

Foster Care Association of Victoria: Children's Court of Victoria

Seeking your experiences and feedback about the Children's Court in Victoria

The Foster Care Association of Victoria is working in conjunction with the Victorian Law Reform Commission to look at the existing practices within the Children's Court of Victoria and how services might be improved to achieve better outcomes and experiences for children and their families. The Victorian Law Reform Commission has been requested by the Attorney-General, Rob Hulls to submit a completed report by 30 June 2010 detailing both its findings and recommendations for change.

The commission is now seeking the views of people who have had direct contact with the Children's Court. This might be as a foster carer of a young person who has been at Court or as a kinship carer looking after a grandchild, brother, sister or niece/nephew. This may be from a young person themselves. How did the experience of going to court make you feel? What were the outcomes for you and your family? What could be done better?

To help gather this feedback, FCAV is inviting carers to attend a series of focus groups to look at issues such as:

- What have your experiences of the Children's Court been?
- What did you know about the case before going to court?
- Did the outcome reached differ from what you expected?
- How did the lawyers conduct themselves?
- Did you understand all that was going on?
- How were the facilities at court?
- Have you attended Children's Court in another location apart from Little Lonsdale Street (for example Moorabbin)? Did this experience differ?
- What could be done better?
- Anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the Children's Court or Child Protection services?

The focus groups to be hosted by the Foster Care Association of Victoria are scheduled for:

- Thursday 25th February, 2010 from 10.30 to 12.00pm;
- Thursday 25th February, 2010 from 5.30pm to 7.00pm;
- Wednesday 10th March, 2010 from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm;

The sessions will be conducted at the FCAV office at 48 High St, Northcote and refreshments will be available. Each group will be limited to 8 places, so please ensure you RSVP quickly if you wish to attend one of these sessions.

Alternatively your responses/feedback on any or all of the topics listed above can be sent directly to FCAV by close of business on Friday 19th March via:

Email: To admin@fcav.org.au, quoting 'Children's Court Project' in the subject line;

Telephone: Call 9489 9770 & someone in the office will record your feedback;

Fax: Fax through your feedback to 9489 9119;

Letter: c/- Foster Care Association of Victoria, 48 High St, Northcote, 3770.

Many thanks for taking part in this important project. The staff and Board at the Foster Care Association of Victoria will continue to work hard to ensure you are valued and your voices are heard.