

Family Law

Thursday 15 August 2024

Session 4 – 1:45pm–2:45pm

Panel: Trauma-informed practice – what we need to know and do to protect clients and solicitors in high conflict disputes

This session will cover the definition of trauma, the importance of recognising trauma in clients and the principles guiding trauma informed practice. Participants will hear from panellists from varied disciplines: a clinical psychologist, court officer, legal practitioner and a professional advisor with lived experience working with and writing about their work with trauma affected clients. The panel will discuss how to identify trauma in clients and how it impacts family law disputes. The discussion will cover management techniques in trauma informed practice and how to best assist trauma affected clients in a court setting. The panel will also discuss vicarious trauma and the importance of family lawyers and those working within the family system to beware of this risk and put in place self-care mechanisms and supports. There will be an opportunity to participate in a Q&A session at the end of the session.

Meet the speakers

Cynthia Bluett, Family Law Dispute Resolution Specialist, Separation Solutions (moderator)

Cynthia was admitted as a solicitor in 1989. She became an Accredited Specialist in Family Law in 2009 and now sits on the Law Society of NSW Advisory Committee for the Specialist Accreditation program. Cynthia qualified as a Nationally Accredited Mediator in 2019. Prior to joining Separation Solutions in 2023, she was a partner at one of Sydney's leading family law firms, Pearson Emerson Family Law. Cynthia worked as a family lawyer for nearly 20 years and was exposed to all facets of family breakdown. She has acted in high conflict matters involving family violence, complex financial cases, and parenting cases that have included relocations, adoption, surrogacy and child support issues. Cynthia's experience as a family law practitioner was acknowledged by Doyle's Guide each year between 2018 and 2023. In 2023 and 2024, she was recognised by Doyle's Guide as a 'Recommended' family law mediator.

Judicial Registrar Julianne Bardetta, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

Julianne Bardetta was appointed to the role of Judicial Registrar with the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia in August 2021 and is based in the Sydney Registry. In addition to her Registrar role across both Court work and dispute resolution, Judicial Registrar Bardetta is also the Director – Finance Operations and Director – National Assessment Team at the Court. Julianne commenced her legal career 15 years ago practising child protection law at the NSW Crown Solicitor's Office before moving to practise family law exclusively in private practice. During the 'Covid years' Judicial Registrar Bardetta also created and ran an online DIY family law platform. Prior to practising law, she worked as both a management and financial accountant. She holds Bachelor

of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws (Hons) degrees from the University of Melbourne and is currently completing a Master of Laws (Applied Law).

Hayley Foster, Director, Family Violence/Access, Equity and Inclusion, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

Hayley Foster is the Director of Family Violence and of Access, Equity, and Inclusion at the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia. She is charged with advising the Chief Justice and CEO on enhancing the Court's response to family violence and increasing accessibility for diverse populations. Her career spans frontline services, behaviour change, law practice, policy development, and executive leadership. Hayley has played a key part in influencing and shaping substantial policy and law reforms at state and federal levels, including in relation to criminalising coercive control, affirmative sexual consent laws, a national curriculum on respectful relationships, paid domestic violence leave, Respect@Work, and prioritising safety in family law. Notable advisory roles include the Commonwealth Advisory Group for the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children and the Fair Work Commission's Sexual Harassment Working Group.

Dr Maree Livermore, Founder and CEO, Tribe Family Lawyers

Dr Maree Livermore is a well-known family lawyer, author, legal service innovator and policy development advocate. She is the author of *The Family Law Handbook* (Thomson Reuters) a plain-English text now in its 5th edition and widely used by self-represented litigants, universities, and community services. She is also Founder and CEO at Tribe Family Lawyers, which leverages e-commerce and cloud technologies to re-frame access to family law services. Maree holds a doctorate in the mental health field. She has been working with vulnerable people and, in particular, with clients with a background in domestic violence, since the very earliest stages of her career. She is also a passionate advocate for a simpler, more responsive and client-focused family law system.

Dr Monique Phipps, Clinical Psychologist

Dr Monique Phipps is a clinical psychologist who has worked in a variety of clinical settings for more than 23 years. After graduating in 2000, Monique spent 16 years working in community mental health and drug & alcohol services and spent 12 years at St Vincent's Hospital Mental Health Service in Sydney. In these roles she developed extensive skills in the assessment and treatment of trauma and complex mental health issues. She also worked with young adults with emerging psychosis and mental health difficulties. After leaving St Vincent's Hospital, Monique worked in the fields of homelessness, adolescent and family services, and she has worked most recently with veterans and their families. While training to become a clinical psychologist Monique spent many years working with children with developmental disabilities and autism spectrum disorder, and her work included teaching at a school for children with autism.