in a range of health and welfare settings. She has recently completed an ESRC funded ethnographic study of electronic information sharing in multi-disciplinary child welfare practice and is currently Principal Investigator on a further ESRC Public Services Programme study of 'error' and 'blame' in child welfare practice. The latest study focuses on the relationship between performance management of public services responsible for safeguarding children, and the impact of anticipated blame within the decision making practices of those providing, supervising and managing these services.

Her publications include:

White, S., Fook, J. and Gardiner, F. (eds) (2006) *Critical Reflection in Health and Social Care*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

White, S. and Stancombe, J. (2003) *Clinical Judgement in the Health and Welfare Professions: Extending the Evidence Base*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Taylor, C and White, S. (2000) *Practising Reflexivity in Health and Welfare: Making Knowledge*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

FEBRUARY 2009 – CAFCASS RESEARCH CONFERENCE – PROGRAMME-AT-A-GLANCE

REGISTRATION and REFRESHMENTS (start 9:15 am)					
PLENARY SESSION (start 9:45 am) – Room 1/2/3 1. Anthony Douglas "Introduction" (15 minutes) 2. Donald Forrester - "Parental Substance Misuse and Child Welfare: Issues in Engaging Parents and Assessing Risks for Children" (3/4 hour)					
TEA/COFFEE BREAK (25 minutes)					
PARALLEL SESSIONS (start 11:10 a.m. - see details below)					
Room 1 Kate Morris and Paul Nixon "Family Decision-Making: Rights Based Practice and the Evidence Base for Family Group Conferences" (3/4 hour) Anthony Douglas "Partnership Working" (3/4 hour)	Room 2/3 Judith Masson "Understanding Care Proceedings: Messages for Practice under the Public Law Outline" (3/4 hour) Liz Trinder "Dispute Resolution and Private Law Contact: Processes, Outcomes and Future Directions" (3/4 hour)	Room 15 Judy Corlyon and Claire Sandamas "Improving Children's Lives by Supporting Non-Resident Parents" (1/2 hour) Sarah Woodhead and Benjamin Hitch with a member of the Cafcass Children's Rights Team "Does the Involvement of Young People in their Case have an Effect on the Overall Outcome?" (1 hour - workshop)	Room 16 Polly Baynes "Social Work with Violent Men: What Has Changed?" (1/2 hour) Ravinder Thiara and Rosemary Aris "Child Contact in the Context of Post-Separation Violence: Issues for Black and Minority Ethnic Women and Children" (1 hour - workshop)	Room 17 Susanna Abse and Leezah Hertzmann "Conflict or Collaboration? Why You Can't Ignore the Couple. 'Parenting Together' – A New Therapeutic Service" (1/2 hour) Teri Rogers "Creativity, Reflection and Effective Practice" (1 hour - workshop)	Room 18 Community Care Inform "Finding Relevant Research to Inform Practice" (1/2 hour) Colleen Eccles "Evidence Matters: Gaining the Confidence of Children and Families through Excellence in Analysing Evidence" (1 hour - workshop)
LUNCH (1 hour)					
PARALLEL SESSIONS (start – 1:40 p.m. - see details below)					
Beverley Prevatt-Goldstein "A Model of Good Practice for Working with Black and Other Children and Families" (3/4 hour) Jan Horwath "Believing and Belonging: Faith, Parenting and Assessment" (3/4 hour)	Alison James "Cultures of Childhood: a Critical Appraisal" (3/4 hour) Dr Sue McGaw "Assessment of Parents with Learning Disabilities" (3/4 hour)	Phillip Gilligan and Martin Manby "The Common Assessment Framework: Does the Reality Match the Rhetoric?" (1/2 hour) Sandra Maxwell "Implementing the Common Assessment Framework" (1 hour - workshop)	Christine Smart and members of the Cafcass Children and Young People's Board "The Health and Well-Being of Children in Care" (1/2 hour) Christine Robbie "Examining the Methods and Techniques for Eliciting the Wishes and Feelings of Children (aged 5-11) in the Middle of Parental Disputes in the Family Courts" (1 hour – workshop)	Elaine O'Callaghan "The Role of Expert Evidence in Resolving Disputed Child Contact Cases" (1/2 hour) Jane Glover and Rebecca Fowler "Mediation in a Family Court Setting – Does It Work?" (1 hour - workshop)	Ann Potter "The Right to be Seen as Well as Heard? Contemplating the direct involvement of children and young people in family proceedings" (1/2 hour) Bridget Godfrey "What Works with Parents with Alcohol Problems: a service users' perspective" (1/2 hour) Helen Scholar and Steve Myers "A 'Case Planning' Model for Private Law Applications in a North West (England) Family Court: Findings of an Evaluation Study" (1/2 hour)
TEA/COFFEE BREAK (25 minutes)					
PLENARY SESSION (start 15:35 p.m.) – Room 1/2/3 1. Sue White - "Tales from the Trenches: Rationing and Reasoning at the 'Front Door' of Children's Social Care. What Does this Mean for Referrals?" (3/4 hour) 2. Anthony Douglas – Concluding Remarks (10 minutes)					