

TRAINING PROGRAMME

Nagalro Spring Conference: Zoom, 9.30 am – 1.30 pm, 4 March 2024

‘Parental alienation’ – Debates and Controversies

This conference will examine the ‘parental alienation’ (PA) ‘model’ and myths, its history within the UK Family Courts, and the current debates. We aim to examine the lens of interpretation through which allegations of PA reframe the issues before the Court, and demonstrate how easy it is to lose focus so that the child becomes the object rather than the subject. We also hope to create learning points about PA for attendees from other jurisdictions and professions.

It is imperative that social workers working in private law within the Family Courts keep the focus on the Section 1 Children Act 1989, that the child’s welfare is always the paramount consideration throughout, and also on the essential assessment of significant harm that is required under S37 where any allegations of abuse of a child or domestic abuse are made. A high number of Family Court cases where allegations of domestic abuse (DA) go on to have counter claims of PA. We will address some of the facts and figures, and flag up where there is no reliable research base for claims of PA.

The landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021 brought changes which crucially recognised children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right for the very first time. To ensure procedural fairness, all social workers have a duty to uphold adherence to Practice Directions [12J (child arrangements and domestic violence), 3AA (special measures) and 25 (experts)], and a good understanding of dynamics of domestic abuse throughout the family justice system. From this base we will look at the evidence around DA, child abuse (CA) and PA and we will examine:

- Key judgements, legislation and statutory guidance – the legal framework
- Is there any reliable evidence base for PA?
- The crucial importance of early Fact Finding Hearings
- The role of the expert in allegations of DA, CA and PA – Part 25 Experts and Assessors
- If a child is resistant to spending time with, or hostile towards, one parent post separation – has it been established there is no legitimate reason or cause for this, before accepting it as unjustifiable?
- What are ‘alienating behaviours’, and how to assess the significance of the impact of these behaviours on the child?
- What further training is needed on DA, CCB and PA?

Conference Chair: Professor Jo Delahunty KC

1. Professor Jo Delahunty KC (4Paper Buildings) – the broader legal perspective
2. Jenny Beck KC, Beck Fitzgerald Sols. - Part 25 instructions and PA cases through the eyes of a family lawyer - dynamics/pleadings/counter-allegations and how Courts respond.
3. Dr Jaime Craig (co-chair of FJC working group on Responding to allegations of alienating behaviour) –on the impact on the child, and on Psychologists and experts in PA cases.
4. FJYPB A young person will talk about their Real life perspectives – what the child has really experienced –and a mother will present their experience of PA allegations.
5. Dr Julie Doughty, Cardiff University (co-author of Review of Research and Case Law on parental alienation 2018) will present a current academic research overview
6. Learning points – plenary session.

Cost: £50 - £75 4 CPD

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Communicating with Children

This experiential workshop will present a range of quick and easy to access tools and techniques to support parenting and family assessments and hearing the voice of the child. The tools and techniques draw from play and art therapy as well as Therapeutic Life Story Work. We will also consider ways of explaining to the child who you are and why you are seeing them. A handout will be provided of printable worksheets to use during visits to children.

Trainer: Suzanne McGladdery, ISW, Therapeutic Life Story Work Practitioner, Lecturer, Consultant

Zoom, Tuesday, 23 April 2024, 09.30 – 12.30

3 CPD

A Year of Public and Private Law in Review

A review of the most important and interesting cases of the last twelve months.

Led by barristers from Coram Chambers:

Zoom, Autumn 2024 date to be confirmed 2 CPD

Effective Assessment and Intervention in working with Disguised Compliance/Parental Resistance in Safeguarding Children

This session will address different forms of disguised compliance/parental resistance and explore the effects on parents/carers; staff; and the risks those present to each of them, and ways to most effectively deal with such risks.

Why is this matter so important? What are the risks? The evidence base/findings from Serious Case Reviews/ Effects on and risks for workers and for children/ Key findings on practice and interagency working/ Effective professional and agency responses/interpersonal skills.

Trainer: Professor Brian Littlechild.

Zoom, Autumn date to be confirmed 2024, 09.30 – 11.45 am 2 CPD

Nagalro Autumn 2024 Conference:

‘Post Adoption Contact – a brave new world’

This conference is on the theme of post-adoption contact, taking up the need, identified in the PLWG’s consultation paper, for further training to ensure that all relevant professionals understand the issues and options for children and are ready for the implementation of the recommendations for best practice.

Conference Chair: Her Honour Justice Judd

Zoom Webinar: 09.30 -1.30 pm Friday, 4 October 2024

More details to follow

INDEPENDENT SOCIAL WORKERS - Children and Family specialists

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