

Biographies of Speakers – ESRC International Seminar Series

Seminar 6:

Divorce and Separation New Models Of Professional Practice To Support Parents

Penny Mansfield CBE – Director One Plus One

Penny is a sociologist, specialising in qualitative research on marriage and couple relationships and on evidence-based practice and policy. She was the Principal Investigator of a study of the early years of marriage and the transition to parenthood (Mansfield & Collard, 1988)

Early intervention is a founding principle of OnePlusOne and she has devoted much of her career to formulating insights from research to create usable resources for practitioners, and more recently for the public; she developed the concept behind OneplusOne's innovative online relationship support services used by 1.25 million people yearly.

A frequent speaker at conferences, she contributes to both print and broadcast media, has authored numerous publications and is a member of several research advisory groups and policy committees.

In 2013 she was awarded a CBE for her services to children and families.

David Marjoribanks – Relate

Dr David Marjoribanks is Senior Policy and Research Officer at Relate. He joined Relate in June 2014 and has since worked on several major policy and research reports, most recently as sole researcher and author of a report commissioned by the DWP to explore opportunities for joining-up pre- and post-separation support '*Breaking up is hard to do: Assisting families to navigate family relationship support before, during, and after separation*' (forthcoming). In addition to this he has edited Relate's recent essay collection (*What's love got to do with it? 14 ideas for putting relationships at the heart of policy*) including essays from politicians, think tanks and charities, and has co-authored other policy and research reports (*Relationships, Recession and Recovery: The role of relationships in generating social recovery* and *The Best Medicine: The importance of relationships for health and wellbeing*) as well as leading on the development of a strategy to measure outcomes in young people's counselling across Relate's Young People's Counselling services. Prior to joining Relate, he was the researcher for family policy at the Centre for Social Justice, focusing on support for people to form and maintain healthy relationships over the life course, including relationship education for young people, relationship support around key transitions, help for separated/separating parents, and interventions for complex families. Before this, David was an Associate Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Kent, where he also completed his PhD. He also has an MA in Political Philosophy and BA in Politics, both from the University of York.

Professor Lawrie Moloney Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne

Professor Lawrie Moloney is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Institute of Family Studies. Before joining the Institute, he spent 24 years in the university sector, including ten years as Director of the Department of Counselling and Psychological Health at La Trobe University. Prior to that, Lawrie was a Director of the Family Court Counselling Service, a position he took up after working as a mental health psychologist in both Scotland and Australia. He was Editor in Chief of the Journal of Family Studies between 2003 and 2014 and has published more than 250 articles, editorials, chapters and monographs. In addition to more formal research publications, Lawrie has written on clinical and social issues linked to parents' and children's encounters with the family law system. With Dr Jenn McIntosh, he was Co-Director of "Children in Focus", a clinical and research-based program that introduced child focused and child inclusive forms of mediation to Australia. Lawrie has qualifications as a family mediator and family therapist.

Chris Sherwood – CEO Relate

Chris joined Relate in 2012 as Director of Policy, Communications and Digital Services. Since joining the organisation he has been instrumental in devising the 2015-18 Corporate Strategy, developing our digital services, and growing our influencing and campaigning voice. Chris was appointed as CEO in July 2015.

Chris joined Relate from Scope where he was the Director of Innovation and Development. He was previously a Senior Development Manager at Nesta where he led their work on Co-production, People Powered Health and Ageing.

Chris has over ten years' experience of working in the voluntary sector and prior to this he worked in Westminster and local government. His career interest to date has been on policy, innovation and service improvement in welfare to work, family support and adult social care.

Chris holds a degree in History and Society from Exeter University.

Christine Skinner, University of York

Dr Christine Skinner is a Reader in Social Policy at the University of York. She has 15 years of experience as a social policy academic and one of her areas of expertise is separated parents' obligations to their children. Notably, she was a key member of the team that produced the first path-breaking national survey of separated fathers in 1999. She was also an academic member of the consortium advising on the development of the first dedicated national survey of separated parents (mothers and fathers) in the UK in 2008. She has worked extensively on child support policy and comparing different systems across countries.

Christine has led, advised and directed influential research studies at national, and international levels and is highly regarded in her field attracting commissions from a number of prestigious organisations including; the Economic Social Research Council, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Nuffield Foundation, and Gingerbread. On many occasions she has acted as an expert policy advisor on government funded research projects and

advised the Government's Work and Pensions Select Committee inquiry into child support policy and the Coalition Government's 'Family Support Services Expert Steering Group' that developed the 'Help and Support for Separated Families' initiative..

Currently, Christine is directing a series of international research seminars funded by the ESRC '*Child Maintenance: International Perspectives And Policy Challenges*' (ESRC Award Ref: ES/L000792/1) and conducting a co-production of knowledge project with Resolution exploring their 'Family Matters' service. This project is also funded by the ESRC under their Impact Acceleration Account. Christine is also the co-founder and co-director of the International Network of Child Support Scholars (<http://incss.org/>)

Emeritus Professor Janet Walker OBE, FAcSS, FRSA

Professor Janet Walker is Emeritus Professor of Family Policy in the Institute of Health and Society (IHS) at Newcastle University. Janet studied social sciences and has practised as a probation officer, family therapist and family mediator. Between 1985 and 2005 she was the director of a multidisciplinary research centre at Newcastle University, leading over 50 studies in the fields of marriage, divorce, mediation, family law reform, parenting, policing, criminal justice and services for children. Between 2005 and 2010 Janet was the Strategic Research Adviser in IHS. Since then she has participated in various research and consultancy activities and continued to publish widely.

Janet was an expert consultant on family mediation to the Council of Europe and has provided advice on divorce reform to governments in several countries. She has held a number of public appointments, including as a member of the local parole board at HMP Durham, as non-executive Director and Vice-Chair of Newcastle City NHS Trust, and as a member and Deputy Chair of the Social Security Advisory Committee, Department for Work and Pensions. In 2014 she was a member of the Ministry of Justice Mediation Task Force, and in November 2014 was appointed by the Minister of Justice and Civil Liberties as Co-Chair of the Voice of the Child Dispute Resolution Advisory Group. The report of the Group was published by the MoJ in March 2015. She has been a trustee of several charities and, currently, is a trustee of Relate and Safe Families for Children, and a Board member of the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family in Calgary.