



FAMILY JUSTICE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOARD UPDATE

1. Current work with Ministry of Justice

The Board continue to work closely with the Ministry of Justice contributing to policy groups etc. With recent staff changes at the Ministry of Justice, Charlene Edward-Williams has replaced Holly Simpson to take over as lead liaison between MoJ and the FJYPB.

A small group of FJYPB members with Marie Gittins are due to meet with Minister Caroline Dinenage, MP, on 28 October 2015. The Board will be discussing current work and asking how the Minister can support the voice of the child in the family justice system.

2. Voice of the Child Conference

The FJYPB recently held their third annual Voice of the Child Conference on 23 July 2015. This year's VOTC theme was 'Effective Participation: Make it Happen – Make it Better'. The aim of the conference was to promote the voice of the child in proceedings to an audience of 300 professionals from the Judiciary, Cafcass, Children's Social Care and government departments. The conference was a huge success and a summary of the conference has been produced (see appendix 1).

3. National Charter

The National Charter aims to reinforce professional practice and sets out the standards and expectations that children and young people should receive from family justice services. The FJYPB continue to work together with various agencies to promote and implement the National Charter. In June 2015 members of the Board met with representatives of each agency to review and update commitments, with a progress update presented at our conference in July.

It is proposed to take the charter forward as a list of aspirations from the FJYPB. In addition, the supporting document will be updated and simplified after discussions with key agencies and after being reviewed again by members of the FJYP Board.

4. Court Reviews

Since September 2014 the FJYPB have visited all of the 12 identified DFJ areas. The purpose of the court reviews is to allow the FJYPB to make findings and recommendations on how the court buildings could become more approachable and welcoming to children and young people, with a view to discussing with the local judiciary how they can hear the voice of the child within proceedings.

The key findings of the reviews so far 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 the court reviews is being produced to be sent to Sir James Munby, the President of the Family Division.

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

The Board have now completed a total of 15 out of the 22 scheduled inspections of NACCC accredited contact centres. The Board is committed to complete all of the inspections by the end of March 2017. Louis Ruddlesden has now replaced Jill Green at NACCC as our link support. Louis has said how very appreciative he and NACCC are for our support and the inspection reports that they have received have been really helpful and professional.

6. Mediation

The FJYPB have been commissioned by the National Family mediation service (NFM) to help them become more child inclusive. We will be assisting them with:

- Child friendly information about family mediation;
- Child friendly feedback forms;
- Undertaking 2-3 inspections of the mediation centres to identify areas they can improve on to make them more child friendly and welcoming;
- Developing a resource pack that can be sent to all NFM centres that will include our recommendations from the inspections and child friendly leaflets;
- Reviewing their training for mediators that meet with children and young people;
- Possible training video.

7. Leaflet to LSCBs

The FJYP Board have produced an information leaflet and video for all Local Safeguarding Children's Boards to support them in safeguarding children in family justice.

8. Welsh Representation

The FJYPB are now recruiting Welsh board members following agreement between the MoJ and the Welsh government. A recruitment campaign is currently underway to the FJYPB until 31st October 2015.

9. Links with Cafcass National Improvement Service

The FJYPB has developed a link with the National Improvement Service to enable the FJYPB to contribute to the improvement work. A representative of the FJYPB attended the NIS development day.

10. Judicial College

The FJYPB have been commissioned by the Judicial College to produce a training video that highlights the experiences of children and young people who have been through the court process. Six of our Board member will be sharing their experience as part of the video over the next few coming weeks.