



FAMILY JUSTICE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOARD UPDATE

1. Voice of the Child Conference 2016

The 2016 Voice of the Child Conference venue and arrangements are under review to ensure compliance with continuing spending controls. It is likely that the conference will now be held during a date in the October 2016 half term and the intention is that the conference will have as high an impact as in previous years.

2. National Charter for Child Inclusive Practice in the family justice system

The National Charter aims to improve standards and to seepend child inclusive practice in all agencies operating in the family justice system. It sets out the standards and expectations that children and young people should receive from family justice services. The decision has been taken to take the Charter forward as a list of aspirations from the FJYPB. The supporting document is being updated and simplified after recent discussions with key agencies and after being reviewed again by members of the FJYPB. The President of the Family Division is awaiting the outcome of the Rules Committee arising from the VWWG (Vulnerable Witnesses Working Group) before confirming the judicial commitments which it is intended will be set out in a new Practice Direction.

3. Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

Maya Sooben has been appointed as the FJYPB new liaison with MOJ. This follows some restructuring within MOJ. The FJYPB secretariat will be meeting with Maya on the 9th June 2016 to discuss and update on the work of the FJYPB. Maya is also planning on attending a FJYPB meeting in order to meet with members and update on the proposed projects that the FJYPB can support the MOJ with.

4. Court Reviews

Between September 2014 and October 2015 the FJYPB visited 12 identified DFJ areas. Overall, the key findings of the reviews have identified that there is a general lack of information for children and young people in court and that while many court buildings do offer some great resources for children and young people, some courts have very little or even none.

A final overall report of key findings and recommendations of all of the court reviews has been completed and has recently been submitted to the President of the Faily Division. The President has welcomed the report and has shared it with all Designated Family Judges in England.

HMCTS are already responding to some of the learning as the FJYPB have devised a notice board for children and young people in courts and a feedback form to be made available in all family courts.

5. National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) Inspections

The FJYPB have now completed a total of 20 out of the 25 scheduled inspections of NACCC accredited contact centres. The FJYPB is committed to complete all of the inspections by the end of March 2017. A final overall findings report will be drafted and the recommendations will be taken forward by NACCC.

6. Mediation

The FJYPB have been commissioned by the National Family Mediation service (NFM) to help them become more child inclusive. In past few months, the FJYPB have carried out three inspections of mediation centres (Oxford, Manchester and Surrey) and have produced a findings and recommendations report for each centre.

The Board are currently drafting an overall findings report, and together with the NFM, we hope to use the findings and recommendations to:

- Develop a resource pack that can be sent to all NFM centres;
- Draft and encourage all centres to use child friendly feedback forms;
- Review training for mediators who meet with children and young people.

7. FJYPB video

The FJYPB have produced a video that is aimed at providing external stakeholders with an overview of the FJYPB, the work we do and its impact. It is anticipated this video will inspire stakeholders to take forward the voice of the child in family justice. The government of Western Australia commissioned the video and showed it at their annual conference on 26th May 2016.

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