



Annual Update of Family Law and Practice for family mediators

9.30am – 5.00 pm on Friday 21 October 2011 at Shugborough Hall, near Stafford

This is FMA's first pilot Annual Update, a model which we hope will become a valuable part of the mediation training year. Our presenters however have been running these multi disciplinary updates for nine years. One of the principles behind the course has been the importance of demonstrating family mediation's credibility by emphasising that mediators are fully up to date with family law and practice as it applies to the mediation room.

Our AIMS and OBJECTIVES are to meet the specific needs of practising family mediators, by providing both a basic update of legal knowledge and practical suggestions about the improvement of practice. We will try to discern together what trends there are in the development of family law and Government policy, and the extent to which these should influence our work. In a sense, the course mirrors the legal updates offered by other training providers, but with a specific focus on the needs of mediators, and a greater opportunity to discuss issues, both in plenary and in small groups. Numbers will be limited to 25.

Who should attend? The course is aimed at both "lawyer mediators" and "non-lawyer mediators." For experienced family lawyers, the critical update of emerging trends in law and practice should provide you with the annual information you need (our habit has been to offer legal notes stretching back over three years, with emphasis on the last twelve months) . For those less experienced in this field, the balance between basic principle and recent gloss will be valuable, but is *not* a substitute for attending our "Family Finances for Non- Lawyers" course to be run in February 2012.

If this pilot proves "successful" FMA will look at rolling it out across the country in 2012. Expect inputs, lively discussion and group work – feedback from courses run by these trainers follows at the end of this flyer.

We will *email* detailed notes in advance so that we can maximise the opportunity to work together on the day. *When booking, please tell us if you have particular interests.*

Presenters:

Neil Robinson is Vice Chair of the Family Mediators Association, Director of The Mediation Centre and a Consultant at Nowell Meller Solicitors. He was Legal Aid Family Lawyer of the Year 2007. He is a trainer for Resolution and the Family Mediators Association, an experienced family lawyer, a mediator and consultant, and a Mental Health Tribunal Judge.

With Steve Kirwan and Chris Barton

Topics will include:

1. Legal Update in Children Law – Statutes & Case Law; Procedure
Recent private law cases: abduction and relocation, S 8 Children Act 1989, shared care, special guardianship, adoption, parental responsibility etc.
2. In Depth Discussion Areas in Children Practice:
 - a) What are the Emerging trends in children law and practice? Which way does the pendulum swing at the moment?
 - b) Contact activities, Parenting Information Programmes and creative solutions; Mediation assessment as contact activity
 - c) Shared residence or shared parenting?
 - d) The voice of the child – impact on the practice of Judges, lawyers, mediators and CAFCASS
 - e) Developing practice in Domestic abuse and Child Protection
 - f) What is left of separate representation and r.16.4 cases?
 - g) The Public Law Outline, Family Group Conferences and other child care issues (insofar as they provide opportunities for mediators)
3. Developments in Finance Cases:
 - (a) The yardstick of equality, magnetic factors, sharing principles, marital/ extra marital assets, compensation and special contributions – what do they mean for mediation participants?
 - (b) Children - child support & private applications
 - (c) Spouses - the rich, the poor and the ugly through to, eg, *Kingdon* (2011)
 - (d) Technical Updates on Pensions (including public sector pensions),
 - (e) Pre-nuptial and cohabitation “contracts”: *Radmacher* (2010 (HL)) & Law No 198 (2011), *Marital Property Agreements*
4. Tasters: New opportunities and new expertise for Mediators:
 - a) Cohabitation Update
 - b) Pre marriage/ pre-relationship services
5. The Future of Family Courts and family Practice for mediators, Judges, lawyers, and Cafcass:
How can we work better together with family lawyers and Judges and help each other out?
Green and White Papers, Coalitions, Interim Family Justice Review, Family Proceedings Rules, Adversarial v. Inquisitorial, the Reform agenda, Crystal Balls – and, briefly, how have the first six months of PAP been for you?

What others have said.....

“A good mix of course content; very knowledgeable tutors with time for discussion. More of the same please.”

“These courses get better and better... I'm totally stuck re suggestions for improvement. The amount of lively discussion generated indicates how relevant the material covered has been. Thank you!”

“A brilliant day, very apposite with a lot of relevant and helpful content, presented with variety and full participation.

“Great food for thought about exacting times ahead.

“As always, courses very much hands on, allowing parties to feed back throughout the day. Very informative”