



TRAINING BROCHURE

Workshops

Assessing foster carers and adopters (2-day)

Designed for practitioners and managers working in adoption and fostering, it considers all elements involved in the crucial task of undertaking thorough and robust assessments of prospective carers, from initial enquiry to presentation at panel.

Be court ready: *keeping knowledge and skills current*

A significant aspect of a social worker's role is appearing in court where their practice, training and application of the law is tested. A thorough but accessible explanation of the legislation and decisions made by courts will be complimented by a step-by-step guide to appearing in court and an opportunity to take part in a mock proof.

This training will support the social worker in preparing and presenting confidently in court so that they can showcase the hard work they have put in to promoting and planning for permanence.

Child Adoption and Permanence Report (CAPR)

When permanent placement away from home is planned for a child, a report must be written that serves multiple purposes and requires the greatest care. The child's social worker must make sure that the child, their family, their history and their current and future needs are thoroughly understood and set out in writing.

This report is written for a range of different audiences, including Panels, Courts and potential future substitute parents for the child. Writing a report that meets the requirements of a range of parties while remaining sensitive and child focussed can feel an overwhelming challenge for social workers.

This workshop will explore the use of the Report to satisfy the needs of competing audiences and, most importantly, those of the child now and in the future.

Contact - my family, my future and me... (2-day)

Contact is a critical aspect to progressing permanence planning for children. This interactive workshop is an opportunity for practitioners to consider such a complex issue. Legal framework, research and good practice will be explored through real life scenarios.

Workers will gain a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the types of contact, purpose of contact and assessments needed to be done at the various stages of the permanence process from the Children's Hearings decisions to post order contact. This is a practical and informed workshop that deals with the often frustrating challenges workers face when dealing with contact.

CPO to POA - a child's journey towards permanence

Using case scenarios, the worker will follow 3 children through the legal framework of the care system providing a continuous link between the various stages of the process.

An intensive and interactive day looking at what happens at Children's Hearings, in permanence planning and in Court, the workshop will look at the decisions open to Hearings, at the mechanics of permanence orders, direct petitions and kinship care orders and explain their practical application.

The workshop is a must for the new and experienced practitioners who want to navigate the process in order to minimise drift and delay and to make effective and practical decisions appropriate for each child.

Introduction to chairing adoption and fostering panels for new panel chairs

Panel chairs require an essential set of knowledge, skills and values in order for the process to achieve positive outcomes for children. The business of panels is complex, they make recommendations about adoption and permanence plans for children, approve foster carers and adopters and consider matches. They also oversee the reviews of foster carers and adopters. In addition, the provisions of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 allow any agency decision to be reviewed or 'appealed' and this also falls under the remit of these panels. Whilst experience of chairing other meetings is helpful, there are unique aspects to chairing panels which will form the basis of this workshop.

Introduction to the impact of social networking in adoption and fostering

Social networking is here to stay in an ever-changing world. Our confidence levels about how to manage this phenomenon can vary. The importance of social media in young people's lives can challenge supervising social workers, foster carers and adopters. The issue of unmediated online contact is one that arises on a consistent basis. This workshop will aim to provide an overview of how the impact of these changes have been managed and progressed in adoption and fostering.

Kinship care:

professionals, family and friends working for the child ***Understanding the law and research for kinship carers***

Kinship carers look after some of our most vulnerable children, often as a direct alternative to children being received into care.

This workshop will look at the significant changes under new legislation to their legal status, financial entitlements and the local authority's duties in supporting them. It will draw on up-to-date research that highlights the experiences of children and kinship carers. It sheds light on how workers can meet the unique challenges involved to promote stability for the child within a kinship care setting.

Making a difference at Children's Hearings - all you need to know to be confident, effective and informed

Children's Hearings decide whether the plans made by social workers will be implemented. This workshop will support and inform the worker in their pivotal role within the Hearing System in promoting the agency recommendation so that the best outcome for the child will be achieved.

Delegates will be provided with an insight into the mechanics of the System explaining the various orders, the best way for the worker to prepare and present at Hearings, the importance of the written report and reviewing the progress of work carried out under the Orders. This training is a must for any worker attending Hearings.

Making good assessments of foster carers (2-day)

This course focuses specifically on foster care, considering all aspects of the assessment required for people embarking on the fostering task. As well as considering the key tasks involved in the assessment, it will help assessors identify the capacities that foster carers will require in order to provide safe, nurturing care to children and young people. It will consider the theories around what supports good placements and will use case material to explore what skills workers will need to use in assessments.

Moving children onto permanent placement: good practice in the introductions process

Suitable for those new to the process of moving children on, more experienced practitioners seeking to refresh their knowledge and foster carers whose involvement and perspective on the process are critical. A child's move to permanent placement can be a time of anticipation and excitement, but it may also trigger feelings of loss and anxiety.

Delegates will consider steps that can be taken to ensure the transition from temporary placement to permanent placement is made as positive as possible.

Workshops (cont.)

Overview of child care law in Scotland - an introduction to the law for children and family workers

Navigating your way around the law and making it relevant to your day-to-day work gives social workers the knowledge, confidence and competence to intervene in families' lives where the need arises. This workshop explains the powers, duties and obligations of the decision makers, workers and carers and the rights and responsibilities of children and parents. The training is tailored for those new to children and family work and permanence or for those looking for clarification of child care law. Plenary sessions, case scenarios, quizzes and discussions bring the law to life and show how it can be applied to improve outcomes for children.

Permanence matters for solicitors - getting to grips with legislation, case law and good practice in adoption and fostering

In the 8 years since the implementation of the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007, policy, practice and court judgements have informed the interpretation and application of the law. The need has never been greater for an effective legal presence in the formulation and delivery of local authority planning for permanence.

This workshop explores and explains in detail the requirements placed on the local authority solicitor. Through the use of plenary sessions, case scenarios, group working and discussion, delegates will develop an enhanced understanding of how to achieve effective and timely progress towards permanence. It will also promote the significant role of the local authority solicitor in achieving best outcomes for children and families.

Presenting at adoption and permanence panels

The skill of a children and families social worker presenting confidently at adoption and fostering panels is one that is improved upon by experience. Ultimately, it is achieved by having the underpinning knowledge of the expectations of the panel process and clarity about planning for children where permanence and adoption feature. This workshop will aim to provide the tools for children and families workers to participate effectively in this process on behalf of vulnerable children. It is aimed at children and families social workers and their managers. It may also be of benefit to anyone who has a quality assurance role with adoption and permanence panels.

Protecting children in family placement (2-day)

Adoption and fostering social workers have a clear role in assessing and supporting foster carers and adopters. The ability to keep children's safety at the core of these processes is paramount. The child protection reform programme provided the framework for the protection of children in Scotland for all aspects of public and private life, including family placement. This workshop will consider the child protection context focusing on the needs of children, helping carers to manage disclosures and caring for children who have been sexually abused. Managing allegations will also be considered.

Reviewing foster carers

The statutory and regulatory imperative to review foster carers is clear in Scotland. Whilst there is a framework to guide the functions of reviews, the reality of managing the varied and complex aspects of the review can be challenging. Their importance is critical in making sure that children are looked after in the best possible circumstances.

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to look at what works well in reviews as well as considering what happens when there are difficulties. It will be suitable for foster carer review chairs, panel members and advisors as well as members of family placement teams who present at reviews.

Role of the agency decision maker (ADM) in adoption and fostering

The ADM has an essential role in making decisions about the best plans for children, their carers and adopters. The Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 provides the framework for this role. However, beyond this framework there is very little guidance to inform and support agency decision makers, particularly when dilemmas arise. The process of making the decision will vary across agencies but there are some key good practice considerations.

Siblings: placements, dilemmas, challenges and themes

Decisions we make around siblings are likely to throw up some of the toughest dilemmas we face in family placement work. How do we decide whether children can safely remain together or whether we should look for separate placements? Is our decision making resource led or child led?

This workshop will consider the available research and allow us to think about how to shape our practice to ensure we take account of all key factors involved. Suitable for child care and family placement social workers, it is an opportunity to share ideas and good practice across agencies and consider how to apply the latest evidence to our decision making.

The supervising social worker in fostering: role, functions and skills

Suitable for all social workers and managers who work in fostering teams and who have supervisory responsibility for foster carers. This workshop will be helpful both for workers who are new to fostering and for more experienced workers who are seeking to refresh their knowledge and skills. It will look at the purpose of supervision in foster care and how it can assist in providing high quality care for children who are looked after. It will provide an opportunity to share good practice ideas with colleagues from other agencies and spend time looking at common dilemmas and difficulties. It will be delivered through use of both taught material and case studies.

What do panels do? a workshop for new adoption and fostering panel members

The Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 provides the overarching framework for adoption and fostering panels in Scotland. Panels make key recommendations which affect the lives of children, foster carers and adopters. Many of these recommendations have life-long consequences for those involved. It is therefore important that panel members have a clear understanding of the function of panels as well as having an opportunity to consider their role in this process. This workshop is aimed at new adoption and fostering panel members and panel advisers, and may also be of interest to new medical and legal advisers.

When placements disrupt in adoption and fostering

This workshop will consider the current research around both adoption disruptions and disruptions in permanent foster placements. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the latest research as well as share experiences and practice with workers from different agencies. It is aimed at team managers across family placement teams and social workers in both fostering and adoption settings.

Whose minute is it anyway? - minute taking for those involved in adoption and fostering panels

The role of the minute taker in adoption and fostering panels is a crucial one. Panels are underpinned by specific legal and regulatory requirements. This means that minute takers need to have enough of an understanding of these requirements in order to produce a minute that is relevant, clear and appropriate.

Commissioned training and consultancy

Individual agencies or groups of agencies can commission training on issues that have particular importance for them. AFA Scotland will discuss the agency's specific requirements and develop the training accordingly. Training can be provided on a wide range of topics including:

- ◆ Achieving best outcomes at children's hearings
- ◆ Adoption support
- ◆ After care and continuing care - *what has changed and what will stay the same?*
- ◆ Assessing LGBTI carers and adopters
- ◆ Assessment of adopters and foster carers
- ◆ Assessing adoption and fostering applicants from diverse backgrounds
- ◆ Applying the secure base model
- ◆ Be court ready - *keeping knowledge and skills current*
- ◆ Chairing of disruption meetings
- ◆ Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- ◆ Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
- ◆ Contact: good practice considerations for children
- ◆ Contact in foster placements and post adoption
- ◆ Direct work with children when permanence is planned
- ◆ Disruptions in permanent placements
- ◆ Does sexual orientation matter in adoption and fostering assessments?
- ◆ Introduction to adoption and fostering panels
- ◆ Legal aspects of permanence planning
- ◆ Legislation - *an overview of child care law in Scotland*
- ◆ Life story work
- ◆ Linking, matching and sustaining placements
- ◆ Making a difference at Children's Hearings - *all you need to know to be confident, effective and informed*
- ◆ Managing challenging behaviour
- ◆ Minute taking for adoption and fostering panels
- ◆ Moving children onto permanent placement
- ◆ Panel training for adoption and fostering panels
- ◆ Placing black and minority ethnic (BME) children
- ◆ Protecting children in family placement
- ◆ Reviewing foster carers: roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Report writing for courts and children's hearings
- ◆ Social media training

- ◆ The Child Adoption Permanence Report (CAPR)
- ◆ The role of the supervising social worker
- ◆ Together or apart – *assessing and planning for the permanent placement of siblings*

AFA Scotland offers a range of direct support to agencies and practitioners within the social work, legal and medical professions, and to individuals directly involved in adoption and fostering. This includes training, workshops, seminars, consultancy, legal advice, independent chairing of meetings and panels, placement co-ordination, disruption meetings and service and case reviews.

Specialist postgraduate course

Securing Children's Futures: *Good Practice in Permanence Planning and Family Placement*

This highly acclaimed post qualifying course validated by Strathclyde University is aimed at social workers and managers in family placement and children and families' teams, as well as other specialist settings across the statutory, voluntary and independent sector.

It provides participants with the opportunity to study aspects of family placement and permanence work in considerable depth and to greatly enhance their knowledge and expertise in this critical area of work.

Applicants will require the support of their employer to attend as well as validate their work. It is imperative that sponsoring agencies ensure their nominated students have the motivation, capacity and commitment to complete the course.

The course is at MSc Level 11 and attracts an award of 60 credits (postgraduate certificate) which can be taken forward to further study and may contribute towards the achievement of a qualification at MSc level. There are 3 modules to the course, each one taught over 3 consecutive days.

Adoption and fostering practice sessions

A consultant is provided for a day to explore 3 cases relating to adoption, fostering or kinship care issues. They will meet with the child's social worker, a member of the family placement team as well as the carer/adopter. This meeting will take place within the agency. The purpose of the consultation will be to look at progressing permanence plans for a child, exploring issues of contact, placement of siblings, routes to permanence, difficulties in placement as well as any other child care planning dilemmas. The agency will provide the consultant with the key aims for the session as well as background information. The consultation will normally last for 90 minutes after which a letter will be sent to the agency recommending a way forward.

Fees

| <u>Workshops</u> | <u>1-day</u> | <u>2-day</u> |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Member: | £110.00 | £195.00 |
| Non-Member: | £150.00 | £235.00 |
| Individual: | £ 90.00 | £175.00 |

| <u>Conference</u> | | <u>Seminar</u> | |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Member: | £190.00 | Member: | £110.00 |
| Non-Member: | £230.00 | Non-Member: | £150.00 |
| Individual: | £170.00 | Individual: | £ 90.00 |

Panel chair/member (new rates)

Rate: £500.00

Commissioned training and consultancy

Per day £750.00

Specialist postgraduate course

Course £2200.00

Adoption and fostering practice sessions

Per day £750.00

(all prices are excluding VAT)

The Staff Team

Robin Duncan Executive Director, **Margaret Grant** Research Associate, **Ravinder Kaur** Trainer/Consultant, **Rhona Pollock** Legal Consultant, **Brenda Reilly** Business Support & Finance Manager, **Jane Steele** Trainer/Consultant, **Alison Wilson** Child Placement Consultant