



Cafcass Board Meeting 29 February 2024

FJYPB UPDATE



FJYPB

- We completed **501** commissions in **2023** with our stakeholders which is almost **20% more** than 2022 and the most we have ever completed in a single year.

We have continued to increase our work year on year. In 2018 we completed 118 commissions with a gradual increase until 2021 when we reached 444 commissions. Highlighting that we have increased our profile and influence across the family justice system. More recently we have focused on our impact for children and formalising our relationships with stakeholders, particularly Cafcass with improved preparation and presentation.

- We currently have **51 FJYPB members** (5 from Wales) who have experience of either public or private law proceedings. Our recruitment for new members started in December 2023 and ends 31st January 2024. We will have conversations with the children and young people who have applied, and we look forward to welcoming new FJYPB members in the coming months.



FJYPB/CAFCASS WORKPLAN

Highlights	Work Undertaken	Next steps	Impact
Children's Complaints	Jenn has met with Hema Johal, Children's Complaint Manager, to identify how best to involve the FJYPB in future review of children's complaints.	FJYPB members to meet with Customer Feedback Team bi-annually to review complaints received by children and young people. FJYPB will review the process for each complaint, and feedback on the actions undertaken by Cafcass.	FJYPB members are included in the evaluation of the redeveloped Cafcass complaint process, ensuring that it is child centred and that responses and actions are striving for an exceptional experience.
Take me seriously	First video ' Letting you know how we help ' Completed. FJYPB worked with Cafcass and animators to create the script and provided the voiceovers.	Work on the second video to begin before the end of the financial year.	Children and young people have a better understanding of who Cafcass is, how they support families, and how they can have their voices heard.
Children in Care Councils	Jenn has met with Essex LA and the support team for their children in care council (CiCC). They identified a need across the area to encourage social workers to share more of themselves with the children and young people they work with to support the development of trusting and positive relationships. FJYPB have agreed to support the CiCC in developing a Zoom recorded video.	Video to be recorded 21 st February 2024. Video to be shared across Essex and feedback to be obtained.	Social workers share a little of themselves to connect with the children and young people they work with.
Sharing Recommendations	FJYPB have produced Top Tips to be shared nationally across Cafcass.	FJYPB to continue to promote the Top Tips and the benefits of sharing recommendations for children and young people.	Children and young people are updated about the progress and outcome of their proceedings. They are supported to understand the decisions made
Safe Contact	FJYPB contributed views and experiences at a workshop on how they can spend time with family members safely. Offered suggestions of what professionals need to consider.	Further workshop arranged with FJYPB members 16 th January with Lolita as lead to consider indirect contact and shared care.	Safe contact arrangements are made with the child's involvement and meets their needs.
Child's version of the parenting plan.	FJYPB held a virtual workshop and Volker (Cafcass Commissioning Team) joined the FJYPB at their meeting 16 th Dec 2023 to review the current plan. FJYPB would like options for a children and young person's version of their parent's plan. They suggested a storyboard version and a summary with the option to have a whole copy .	Further meeting with Volker and report to CMT.	Children and young people are involved in the arrangements agreed by their parents.
Domestic Abuse Practice Group	FJYPB member is co-chair of the group along with the domestic abuse charity SafeLives. First meeting held Nov 2023	Two FJYPB members to attend each meeting and represent the FJYPB and the voices of children with experience of domestic abuse.	Consideration is given to the experiences of children and young people as victims of domestic abuse. FJYPB contributions positively influence practice.

FJYPB Priorities 2023 and Achievements

1. Improve children and young people's participation in their proceedings

- The FJYPB have visited and reviewed 5 contact centres across Wales. They included: Barnardos (Flintshire), Glamorgan House (Swansea), Pontypridd Contact Centre (Pontypridd), Swan Family Centre (Cardiff) and Child Focused Children's Service (Pontypool).
- FJYPB took part in session with Research in Practice to develop practice tools for better communication and engagement with children and young people. This resource is being made available to newly qualified social workers.
- FJYPB worked with Cafcass to develop the first in a series of six 'Taking me Seriously' videos '[Letting you know how we help](#)'
- FJYPB book In My Shoes: Shared over 1000 hard copies and almost 4000 copies have been downloaded. Open University have added the book to their reading list and set an assignment to law students to read a piece and reflect upon it.

2. Continue to raise awareness of the impact of delay in family courts on children and young people.

- This year's VOTC conference also focused on the impact of delay and challenges attendees to inform children and young people of delay and the reasons.
- FJYPB met with Jacky and the President in June to challenge them on what they have done to reduce delay. Next meeting for early 2024.

3. Continue to develop a resource for schools to support children and young people involved in family court proceedings.

- PSHE Association are supporting the development of our school resource to be accessed by staff and pupils to provide an overview of family proceedings, the impact on children and young people, and the how to support them in school.

4. Raise awareness of the impact of the different types of abuse on children and young people.

- FJYPB have been commissioned by Durham Policy and Commissioning Team to support in the development of a Virtual Reality training resource for Police and Judiciary on the Impact of Domestic Abuse.
- Domestic Abuse: Practice Reference Group co-chaired by an FJYPB members with 2 additional members joining. The group's purpose is to further strengthen the quality and impact of work with children and families in family law proceedings where domestic abuse is known or alleged.

5. To plan and deliver the FJYPB Voice of the Child Conference 2023.

- We had a total of 434 attendees to this year hybrid **VOTC 2023**: THEME: Building trust to enable children and young people to participate in their family court proceedings in the context of delay.

FJYPB MEETING

16TH DECEMBER 2023



FJYPB PRIORITIES 2024



1.

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

- Work with Cafcass to obtain children and young people's feedback and review complaints.
- Increase the opportunities for children and young people to share their thoughts and feelings. Empower them with tools to express themselves.
- To plan and deliver the Voice Of The Child Conference 2024.

2.

Continue to raise awareness of the impact of delay on children and young people.

- Meeting with the president , Cafcass and MoJ to review the impact of actions taken to reduce delay.
- Robust challenge during Cafcass performance boards and stakeholder meetings to make sure delay is not normalised.

3.

Continued focus on the impact of domestic abuse to children and young people as victims. Expanding the focus to include all types of abuse and harmful parenting.

- Domestic Abuse: Practice Reference Group - Co-chaired by an FJYPB members with 2 additional members joining. Quarterly updates to the FJYPB.

4.

Promoting the uniqueness of neurodivergent/multi diverse disabilities of children and young people.

- Review current practice guidance and practice aids specifically for neurodivergent/multi diverse disabilities children and young people.
- Identifying, beyond Cafcass, how agencies support children and young people involved in family law proceedings that reflects their unique needs.

COMING UP IN 2024

Social Work Practice

Denmark

FJYPB School Resource

VOTC 2024 – 25th July 2024 *Save the date*

Cafcass Animation Videos

Judicial College

Reading University