



# FJYPPB UPDATE

Cafcass Board Meeting July 2024

# **FJYPB Support Team**

We are pleased to announce that Leona Edwards who had joined the FJYPB Support Team as an Apprentice studying towards her Level 3 Business Administration has achieved a **DISTINCTION** level.

As our sponsor Cafcass approved a permanent and full time FJYPB Business Service Officer and we are delighted that Leona was successful in being appointed to this role.

# Our Priorities, Workplan and Impact

FJYPB Priority	Workplan	Impact
<p><b>Improving children and young people’s participation in and experience of their proceedings.</b></p> <p>➤ <b>The FJYPB will continue to work with Cafcass and partners on a range of areas to further amplify children’s voices and improve children’s experiences.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to Take Me Seriously programme, supporting Cafcass with script development and animation of 6 information videos. 1<sup>st</sup> video, <u>‘Letting you know how we help’</u> completed and shared. Creation of 2<sup>nd</sup> video completed in May 2024. Dates to be agreed for co-creation of remainder of programme.</li> <li>• Contribute to the redesign of ICFA service.</li> <li>• Contribute to other improvement work, such as through Pathfinder and the Cafcass Working Group; Relationship with Children in private law.</li> <li>• Developing Family Time guidance for professionals.</li> <li>• To agree and establish a work programme with LA lead professionals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people have access to information that explains Cafcass, the court process, what they can expect to happen, how they will be engaged and be heard, and where they can get support from.</li> <li>• Children and young people will be clear about the purpose and aims of the ICFA service and will be better engaged throughout the referral and programme stages.</li> <li>• Influence the work undertaken with and for children in private law proceedings. Review and development of resources that can be used in work with children and young people.</li> <li>• Children will be the priority for professionals when considering their family time, both within and beyond proceedings. Guidance will support professionals in enabling children to actively participate in the decisions about their lives, by expressing their own views and tailoring family time to children’s individual needs. Professionals will be able to explain to children how their family time is safe.</li> <li>• To increase the voices of children and young people who are in public law proceedings (45,000 in 2023-24).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact of domestic abuse to children and young people, expanding our focus to include all types of abuse and harmful parenting.</b></p> <p>➤ <b>Cafcass worked with more than 137,000 children in proceedings in 2023-24; it is estimated that around 60% may have experienced domestic abuse. We will continue to work with Cafcass and others to share our lived experiences and to provide feedback and ideas around further strengthening practice where domestic abuse and harmful parenting is known or alleged.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to co-chair the Living With and Experience of Domestic Abuse Practice Reference Group (with SafeLives).</li> <li>• VOTC conference 2024 – members will create the content for and deliver the conference in July 2024, with a focus on children’s experience and impact of domestic abuse and harmful parenting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures the voices, needs and interests of children and young people who experience domestic abuse are listened to, are at the centre of and influential in further developing and improving practice. Children and young people’s input has shaped how work is undertaken with children to understand what life is like for them and improvement in practice builds confidence and trust for children and young people about the quality of this.</li> <li>• Engaging in discussion with and sharing our experiences and key messages to professionals from across family justice. Improving professionals understanding about how harmful parenting impacts children and young people and setting the FJYPB challenge, for which we will seek feedback about progress and impact.</li> </ul>

# Our Priorities, Workplan and Impact

FJYPB Priority	Workplan	Impact
<p><b>PSHE lesson for schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ FJYPB members identified a need within schools for discussion about family separation and change.</li> </ul>	<p>Following discussions with the DfE and introduction to the PSHE Association the FJYPB has helped develop a school lesson plan, to help teachers explore with children the impact of changes in families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft has been completed and is now at review and approval stage.</li> <li>• Aim is to pilot in selected school/s from Sept 2024 and evaluate.</li> </ul>	<p>In the year ending March 2023 there were an estimated 3.8 million children living in separated families. This school lesson resource, developed with FJYPB members, aims to eventually reach all school aged children in KS3 and will help them have a better understanding of changes in families and of why and when family courts may become involved.</p> <p><b>Key learning outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of proceedings and family separation on children and young people.</li> <li>• Children's rights when families change.</li> <li>• Role of the family courts.</li> <li>• The roles of professionals and why and when they become involved.</li> <li>• How to support a friend experiencing proceedings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reducing delay in the family courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continue our focus with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and others on reducing delay for children who are in proceedings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members will meet with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and HMCTS to review actions taken to reduce delay.</li> <li>• Focus on delay for children in local areas through attendance at annual regional Performance Boards within Cafcass and twice-yearly meetings with LFJB national chairs network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people are able to challenge key stakeholders on what actions they are taking to reduce delay, holding decision-makers to account.</li> <li>• Delay is reducing following the FJYPB challenge set in 2022 around not normalising this.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promoting the uniqueness of neurodivergent children and young people</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Top Tips for working with children and young people who are neurodiverse. Aim is to launch at the VOTC on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top Tips created by children and young people who are neurodiverse, based on their own experiences and insight. This will help professionals consider how they can effectively engage children and young people in services and support. We will ask Cafcass staff and other professionals for feedback about the impact of this in their work.</li> </ul>

# Taking Me Seriously

## *Animation - 2*

Many of our FJYPB members have been working with the Cafcass National Improvement Service (NIS) and the animators to create the script and content for the 2nd video being produced for children and young people.

Members Zoe, Chloe, Oli and Plam were in London in May to record the voiceovers for this forthcoming animation **'Sharing Recommendations'**.



# ICFA

## Improving Child & Family Arrangements

FJYPB members met with members of the ICFA Working Group to review the Provider Referral Form - advising on how this can better focus on the child or young person, asking each provider to reflect on what the child's lived experience has been prior to their service intervention and on the expected outcomes for the child.

This project is ongoing and a member of the FJYPB Support Team joins the ICFA working group to identify further opportunities for the FJYPB members to engage.

The FJYPB has challenged the working group to think about how children and young people will best be able to access information about an ICFA on Cafcass's website. It has been agreed that this will be considered in the further planning.

**FJYPB Priority:** Continued focus on the impact of domestic abuse to children and young people, expanding the focus to include all type of abuse and harmful parenting.

### Voice of the Child Conference 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024

- **Childhood lasts a lifetime:** Turning up the volume of the voices of children and young people who have experience of domestic abuse and harmful parenting.

### Domestic Abuse 'Wheel of Best Practice'

- FJYPB member met with the Cafcass Domestic Abuse Development Manager and shared our view on the newly developed 'Wheel of Best Practice'.

### Domestic Abuse - Moderation

- FJYPB member Olivia joined the moderation board to review the work and support Cafcass provided to children and young people who are victims of domestic abuse.

# Word Busting to Court Orders

The FJYPB was asked by the Language Matters working group (which includes judiciary, HMCTS, legal professionals, Cafcass and Cafcass Cymru) to review the wording in court orders with a view to making them more understandable for all. Members met and provided feedback about the following words which they felt should be replaced or better explained in orders:-

- + **Case Number**
- + **Parties**
- + **Applicant and Respondent**
- + **Recitals**
- + **Issues**
- + **Ordered**



# SENIOR LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT



- + **Deputy Director (Operations and Improvement)**
- + **Assistant Director (Performance and Quality Assurance)**
- + **Assistant Director (Principal Social Worker)**

FJYPB members Shanti, Danielle, Saffron and Olivia, supported by a member of the FJYPB Support Team, undertook interviews of the candidates for each of these Cafcass roles. Our feedback and scorings were submitted to Cafcass HR to form part of the overall evaluation of each candidate.