



# Cafcass Board Meeting October 2025

FJYPB UPDATE



# HELLO

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1

- Improving children and young people's participation in proceedings.

2

- Helping professionals understand how domestic abuse affects children and making sure all types of abuse and harmful parenting are thought about.

3

- Making sure children know their rights and keeping a focus on them growing up safe and happy.

4

- Keeping the focus on reducing delays across family courts because children need certainty and safe final decisions.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2025–2028



voice of the CHILD  
CONFERENCE  
2025



# ATTENDEES

At our peak we had over **992 visitors** to the live stream page.

Our 2024 conference had a peak of 499

**Percentage increase of approximately 98.80% compared to 2024.**

*Over 1500 registrants*



## Overall Activity

Active now: 4

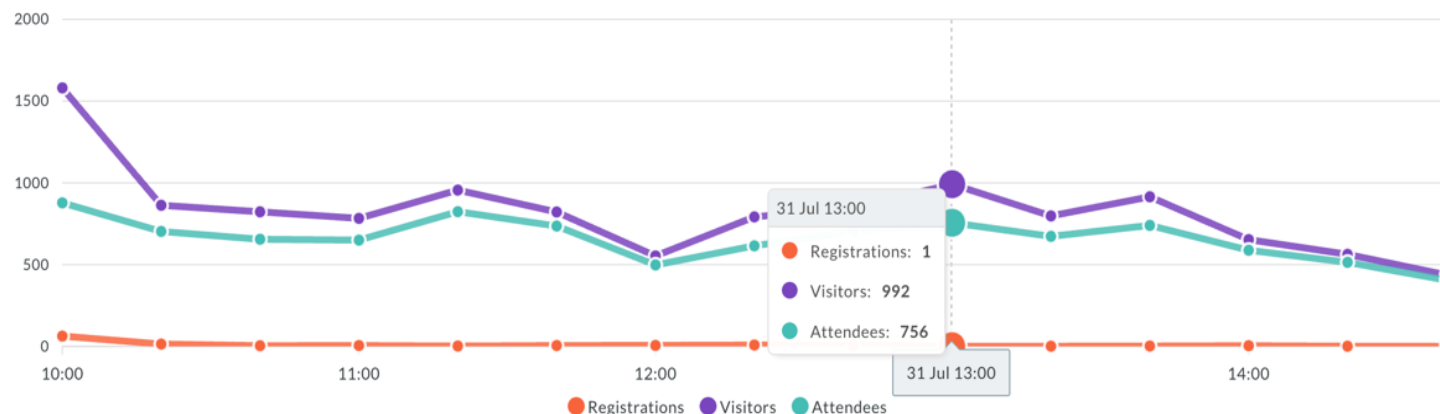
Event times

☒ Date Range

2025-07-31 10:00

- 2025-07-31 15:00

Update



52% of visitors  
Converted to registrants



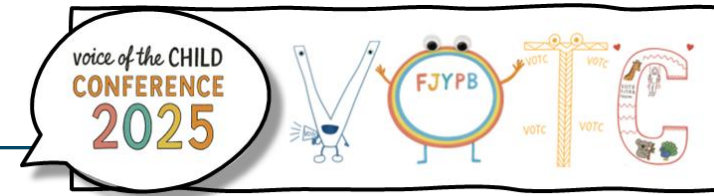
70% of registrants  
Attended events



37 mins  
Average active duration



# Highlights and Analysis



## FJYPB Session-Specific Insights

### ‘In My Shoes’

- Deeply impactful—many said it changed how they view their role.
- Encouraged professionals to **see children as individuals**, not cases.
- Sparked commitments to **listen more deeply** and **capture lived experience** in reports.

## Hearing from Jahnine Davis

- Raised awareness of **silent racism**, **adultification**, and **cultural blindness**.
- Inspired professionals to **challenge bias** and **ask braver questions**.
- Many committed to **anti-racist practice** and **better representation**.

## Nuffield Webinar

- Highlighted the **emotional toll of deprivation of liberty (DoL)**.
- Urged professionals to **consider long-term impacts**, not just immediate safety.
- Sparked interest in **policy reform** and **better support post-proceedings**.

## Panel Discussion

- Reinforced the need for **joined-up working** and **systemic change**.
- Validated the **pressures professionals face**, while urging continued improvement.
- Emphasised the importance of **transparency**, **accountability**, and **child-centred leadership**.



**IMPACT: Cafcass EDI (2025/26) PRIORITY**

*Better understand the impact of heritage and culture on our assessments of harm and risk to children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds & Understand anti-racist practice in family justice*

**Talking to Children and Families About Ethnicity, Culture, and Heritage**

- Many attendees reflected on the importance of not making assumptions and being curious and respectful when exploring a child’s cultural identity.
- Practitioners committed to asking children directly about their culture, religion, and heritage rather than relying solely on parental accounts.
- Example: *“I will ask more questions if I am unsure – really get to know a child's uniqueness.”* – LA, Cafcass

**Anti-Racist Practice and Understanding Impact of Heritage**

- The presentation by Jahnine Davis on “It’s Silent” had a strong impact, prompting attendees to reflect on adultification, invisibility, and systemic bias.
- Practitioners committed to being more vocal, challenging racism, and seeking further training.
- Example: *“I will be more aware of how silent racism affects children and families. I will search for training on anti-discriminatory practice.”* – MP, Cafcass

**Embedding Cultural Competency in Practice**

- Attendees expressed a renewed commitment to embedding cultural awareness in assessments and court reports.
- Several mentioned plans to share learning with teams, incorporate it into team meetings, supervision, and audits, and challenge unconscious bias.
- Example: *“I will challenge staff about how they are helping the child to feel safe and interrogating their uniqueness and diversity.”* – E AC, Cafcass

# Impact – the ‘so what’?



## What Was Learned from the FJYPB presentations

- Participants consistently highlighted:
  - The **importance of listening** to children and young people.
  - The need to **understand lived experiences**, especially around trauma, identity, and culture.
  - The value of **clear, honest communication** and **emotional safety**.
  - Recognition that **children’s voices must be central** to decision-making—not just heard, but acted upon.
  - To restructure reports to prioritise child impact analysis upfront
- **Top keywords:**
  - *children, understanding, how, safety, voice, empathy, trauma, identity*

## What Was Reflected On

- Acknowledgement of **past shortcomings** in listening to children.
- Realisation that **professional assumptions** can silence or distort children’s voices.
- Emotional responses to hearing **first-hand experiences** of harm and exclusion.
- A renewed sense of **responsibility and purpose**.
- **Top keywords:**
  - *reflect, assumptions, empathy, honesty, impact, responsibility*

## How It Will Be Applied

- Attendees committed to:
  - **Changing practice** to be more child-led and inclusive.
  - Using **storyboards, goodbye letters, and creative tools** to communicate better.
  - **Embedding learning** into team meetings, supervision, and training.
  - **Challenging unconscious bias** and improving cultural competence.
- **Top keywords:**
  - *apply, share, team, supervision, communication, curiosity, feedback, training*

## What Might Change

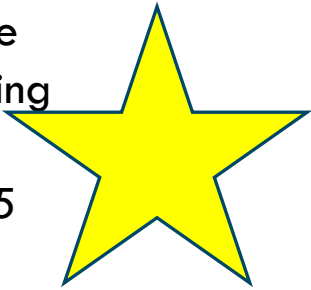
- Participants plan to:
  - **Slow down** and give children more time and space.
  - **Avoid defaulting to school visits**—instead, ask children where they feel safe.
  - **Be more curious** about culture, race, and identity.
  - **Improve endings**—ensuring children understand what happened and why.
- **Top keywords:**
  - *change, curiosity, culture, communication, endings, empowerment*



# FJYPB Members Feedback



Members gave  
an overall rating  
of the  
conference 4.5  
out of 5



My advice would be to  
really involve yourself in  
the prep days as it's the  
best time to get your say  
and your opinions heard

Get involved and  
make yourself heard

Stay calm and  
remember we're  
all in it together

Don't be afraid to  
take part, it's an  
amazing experience  
that you will never  
forget

All the adults and members will  
look after you really well- you will  
have fun and be doing something  
important, you will learn lots and  
have new and positive  
experiences, make sure you eat  
well and sleep well before the day!

## **FJYPB NEXT STEPS:** Leading, learning and reviewing

Following the VOTC we will continue to promote the FJYPB 2025 Challenge, Takeaways and Guide: For keeping children and young people at the centre of their proceedings at key stakeholder events such as with Cafcass, Cafcass Cymru, Local Family Justice Board's. These events provide the ideal opportunities for us to remind our stakeholders of these resources and challenge them on what actions they have taken to implement into practice.

### **Key Stakeholder Events include:**

#### Cafcass

- Leadership live
- Ambitious for Children week follow up
- OMT / CMT

#### Cafcass Cymru

- Annual Staff Conference
- Internal communications

#### Local Family Justice Boards

- Each LFJB annual event
- National Family Justice Board meetings

**We had 165 downloads of our Top Tips:  
Guide for keeping children and young at the  
centre of their proceedings.**



# FJYPB Training Day







# AMBITIOUS FOR CHILDREN WEEK 2025

Seeing and Engaging Children

