



**FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA  
(DIVISION 2)**

**NOTICE**

**NCC3896/2023**

PLEASE NOTE that pursuant to the orders of 7 March 2024 a copy of this report is provided to each party or the party's lawyer and to any Independent Children's Lawyer in the proceedings

AND FURTHER, unless a party objects in writing within 14 days of the date of release, copies of the Report may be provided to the following if the Court is requested to do so for a purpose related to the care, welfare or development of the child/ren to whom these proceedings relate:

- (a) a Children's Court;
- (b) a child protection authority;
- (c) a State or Territory legal aid authority; and
- (d) a convener of any legal dispute resolution conference.

AND unless otherwise ordered, no person shall release the Report, or provide access to the Report to any other person.



JUDICIAL

REGISTRAR FURNER

Date: 7 March 2024

**NOTICE TO PERSON RECEIVING COPIES OF THIS REPORT**

1. At the date on which a copy of the Report is provided to any of those identified above, it may not have been admitted into evidence and may be untested or if admitted would only form one part of the evidence in the proceedings.
2. Section 121 of the *Family Law Act 1975* provides that it is an offence punishable by imprisonment for up to one year to publish or disseminate to the public any account of family law proceedings which identifies the parties, witnesses or other people concerned with the proceedings, unless specifically authorised by the Court.
3. Any party requiring the Court Child Expert for cross-examination provide at least 14 days' notice in writing to the Court Child Expert and each party of the proceeding.



IN THE MATTER OF

**STEPHEN COOKE**

(Applicant)

**&**

**HEATHER COOKE**

(Respondent)

IN THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA

(DIVISION 2) AT NEWCASTLE

No: NCC3896/2023

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**CHILD IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**29 February 2024**

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**Release of Child Impact Assessment:**

- Release to all parties
- Consider alternate release options

Drew Cowen

Consultant Psychologist

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## CHILD IMPACT ASSESSMENT

*The Child Impact Assessment provides to the parties and the Court preliminary expert advice about the needs and experiences of children. Any views expressed or professional recommendations made by the Single Expert are, of necessity, limited. Attention is drawn to s121 of the Family Law Act of 1975 which, with certain exceptions, makes it an offence to publish or disseminate to the public, or a section of the public, any part of proceedings under the Act that identifies a party.*

This report is prepared on that basis and pursuant to s6 rule 7.03 of the *Family Law Act 1975*.

**Information for this Child Impact Assessment Report has been obtained from the following:**

- Joint Letter of Instruction dated 14 February 2024

### **Court Orders:**

- 29 January 2024

### **Reports:**

- Nil

### **Material from the Applicant Father:**

- Initiating Application filed 5 December 2023
- Affidavit filed 5 December 2023
- Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk filed 5 December 2023

### **Material from the Respondent Mother:**

- Response to Initiating Application filed 5 February 2024
- Affidavit filed 5 February 2024
- Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk filed 5 February 2024

### **Interviews at The Base, Newcastle West, 22 January 2024**

- Stephen Cooke
- Heather Cooke
- Christian Cooke
- Joshua Cooke

### **Observations at The Base, Newcastle West, 22 January 2024**

- Heather Cooke with Christian and Joshua
- Stephen Cooke with Christian and Joshua

### **Limitations to the Report:**

- There are no significant limitations to this report.

### **Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Proceedings:**

1. On 29 January 2024 Judicial Registrar Furner *made Interim Court Orders by Consent inter alia that the parents and children would consult with a single expert and that expert would prepare a report.*
2. On 14 February 2024 a joint letter of instruction was prepared and signed by the legal representatives for each parent. The letter requested a Child Impact Assessment (CIA) Report be prepared and referred to Court Orders dated 29 January 2024. The parties were subsequently informed that a CIA Report would be prepared and not the SER ordered by Judicial Registrar Furner on 29 January 2024.

## **BACKGROUND TO THE DISPUTE**

3. This report concerns the children Christian Cooke, born 20 August 2014 (and now aged nine years and six months, and Joshua Cooke, born 27 January 2017 and now aged seven years and one month).
4. The father was born and raised in Canada. The mother in Australia. They met and commenced a relationship in August 2011 when the mother was undertaking a medical fellowship in Canada. They commenced living together in 2011 according to the father and 2012 according to the mother, married in Canada on 26 September 2014 and moved to Australia in July 2015. The father obtained Australian Residency in October 2015 and became an Australian Citizen in 2022.
5. The parents separated on 17 November 2023 and it is common ground that the relationship had been under substantial strain in the months prior. On 2 December 2023 the mother unilaterally removed the children and relocated to premises she had rented nearby.
6. The children had telephone communication with the father and the mother reports that the children spent time with the father on 8 December 2023 and 9 December 2023. On 17 December 2023 agreement was reached that the children would spend week about with each parent during the summer school holiday period which had just began.
7. On 12 January 2024 the parents undertook mediation and reached an interim agreement that during term the children would live predominantly with the mother and spend time with the father on alternative weekends from after school Thursday to before school Monday and in the off week from after school Thursday to before school Friday.

## **BRIEF MENTION OF KEY ISSUES IN DISPUTE**

### **Children's Primary Carer / Attachment Figure**

8. It is common ground that since the parents have been in Australia the mother has been in full time employment and the father has not undertaken any paid work. The father asserts that he has been the primary carer of the children and is their primary attachment figure. The mother asserts that while the father has spent the majority of time in the household with the children he has struggled to meet the children's physical and emotional needs and that the mother is the children's primary attachment figure.

### **Father's Alcohol Use**

9. The mother reports that the parents would share a bottle of wine most nights with the father consuming the majority of that bottle. The mother advised she ceased drinking alcohol mid week in July 2023 but the father continued. The mother also reports that the father would consume five bottles / cans of beer or mixed alcohol every night and also consume one bottle of gin every week. The mother reports that she rarely drank to excess and estimates she would consume around 4 standard drinks per day (and less since July 2023) and that the father would consume around 13 standard drinks per day.

### **Parenting Capacity**

10. It is common ground that the parents have very different parenting styles. They each report that throughout their relationship they invested a lot of time trying to change the other parent's parenting attitude and behaviour and were unsuccessful in doing so. They are now each reporting concerns with various aspects of the other's parenting and particularly in relation to how best support Christian's Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

11. There are cross allegations that each parent has exposed the children to selective and at times inaccurate details of the adult conflict in order to inappropriately draw the children to themselves and / or away from the other parent. Both parents acknowledge at times using the children, and particularly Christian, as a messenger to the other parent. For example the father asserts that the mother has a picture of the father crying on her caller identification and the mother asserts that the father has told the children that the mother has taken all of the money and he has nowhere to live and cannot afford to live.
12. It is common ground that the parents' co-parenting communication is currently extremely poor. They both assert that they do not trust the other and that they actively avoid contact. On the day of the assessment the mother had arranged for the maternal grandmother to come from the Central Coast to care for the children for three hours and bring them in for their scheduled appointment so as to avoid the children waiting around for 90 minutes. The father had anticipated that he would care for the children while the mother was being interviewed. It is noteworthy that neither parent had initiated any communication regarding their respective intentions.

### **Family Violence**

13. In his Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk filed 5 December 2023 the father reported that resulting from the mother's behaviour he had experienced emotional / psychological abuse, financial abuse, threatening comments and exposure to family violence, that Joshua and Christian had experienced emotional / psychological abuse and that Christian had experienced physical abuse.
14. The father reports that the mother is 'mean and short tempered' and that on 6 September 2023 the mother was putting Christian to bed and slapped him across the face, and that on 18 November 2023 the mother struck Christian across the face whilst in the matrimonial bedroom watching a movie. The father asserts that the mother 'uses love as a weapon' and would tell the children she did not love them or did not love them as much as another family member, to manipulate them into doing what she wanted them to do.
15. The mother acknowledges slapping Christian on 6 September 2023 and appears to assert that she had intended to slap him elsewhere but caught this jaw when he moved. She denies slapping Christian on 18 November 2023. She denies using love as a weapon.
16. In her Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk sealed 5 February 2024 the mother reported that resulting from the father's behaviour she had experienced physical abuse, emotional / psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, threatening comments and exposure to family violence and that both Christian and Joshua had experienced emotional / psychological abuse and exposure to family violence.
17. The mother reported that the father's chronic daily excessive alcohol use put the children at risk as the father was unable to adequately care for them. The mother asserts that the father repeatedly harassed the mother for sexual contact despite the mother repeatedly requesting that he leave her alone. The mother asserts that the father was unable or unwilling to enact appropriate boundaries and in his care the children had excessive and uncensored access to inappropriate online content.

### **Mental Health of the parents**

18. The father raises concerns that the mother may have a personality disorder and that this is exacerbated by stress and alcohol use. He suggested that her estrangement from the maternal grandfather prior to his death in mid 2023 had somehow resulted in the mother then including the father in her long term general negative view about men. He also advised that in mid 2023 the maternal grandmother informed him that the mother had had an eating disorder while studying medicine in Queensland.

19. The mother raises concerns about the father's psychological health and functioning including chronic paranoia. She reported that the father's behaviour can often be impulsive, irrational, controlling, and abusive. She gave an example that when the mother left the matrimonial home with the children, the father responded by immediately going to the pharmacist and obtaining Christian's Ritalin to prevent the mother from being able to do so.
20. The mother reports that in June 2023 the father was prescribed anti depressant medication but refused to take that medication. The mother also reports that the father was diagnosed with anxiety and prescribed medication but refused to take that medication. She proposed that the father obtain a full psychological assessment and be required to follow his treating medical provider's recommendations in terms of treatment and medication.
21. The father reports that he consulted his general practitioner in mid 2023 due to situational stress with a view to obtaining support with sleeping and eating. He was prescribed medication (but could not recall details), filled the script but did not take the medication because the issues had resolved. The father advised that in September 2023 he was diagnosed with ADHD (unsure what type) by psychiatrist, Dr Suraiya Moisey. He was prescribed Vyvanse (20mg) and dexamphetamine (5mg) which he continues to take and finds beneficial.

### **Parenting Arrangements**

22. In his initiating application the father did not make specific proposals on a final basis and proposed that on an interim basis the children live predominantly with him and spend time with the mother on alternative weekends from after school Friday to 5.00pm Sunday. During the assessment the father indicated his preference for the children to live predominantly with him and if this was not possible then in an equal time shared care parenting arrangement.
23. In her Response to Final Orders the mother proposed that on a final basis the children live predominantly with her and spend time with the father during school term on alternative weekends from after school Friday to 5.00pm Sunday and for half of each school holiday period. At interview the mother proposed reducing the current interim parenting arrangements so that the children spent time with the father during school term on alternative weekends from after school Thursday to 5.00pm Sunday (rather than the current before school Monday) and in the following week from after school Thursday to before school Friday and for half of each school holiday period.

### **ADULTS**

#### **Stephen Cooke (Applicant Father)**

24. The father presented as somewhat anxious. He acknowledged feeling stressed. He was a poor historian. He referred many times to what the mother had done to him and appeared to see himself as a victim. He appeared quite concerned about what might happen to him and was often quite defensive. It appeared difficult for him to remain on topic and on several occasions, he abruptly changed topics and needed to be reminded what the original topic or question was.
25. The father spoke very lovingly and positively about both children. He described their different personalities and the challenges the parents had had especially with Christian's behaviour, ongoing battles with food, and struggles with emotional regulation. The father described taking the children to various appointments and activities they did together such as swimming at the ocean baths. He presented a letter from the pharmacist stating the father was the person who typically collected prescriptions for Christian. The father

advised he was stressed in mid 2023 because he was worried the mother would take the children and he would no longer be able to soften the impact of the mother's inappropriate behaviour.

26. The father described good relationships with his parents and two siblings who all live in Canada. He reported talking with his parents on a daily basis since the parents' separated and that his sister had recently visited him. When asked about friends he was clearly uncomfortable. He named two men and spoke about them as being couple friends and it being difficult now that the parents had separated. Similarly, he advised he had been close to the mother's sister's partner, and now felt betrayed as that man was now supporting the mother. He advised he was making an effort to maintain social connections.
27. The father described his interests as computing and running. He runs most days typically between 7 and 14 kilometres. He explained that the mother also enjoyed running and they would go together when the children were younger and in a stroller. He referred to having previously volunteered at the children's school canteen but was vague regarding this.
28. The father described his involvement with computers as part of his role as caring for the family and keeping them safe. He spoke in detail about the lengths he had gone to in setting up a system to ensure the children had access to reliable high speed internet 24 hours a day including establishment of various back up systems to guard against events such as temporary power outages (although why the children would require this is questionable). The father volunteered that he was highly skilled in computing and was confident of soon gaining paid work in the field and working from home.

#### **Heather Cooke (Respondent Mother)**

29. The mother presented as being well organised and calm. She spoke clearly and confidently and appeared to have a good recall of dates and details. She freely and calmly expressed her many concerns regarding the father including the concerns she has for the children resulting from the father's behaviour prior to separation and continuing.
30. The mother was critical of the father's lack of understanding of Christian's needs and ineffective parenting. She worried that unless the children received appropriate care including limit setting they would grow up without the ability to manage. She advised that she took the difficult decision to leave the relationship so that she could provide appropriate care and parenting for the children and so they would not be exposed to what she described as the father's relentless abusive behaviour.
31. The mother described the process the family had undertaken culminating in Christian being diagnosed in March 2022 with ADHD-combined and also a specific learning disability. She advised the family and school had focussed on assisting with literacy over the last 18 months and were now switching to numeracy.
32. When asked about slapping Christian, she spoke about being under considerable stress for an extended period due to the father's behaviour. The mother also volunteered that the period since separation has been very difficult for her and that at times she had felt 'angry' and she was aware that this was not a 'helpful place to parent from'. She spoke about arranging to see a counsellor which she intimated would commence shortly.
33. The mother works as a cardiologist. She advised since separation she has resigned from her teaching role at John Hunter Hospital and now has most Fridays free. She advised she now takes the children to school Mondays to Thursdays and that the children have recently started to attend Out Of School Hours (OOSH) at the school on Mondays to Wednesdays.

34. The mother stated she had a very supportive network of family and friends. She advised that her parents separated in 2011 when the mother was aged 32 years. The maternal grandfather died in mid 2023. The maternal grandmother lives on the Central Coast. The maternal aunt and her two daughters live near the maternal grandmother. She advised there are no issues with her family relationships.

## **THE CHILDREN**

### **Christian Cooke (born 20 August 2014 and now aged nine years and six months)**

35. Christian attends Merewether Heights Public School where he is in year four. Both parents reported him to be bright and as having some difficulties with literacy and numeracy. In March 2022 Christian was diagnosed with ADHD-combined and specific learning difficulties. He presented as a serious and somewhat sad child. During his interview, and in observations, he was very focussed on his own perspective and he struggled to remain on topic.
36. Christian spoke many times about the current parenting arrangements 'not being fair'. He explained in substantial detail how his father was the fun parent and his mother had more rules than the father. Christian liked having fewer rules and ideally no rules. He explained that his father said yes to almost everything and never – or hardly ever – said no whereas his mother said no 'nearly always'. When asked for examples he struggled and when he was pushed he advised whenever he wanted something like what to eat or to have something. When asked what his father might say no to, Christian advised that his father had told him he was not allowed to watch Five Nights at Freddy's (M classification movie based on an M classification video game within the horror genre). Christian volunteered he just searched and found it online and watched it anyway. His father knew this but he did not get into trouble.
37. Christian volunteered that neither of his parents believed him. He was quite upset that they both routinely believe Joshua and not Christian and this was particularly infuriating because 'he (Joshua) is the king of lies'. Christian returned to this theme several times throughout the interview.
38. Christian routinely circled his conversation back to things being unfair for him. He wanted to spend more time with his father because he was the fun parent but his mother would not agree to this. He spoke critically of his mother on numerous occasions as being 'unfair'. He didn't understand why his parents 'don't just end the war and get back together'. He blames his mother for this as his father wanted to reconcile but his mother did not. Christian was also unhappy that in his mother's household the children had chores to do, a checklist that they needed to refer to and follow, and restrictions on the quantity and quality of screen use. Christian explained 'I picture mum as an angry monster that won't let me be free. Not let me watch what I want on TV'.
39. Christian was upset that he did not get to go to Canada in the recent school holidays as had been planned. He was looking forward to seeing a particular show / convention and feared that it may never again occur, and he may have missed out forever. He advised that his mother had told him the children wouldn't be able to travel overseas 'until this whole thing was sorted out' and Christian was upset that this might never happen.
40. Christian was very aware that his father wanted 'equal time' and Christian spoke on several occasions about '7,7' but when questioned could not explain what that meant. Christian was less clear about what his mother wanted other than for the children to spend less time with the father than with the mother. Christian advised if he couldn't spend equal time with each parent he would prefer to live predominantly with the father 'because he always says yes to us'. Christian added that 'all dad cares about is not getting sued, paying money and going to gaol.'

41. Christian explained that before the parents separated the father 'got more time' because the mother was at work. He volunteered 'I don't really even know mum that well' and when asked to explain what he meant he advised 'when mum was home, mum was always hogging dad, telling him what to do'. Christian continued 'Dad has changed a lot. He finally got to be himself. Now he listens to Joshua and me more, plays with Joshua and me more, doesn't say no all the time'. It appears that Christian has accepted his father's view that prior to separation the mother had prevented the father from being the fun parent and now the father was free to be himself – the fun parent.
42. Christian was excited that soon the children would be getting pet rabbits. He explained that the children had never previously had any pets 'because of mum' and when asked to elaborate stated that 'mum always made the decisions. Dad never had control of his own body.' Christian explained that the mother would tell the father to get off the computer and spend more time with the mother and children. Christian again juxtaposed this with the father who 'always says yes to us'.

**Joshua Cooke (born 27 January 2017 and now aged seven years and one month)**

43. Joshua attends Merewether Heights Public School and has recently commenced year two. He was excited and chatty. He appears to be much more 'easy going' than Christian and interestingly was described by Christian as such. Joshua was described by both parents as strong academically. He was comfortable speaking about a range of topics and his vocabulary appeared well above age expected levels. Interestingly he referred to his parents equally on occasion as 'Heather' and 'Steve'. Joshua had two stud earrings. When asked he advised he got them just before separation. He said he had this idea one day and his mother said yes and his father said maybe so he got them.
44. Joshua knew that he would be speaking with me and knew what we would be speaking about. He volunteered that he felt 'pretty sad when they separated because it was not nice.' He said 'I hated it'. He explained that his parents separated because his father kept asking his mother for sex. He was unsure how he knew this but was confident each of his parents had told him some days apart. He explained that prior to separation the father had threatened to leave because he didn't get sex.
45. Joshua then immediately declared 'I would like 7 7 because (it is) not nice less with dad and more with mum'. He was very clear that there was more fun stuff when with the father. He later described going swimming in ocean baths, bike riding and roller blading. Joshua then volunteered that the father keeps all the children's toys at his house and that the mother gets frustrated about that. Joshua then stated that his mother 'banned (the maternal grandfather) and kicked him out of the house because of bad behaviour then a few months later he died.' He added that 'mum told me that his new wife is trying to take all the money.'
46. Joshua was asked if that was not possible and he had to spend more time with the one parent and less with the other, he found that difficult to answer. He initially said the father but when given a scenario of his mother living in the former matrimonial home, he changed to the mother and explained 'because that is where I have more toys'.
47. Joshua was asked about pets and advised that they have never had any but were planning to get two rabbits once they moved from the current rented premises which he thought would be in a few months. He described the colours the rabbits will be and what their names will be.
48. Joshua described his mother as having more rules. He struggled to provide details and when pushed described a system of starting with two chocolate stars and losing a star if behaviour was naughty.

49. When asked if there was anything he was scared about or worried about, Joshua immediately spoke about Five Nights at Freddy's. He said he had seen some trailers but not actually ever played the video game or watched the movie. Both parents and Joshua made reference to Christian being obsessed with this game and movie. Christian spoke about it in detail on several occasions. Joshua said he likes playing video games but also likes doing other things. Christian volunteered that as well as being the 'king of liars' Joshua was 'addicted to his ipad'.

**Observations:**

50. The children were observed with the mother before they were interviewed individually. They greeted her warmly after spending the morning with the maternal grandmother. They explored the various toys and equipment and then sat at a table to eat the lunch the mother had packed for them. The children interacted very comfortably with the mother and report writer. They each confidently expressed opinions different to each other and both adults. They did not appear anxious or upset in any way. On occasion the mother prompted the children to answer questions in a certain way or reminded them of things relevant to a question asked of them.
51. The children were observed with the father after they were interviewed individually. They greeted him warmly with hugs. The children were much more animated and excited with the father but this was likely due to being more familiar with the extended space and the various toys and equipment and not having to sit quietly to eat their lunch. The children appeared to prefer playing individually with the father or on their own and the father did a good job to address any minor grumbles and to modify activities so that each child could happily engage.
52. When prompted by the report writer that it was time to leave, both children wished to continue playing. The father allowed this briefly and when the report writer reminded the children that it was now time to leave, the father facilitated this and the children farewelled their father and comfortably joined their mother who was waiting nearby (but out of sight) and departed relaxed and happy.
53. It is noteworthy that despite the parents being in the same room neither spoke or acknowledged the other in any way.

**Evaluation and Recommendations**

54. The matrimonial household was characterised by tension which occasionally escalated. This increased considerably in mid 2023 and still further in late 2023 culminating in the mother unilaterally vacating with the children to premises she had rented nearby. The children initially spent two weeks with the mother with limited time with the father and then week about with each parent for the duration of the summer school holidays. Since school resumed eight weeks ago the children have spent nine nights each fortnight with the mother and five nights each fortnight with the father.
55. There are significant differences in the parenting philosophy and behaviour of each parent. The children view the mother as being strict with rules to follow and view the father as being the fun parent with few rules and who will generally allow them to do or have whatever they want. Contributing to this perception is the father continuing to reside in the matrimonial home where the majority of the children's toys are and where it is a familiar environment.
56. The children have been inappropriately exposed to details of the adult conflict prior to separation and following. This is extremely damaging to the children and robs them of the freedom and innocence of their youth. The views they hold about each parent have clearly been influenced by the (selective) material they have been exposed to.

57. Nine-year-old Christian is currently very self-centred. It is likely that the turmoil of his family situation has intensified his need for attention and validation, often at the expense of others. It is likely that Christian's ADHD symptoms exacerbate his difficulty in regulating his emotions resulting in impulsive and self-focused behaviour. He appears to be struggling to understand the emotional needs of those around him, as his own feelings of insecurity and confusion consume his attention. The combination of ADHD and the destabilizing effects of his parents' separation make it challenging for Christian to navigate his emotions and relationships, leaving him feeling overwhelmed with a sense of injustice and inequity.
58. Seven year old Joshua is a bright boy who is caught in the tumult of his parents' recent separation. This has left him feeling sad and uncertain. Joshua is struggling to comprehend the complexities of adult relationships. He has been burdened by selective information from each parent, both grappling with their own emotional turmoil and mental health challenges. Joshua's feels conflicted and is emotionally overwhelmed. Despite his intelligence, he struggles to reconcile conflicting narratives. The weight of his parents' struggles and the partial truths he has been exposed to weigh heavily on hm, leaving him craving 'fairness'.
59. There are serious allegations and concerns raised by each parent including cross allegations and denials of various forms of family violence. Given the nature of those allegations it would appear appropriate to have them considered in a comprehensive Single Expert Report. Such a report should have the benefit of consideration of a range of subpoenaed material from the children's school and health practitioners as well as from the parents' health practitioners.
60. The children are both clearly advocating for an equal time parenting arrangement. This is consistent with their age and developmental stage whereby they would consider half to be fair and anything other than half to be unfair. This juvenile understanding has been strengthened by the father inappropriately pushing his views onto the children. Given the level of inappropriate exposure the children have had (from both parents) their expressed views should be considered with substantial concern and seen in the broader context of the family circumstances in the months prior to separation as well as the months following separation.
61. The parental relationship is currently highly strained with very little trust. There is virtually no effective co-parenting communication occurring. It is recommended that both parents engage in an evidence based Parenting After Separation type program which specifically addresses high conflict families. Organisations providing such programs include The Relationspace, Relationships Australia and Family Relationships Online.
62. It is also recommended that each parent undertake an evidence based parenting program to assist them to support the children's current and future emotional needs and to promote the development of a healthy child / parent relationship. Programs such as 'Tuning Into kids' or 'Triple P – Positive Parenting Program' or 'Bringing Up Great Kids' are available online as well as in small group formats.
63. Similarly, it is recommended that the parents use a Parenting App (such as My family Wizard, WeParent, MyMob, or TalkingParents) for all communication (other than emergencies). In addition, the parents are encouraged to develop a 'communication protocol' to promote communication which is child focussed, future focussed and solution focussed. Some Parenting Apps contain templates for developing Communication Protocols and there are numerous other examples available online.
64. The current parenting arrangements include the children being in OOSH three afternoons each week while in the mother's care. The parents are encouraged to consider parenting arrangements which allow each child to spend at least some one to one time with each parent.

65. Joshua appears to enjoy the OOSH but Christian does not. The parents may consider variations to the current arrangements whereby the children (or possibly only Christian) spend time with the father rather than OOSH. If this was to occur, it should be used to support Christian's ADHD and Specific Learning Disability interventions as well as assisting him to develop interests which are not screen based.

Drew Cowen  
Consultant Psychologist

29 February 2024

