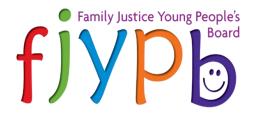




## FJYPB UPDATE

Cafcass Board Meeting January 2025







Leona Edwards

• FJYPB Business Services Officer



Lauren Shepherd

FJYPB Business
 Services Officer Development Worker



Jennifer Gibbon-Lynch

•FJYPB Co-ordinator



Helen Lee

• FJYPB Head of Practice



Dawn Goodwin Cafcass Principal Social Worker

- •Dawn Goodwin Cafcass **Principal** Social Worker
- •FJYPB Lead

#### FJYPB Priorities 2024-2025

public law experience.

FJYPB Priority	Workplan update	Impact		
1. Improving children and young people's participation in and experience of their proceedings.  • 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.  Links to Cafcass Priorities 1, 7 and 9.	<ul> <li>Contribute to Take Me Seriously programme, supporting Cafcass with script development and animation of 6 information videos. 1<sup>st</sup> video, 'Letting you know how we help' and 2<sup>nd</sup> video, 'Sharing Recommendations', completed.</li> <li>Planning underway to create the 3<sup>rd</sup> video in February 2025, with dates to be agreed for co-creation of remainder of programme.</li> </ul>	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.		
	<ul> <li>Parenting Plan – Cafcass' National Commissioning Team has translated views and feedback from the FJYPB into a new Parenting Plan – Our Child's Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Supporting the 25,000 families who access the Parenting Plan each year to keep their children's best interests and needs at the heart of arrangements.</li> <li>Children and young people will be involved in the creation of their Parenting Plan and will receive a summary of this.</li> </ul>		
	Contributed to the redesign of the Improving Child and Family Arrangements (ICFA) service. Child-centred proposal has been included.	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.		
	<ul> <li>Contribute to the improvement of children's and young people's experiences of private law proceedings. This includes work being undertaken with:</li> <li>Private Law Pathfinder</li> <li>Cafcass Working Group; Relationship with Children in private law - FYPB review of child engagement tools and resources has been completed, and feedback has been provided to the working group.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Influence the work undertaken with and for children in private law proceedings.</li> <li>Review and design of resources to be used in direct work with children and young people.</li> </ul>		
	Creating a Safe Family Time guide for professionals – this has been completed and shared.	<ul> <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 and why they think their family time is safe.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>To meet with and agree a work programme with Local Authority lead professionals.</li> <li>Meetings completed with around 40 LA's. Future actions / projects to be taken forward will be agreed early 2025.</li> <li>Current FJYPB recruitment campaign is focused on children and young people with public law experience.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>To work collaboratively with Local Authorities to increase the voices of children and young people who are in public law proceedings (45,000 in 2023-24), and in supporting recruitment to the FJYPB of children and young people with public law experience.</li> </ul>		

P	ric	or	it

#### Workplan

**Impact** 

2. Impact of domestic abuse to children and young people,

• 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

feedback about progress and impact.

key take-aways and 2024 challenge.

Abuse Practice Reference Group (with SafeLives). Engaging in discussion with and sharing our experiences and key messages

expanding our focus to include all types of abuse and harmful Continue to co-chair the Living With and Experience of Domestic parenting. people's input has shaped how work is undertaken with children to understand what life is like for them and improvement in practice builds Cafcass worked with more than 137,000 children in proceedings in confidence and trust for children and young people about the quality of this

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.

**Links to Cafcass Priority 2** 

Links to Family Justice Board Private Law Priority 3: Improve the experiences of children and survivors of domestic abuse involved in private

law proceedings.

family separation and change.

4. Reducing delay in the family courts

delay for children who are in proceedings.

3. Increasing awareness about family separation and change within schools.

FJYPB members identified a need within schools for discussion about

Continue our focus with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and others on reducing

Members will meet with Cafcass, PRFD, MoJ and HMCTS to review actions taken to reduce delay - next meeting is being planned for early 2025.

neurodiverse.

July 2024.

families.

FJYPB attendance at annual regional Performance Boards within Cafcass areas with a focus on delay for children in local areas. FJYPB attendance twice yearly at LFJB Chairs network meetings and annual LFJB conference. The FJYPB has a focus on delay with LFJBs and has challenged them to consider how children and young people's voices can be best represented within their

VOTC conference 2024 – members created the content for and

delivered the conference in July 2024, with a focus on children's

experience and impact of domestic abuse and harmful parenting.

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

Resource has now been completed and was launched on

DfE is supporting **promotion**, and aim is to pilot in selected

18/09/24 via the PSHE Association website.

Links to Cafcass Priority 8 Links to Family Justice Board's 2024-2025 Public Law Priorities 1, 2 and 3 and Private Law Priorities 1 and 2, centred around reducing

areas. · Create Top Tips for working with children and young people who are

school/s and evaluate.

This has been completed and was launched at the VOTC on 25<sup>th</sup>

Children and young people are able to challenge key stakeholders on what actions they are taking to reduce delay, holding decision-makers to account. Delay is reducing following the FJYPB challenge set in 2022 around not normalising this.

**Key learning outcomes:** 

Role of the family courts.

people.

why and when family courts may become involved.

How to support a friend experiencing proceedings.

Childrens rights when families change.

 This will help children and young people who are neurodiverse, creating Top Tips based on their own experiences and insight. This will also 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.

to professionals from across family justice. Improving professionals

understanding about how harmful parenting impacts children and young

• At its peak we had 499 attendees join the conference (an increase of 18%

• In the year ending March 2023 there were an estimated 3.8 million children

living in separated families. This school lesson resource, developed with

Impact of proceedings and family separation on children and young

The roles of professionals and why and when they become involved.

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

people and setting the FJYPB challenge, for which we will continue to seek

from our conference in 2023) with an excellent feedback rating of 4.79 (out

of 5). Attendees shared actions they would take forward in response to our

delay. 5. Promoting the uniqueness of neurodivergent children and young people. Links to Cafcass Priorities 1 and 9

**Links to Cafcass Priority 9** 

### **Cafcass Practice Week Attendees 217**



#### INDIRECT CONTACT

Safe Family Time The <u>Family Justice Young people's Board</u> (FYPB) have created this Practitioner Guide for arranging SAFE FAMILY TIME, reflecting on their personal experiences and sharing with you what helps children and young people to feel safe and reflecting on their personal experiences and sharing with you what helps children and young people to feel safe and secure, and things they would like you to consider when recommending and planning their time with a family member as part of family court proceedings.

- The safety and weffare of children and young people should always be your priority when considering Family Time. The The safety and welfare of children and young people should always be your priority when considering family Time. The views of parents and wider family members are important, especially as they hald parental responsibility for their views of parents and wider family members are important, especially as they hold parental responsibility for their children, but the law requires that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount, and you must make sure this is the
- children, but the law requires that the safety and wellare of the child is paramount, and you loudest consideration in your advice to the court or in the decisions being made in court. Family Time that feels safe and beneficial is important to help us build or maintain relationships with significant people. Family Time that feels safe and beneficial is important to help us build or maintain relationships with significant people in our fires. When we have previously experienced harm or difficulties in those relationships, Family Time can help us In our lives. When we have previously experienced harm or difficulties in those relationships, family Time can help us to heal and learn to trust against but may also cause us distress and further harm. Any arrangements you help decide
- Tor us must be assessed as self-time millioner work entertains.

  We expect and need to be involved in the planning and decision making around our family Time. We may be feeling a self-time time to the involved in the planning and decision making around our family Time. We expect and need to be involved in the planning and decision-making around our family Time. We may be feelin scared, nervous, or unsure if we are allowed to be excited and need your support to help share how we are feeling.
- We need to feel confident that our Family Time arrangements will be safe and expect that you will be able to tell us why We need to feel confident that our Family Time arrangements will be safe and expect that you will be able to tell us why and how you know this. You should be able to tell us about the arrangements for support if we have any questions or
- We need you to be clear about what our family Time arrangements will look like and to have considered whether they We need you to be clear about what our family Time arrangements will look like and to have considered whether they
  work with our arrangements for school, seeing friends, managing our hobbies and our downtime. The arrangement s
  you make should not be exhausting and tiring for us.
- Helping us and our family members prepare for Family Time is important. We may have worries that we need to talk to
- Helping us and our family members **prepare** for family Time is important. We may have worms the you about and reducing these will help us to look forward to and better enjoy our time together. You need to ask how our Family Time arrangements are feeling for us. Reviewing is an important part of understanding You need to ask how our Family Time arrangements are feeling for us. **Roviewing** is an important part of understanding whether Family Time is meeting our needs. It may not feel right for us, and we may be able to suggest changes that will whether family Time is meeting our needs. It may not feel right for us, and we may be able to suggest changes that will make a difference. After every engagement, someone should ask how it is working and feeling — we should be able to
- Please tell us how we will be supported with Family Time after your work with us ends. Knowing who we can talk to and
- Visitise reli us now we will be supported with a same y time after your work.
   What we can do if we are worried about the arrangements. is important.
- We especially need to know what the consequences are and for who if the court orders family time and we don't We especially need to know what the consequences are and for who if the court orders family time and we don't want to or don't feel safe to attend. This should be spelled out by the court, especially if we didn't want the time to be

- Have the best understanding that you can from our families and others who know us, about our experiences and Have the best understanding that you can from our families and others who know us, about our experience.
   situations before we meet with you. We need you to understand any fisks for us as well as the impact of these.
- Think about our age, needs and uniqueness, including culture, ethnicity, faith, and ability, when planning your
- empagement with us and for our ranny some arrangements.

   It is important that you plan well for the meetings with us. Don't make asking us about Family Time the first thing you it is important that you pass went for the meetings with us, bon't make asking us about samply same the risk do when we meet. Get to know us first so that we can start building a relationship with and our trust in you.
- Ask us about the best place to meet somewhere neutral may be better for us, particularly if we are worried about pressure from a parent.

  Be honest and explain beforehand that we will be talking about Family Time. This helps us to prepare for difficult

by "Indirect" contact, and, if you are thinking about Y insurect contact, ano, a you are enaucos auuso, at how this will take place and ask whether this feels







#### Voice of the Child in LFJB's

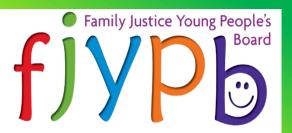




Reeya and Olivia represented the FJYPB at this year's national Family Justice Board Conference.

- + Presentation on Safe Family Time
- + Workshop: Voice of the child in LFJB's
- + Participated in a Q & A session

#### OTHER RECENT WORK



## Judges writing to children

FJYPB have been working with the Nuffield and Judiciary to create a 'Judges writing to children' toolkit with the aim of launching this in January / February 2025.

#### Adoption England

FJYPB sharing experiences of adoption and relationships - to create resources supporting adults to understand the importance of maintaining relationships with people they care about. Video to be created early 2025.

#### Cafcass - Guardians Letters to IROs

We are working with Cafcass to think about what information children and young people want their Guardians to share with their IROs at the end of proceedings.

We have an opportunity for more children and young people to join the FJYPB.

We are specifically keen to recruit more members with public law experience.

We have recently ended our application period and will share with you the number of successful applicants once interviews are complete.

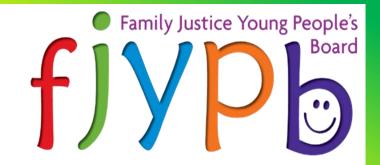


# INTERVIEWS February 2025





## VOICE OF THE CHILD CONFERENCE 2025



#### Save the date

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025

Virtual Event

