



RESEARCH DIGEST

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Research studies and articles based on research

Barnes C, Corker M, Cunningham-Burley S, Davis J, Priestley M, Shakespeare T and Watson N (2000) [Lives of disabled children ESRC Research Programme on Children 5 - 16 : Growing into the 21st Century](#)

Children describe their own experiences of disability

Beckett, C (2001) 'The wait gets longer – An analysis of recent information on court delays' *Adoption and Fostering*

An analysis of increasing delay in care proceedings from 1993-1999.

Bourton, A and McCausland, J (2001) 'A service for children and a service for the courts: The contribution of guardians ad litem in public law proceedings' *Adoption and Fostering* 25/3

An article based on *Guarding Children's Interests: the contribution of Guardians ad Litem in court proceedings* (2000) McCausland Children's Society.

Bretherton, H (2002) "Because its me the decision are about" – Children's experience of private law proceedings' *Family Law* (450-457)

Article based on findings from *Families in Conflict*" (2001) Buchanan A et al, suggesting that many of the children in the study did not feel involved through the welfare report in decisions being made about their future. They wanted the opportunity for greater participation.

Buchanan A, Bream V (2001) "Do some separated parents who cannot agree arrangements for their children need a more therapeutic rather than forensic service?" *Child and Family Law Quarterly* 13/353-360

Based on findings from *Families in Conflict*" (2001) Buchanan A et al, arguing that some children who are subject to private law proceedings are 'children in need' and that they and their parents would benefit from a therapeutic rather than an investigative interventions.

Butler I, Douglas G, Fincham F, Murch M, Robinson M and Scalon L (2000) [Children's perspectives and experiences of divorce ESRC Research Programme on Children 5 - 16 : Growing into the 21st Century](#)

One of the first studies in which children themselves spoke about their experience of their parents' divorce.

Joshi H, Wiggins D and Clarke L (2000) [*The changing home: outcomes for children*](#)
[ESRC Research Programme on Children 5 - 16 : Growing into the 21st Century](#)

The research aimed to quantify the changes in children's lives when they no longer lived with both parents following separation.

Mullender A, Kelly L, Hague G, Malos E and Imam U (2000) [*Children's needs, coping strategies and understanding of woman abuse*](#)
[ESRC Research Programme on Children 5 - 16 : Growing into the 21st Century](#)

"The research set out to discover how children and young people understand domestic violence and how those who have lived with it cope with, and make sense of, their experiences."

Neale B, Smart C (2001) *Good to Talk: Conversations with Children after Divorce*
London Young Voice

This booklet reports and considers the implications of a study (funded by Nuffield) based on interviews with 52 children and young people who had experienced parental separation at least three years previously. The authors argue that:

- children want to be included in decision making in families following separation and that this is crucial to their sense of well-being
- most children do not want to choose the arrangements themselves
- children have the capacity to compromise and recognise the needs of others
- the concept of "family citizenship" recognises the benefits of children's participation in family decisions which affect them
- where children are denigrated, marginalized or physically abused in their families they will tend to "want to choose" what happens
- professional support for children who are excluded from family decisions tends to be limited and show little sensitivity to the child's perspective
- there is little scope for these children to have a confidential space, for them to use an advocate or for them to choose whether or not they participate.

Neal B and Wade A (2000) *Parent Problems! Children's views on life when parents split up* East Moseley Young Voice

These are the voices of children (117) who took part in [Nuffield](#) and ESRC funded research at least three years after their parents separated. They tell us about their different families, their parents, how they felt, how they were involved (or not).

Sinclair R and Bullock R (2002) [*Learning from Past Experience: A Review of Serious Case Reviews*](#) Department of Health

The report analyses 40 serious case reviews.

- 18% of children were on the CPR and 23% had been the subject of a s47 inquiry. 30% were unknown to the Social Services Department at the time of the incident. In only 15% of cases had there been enduring concern about risks of harm to the child.
- Several common features were found amongst the children and their families; young age of children; history of emotional neglect and poor care; parents mental health problems; domestic violence. But these were not universal.
- Knowledge of common background factors had limited predictive value when applied to the general population of vulnerable children. (There would be too many false positives.) Only one of the cases was seen as highly predictable and three as highly preventable.
- Action recommended in the reviews included more conclusive child protection conferences, stronger inter-agency links, clearer definitions of culturally acceptable behaviour.
- The study suggested improvements in child care services – good epidemiological and clinical evidence on factors associated with children suffering significant harm – evidence on the implementation of effective services – the development of practice tools to improve decision making and consistency.

Smart C and Wade A (2000) [*New childhoods: children and co-parenting after divorce*](#)

[ESRC Research Programme on Children 5 - 16 : Growing into the 21st Century](#)

The aim of the study was to discover how children experienced growing up with two parents playing a major role in their lives following divorce. 65 children were interviewed.

Trinder, L; Beck, M; Connolly, J (2002) *Making Contact: How parents and children negotiate and experience contact after divorce* York JRF

Related JFR Findings [*Children's and parents' experience of contact after divorce*](#)

57 children and young people, 48 resident parents and 35 contact parents were interviewed from 61 families about how contact is negotiated, how it is experienced and the factors which shape it. Some parents and children had generally negative experience of legal proceedings and the Family Court Welfare Service. The “no order principle” appeared to be generally working well but there was a suggestion that interventions for families where contact is conflicted require rethinking.

Wade A and Smart C (2002) *Facing Family Change; Children's circumstances, strategies and resources* York JRF

Related JFR Findings [*How primary school children cope with family change*](#)

Children give their views on their experience of parental separation and their preferred means of support. The children were aged 6 to 7 and 9 to 10. 47 children were interviewed. The study highlights the diversity of family arrangements and the children's informal coping strategies. 7 children spoke of court proceedings but none of seeing a Family Court Welfare Officer (FCWO). A different sample of 8 children were recruited who had had direct

experience of targeted support. Two had seen a FCWO. They reported not understanding the purpose of the meeting and not being able to participate fully.