

New Model Conferences

Final Evaluation Report

APPENDICES

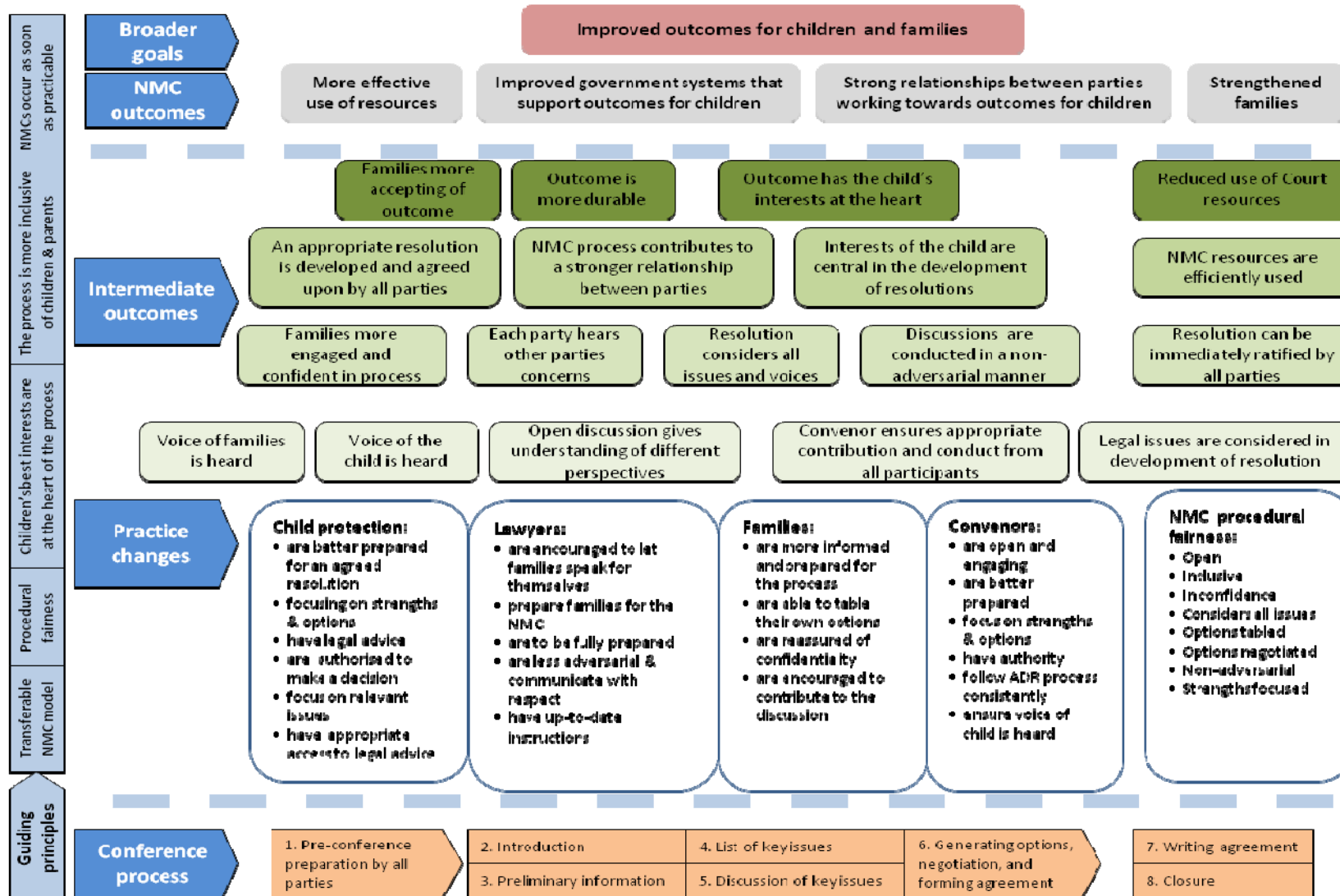
For the Courts and Tribunal Unit, Department of Justice

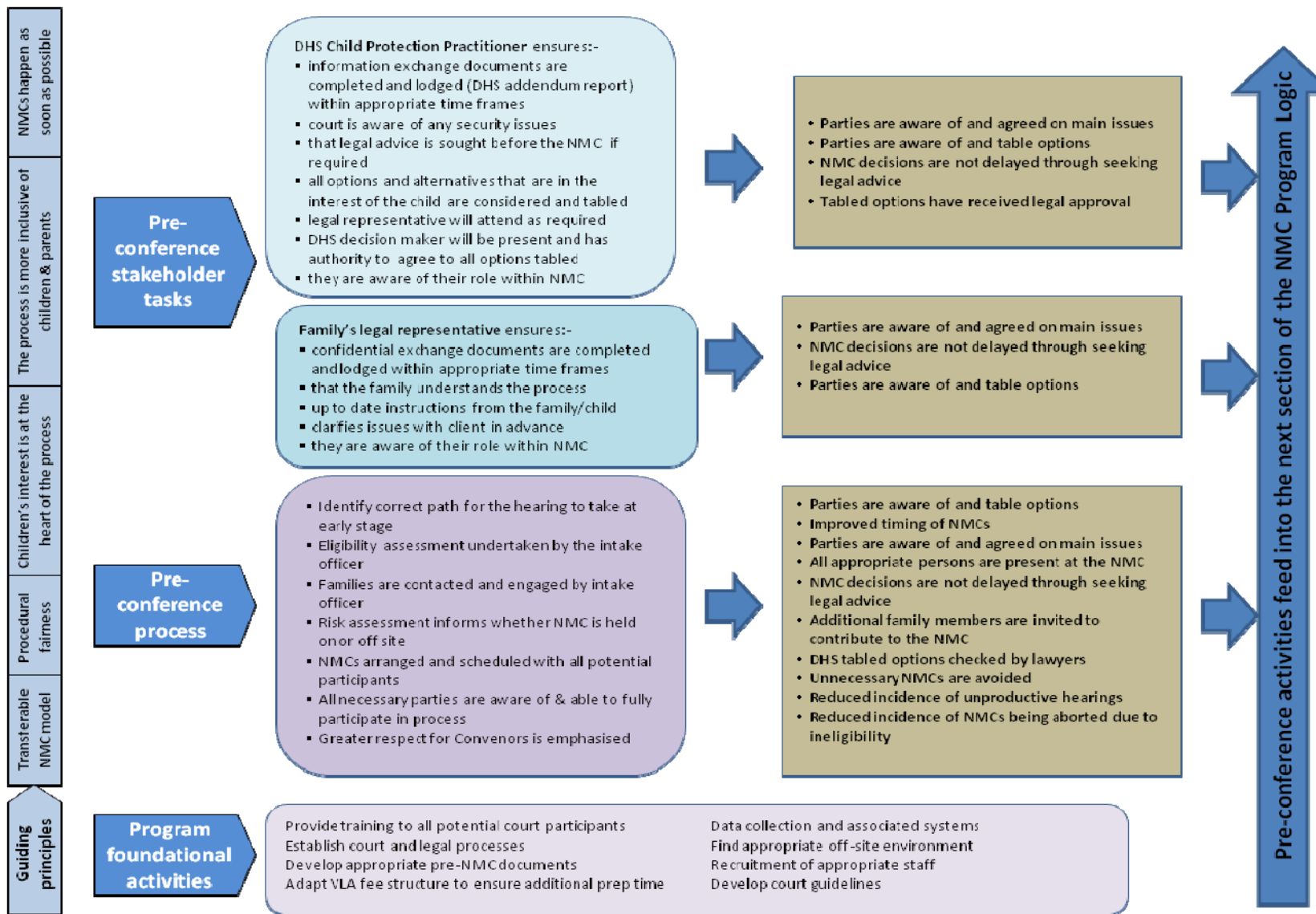
February 2012







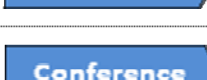


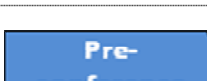
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Appendix One: Program Logic





The following table maps out the program logic structure and pre-conference processes that are presented in the visual presentation of the program logic in Appendix One.

	<p>These goal(s) focus on the highest achievements of a program—the ultimate rationale for the program and what all outcomes are contributing towards</p>
	<p>These refer to those outcomes we expect the program to have considerable contribution towards (although not the only factor involved)</p>
	<p>This level highlights the intermediate outcomes that take the program from its activities (below) to its overarching outcomes and broader goals (above)</p>
	<p>What we expect that people—participants and stakeholders—will be doing differently as a result of their participation in the process</p>
	<p>A summary of the eight-step process of the NMC model</p>
	<p>The tasks that key participants undertake to prepare for the NMCs—including lawyers, child protection practitioners, the Court, DHS, and families</p>
	<p>The process that is undertaken to organise, prepare, run and hold the NMCs</p>
	<p>The activities that were undertaken to establish the foundation for the project to commence and be implemented</p>

Appendix Two: Key evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions	Sub-evaluation questions
1. What was the impact of preparation processes on the delivery of the NMCs?	<p>1.1. To what extent were NMC stakeholders able to undertake required preparation?</p> <p>1.2. To what extent did the preparation for the NMCs contribute to improved efficiency?</p> <p>1.3. To what extent did the preparation processes adequately equip participants to engage in NMCs?</p>
2. To what extent did the parties shift into the new roles required within the NMCs?	<p>2.1. To what extent did the convenor ensure adherence to the principles and processes of the NMCs?</p> <p>2.2. What was the extent of cultural shift in the conduct of participants?</p> <p>2.3. What was the degree of family engagement and contribution?</p> <p>2.4. To what extent do parties feel the atmosphere was non-adversarial?</p>
3. To what extent was procedural fairness achieved?	<p>3.1. To what extent did the participants feel there was appropriate time allowed for the NMCs?</p> <p>3.2. To what extent did the families feel able and encouraged to participate?</p> <p>3.3. To what extent did the families feel assured of confidentiality?</p> <p>3.4. To what extent did the participants feel there was appropriate focus on the child?</p> <p>3.5. To what extent did the participants feel heard and involved in the process?</p> <p>3.6. To what extent did participants understand how outcomes were achieved?</p>
4. How effective were the NMCs at achieving accepted outcomes for parties?	<p>4.1. To what extent was there confidence that a durable outcome was achieved?</p> <p>4.2. Are there any identifiable factors that frequently assist in reaching a resolution?</p> <p>4.3. To what extent did the NMC process influence relationships between the family and Child Protection to be strengthened or maintained?</p> <p>4.4. Were there any other outcomes for families through their involvement in the NMCs?</p>
5. What was the impact of the NMCs on the efficiency of the Children's Court?	<p>5.1. What impact are the NMCs having in timeframes for resolution?</p> <p>5.2. What impact are the NMCs having on returns to Court (e.g. breaches, variations of orders or conditions)?</p>
6. What are the identified issues for expanding the program?	<p>6.1. Are there any identified barriers in providing metropolitan roll out of the NMCs?</p> <p>6.2. Are there any identified barriers in providing regional roll out of the NMCs?</p> <p>6.3. To what extent is the process appropriate for different cultural and linguistic groups?</p>

Appendix Three: Participation Information Sheet

Evaluation of New Model Conferences (NMCs) for the Children's Court of Victoria

— INFORMATION SHEET —

This sheet provides information about your participation in the research entitled *Monitoring and evaluation of New Model Conferences in the Children's Court*, conducted by Clear Horizon Consulting Pty Ltd. The Principal Researcher for this project is Dr Jess Dart from Clear Horizon. This information sheet explains the risks and benefits of you helping us with this research.

1. What is the research about?

The introduction of New Model Conferences (NMCs) in the Children's Court of Victoria aims to promote improved outcomes for children and families, achieve higher settlement rates and reduce the length of the court process in matters in the Family Division of the Children's Court. Clear Horizon Consulting has been asked by the Department of Justice and the Children's Court to assess whether the NMCs are providing an effective dispute resolution model for children and families. We are speaking to lawyers, court staff, DHS staff, and families to get their perspectives on the NMCs.

2. Why am I being asked to participate?

You are being asked to participate in this research because you have been involved in the NMCs and we are interested in what you have to say about it. This will help us to find out more about whether the NMCs are working and how to improve them in the future. Your details have been provided by the Conferences Unit as you have experienced the NMC process. You are under no obligation to participate in an interview or in this research in any way, your participation is entirely voluntary. If at any point you wish to withdraw your participation you are free to do so without any consequences.

3. What will happen if I participate?

As part of this research, we would like to speak with you either over the phone or face-to-face in a research interview. This will take approximately 30-40 minutes of your time. Participation in a focus group will take about an hour. To ensure you are comfortable with the issues outlined for discussion, we have provided an overview of the questions/topics to be covered before doing the interview.

Before the interview we will verbally run through the key elements of this information sheet with you, ask you to consent to the interview and to it being recorded. After we conduct the interview with you we transcribe the recording. This transcript is then analysed along with all the other interviews conducted and quote from your interview may be used in reporting processes.

Any information which could identify you will be removed from any aspect of your transcript used in the reporting process. Individual responses will be summarised and presented in a report that will be stored and used by the Department of Justice and the Children's Court. Individual names will not be mentioned in this report. This summary report may be made available to other government agencies and stakeholders. You are entitled to receive a copy of this report from the Department of Justice.

When using your words in our reports and presentations we will endeavour to ensure that you cannot be identified. However, due to the nature of the research, information that you give may be identifiable to others. You are more than welcome to check your transcript or any quotes we may want to use before we send out any documents or reports.

4. What will happen to the information?

We are committed to protecting your confidentiality in line with the Information Privacy Act 2000. We will take steps to ensure that no one will be able to identify you from the information you give us. We will manage the information you give us in a secure and confidential way. This means:

- We will not leave your name on any data we collect from you - we will use a code
- We will not use your name in our reports or when we present the research
- We will not discuss you in the other interviews we do or with the Children's Court
- We will not pass on your details to anyone else.

Any information you give to us will be stored in a secure location by Clear Horizon Pty Ltd for six (6) years and will then be destroyed. Clear Horizon will have no role in determining how the final report of the evaluation will be published and distributed. The final report will be provided to Department of Justice and the Children's Court who will publish and distribute as they determine appropriate. A copy of the final report will also be provided to the ethics committee.

The evaluation report will be subject to Department of Justice policies in terms of publication. The Executive Director of Courts and the President of the Children's Court are responsible for approval of the final report for general publication, including possible placement on the Children's Court website and distribution to evaluation participants.

5. What are the consequences of my participation?

By providing feedback on your involvement and experience with the NMCs, you will have input into the future of the model in Victoria. In evaluating the NMCs, we will be hoping to learn from the experiences of all stakeholders. In the event that you feel you have been negatively affected or distressed in any way by your involvement with the evaluation, all participants will have access to a confidential counselling service if required. Clear Horizon will facilitate access to these services should the need arise.

6. Where do I find out more information?

If you have any questions about the project or your involvement with it you can contact Clear Horizon or the Department of Justice via the contact details below.

If you have any queries or concerns about the project you may contact Paul Crossley from Clear Horizon:

Paul Crossley
Clear Horizon Consulting
129 Chestnut Street Richmond VIC3121
Tel: (03) 9425 7777
paul@clearhorizon.com.au

If you have any concerns or complaints about the project, you can contact the Secretary of the Department of Justice Research Ethics Committee:

Dept of Justice Human Research Ethics Committee,
Level 21, 121 Exhibition St.,
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: (03) 8684 1514

Appendix Four: Interview and focus group schedules

Semi-structured interview guides: legal representatives & DHS practitioners

Preparation

1. Can you talk me through the preparation processes you go through for the NMC?
 - What are the main differences from the old model?
 - What have been the positive/negative impacts for you?
 - How have these processes impacted on your ability to perform your role?
 - Are there any recurring barriers or problems?
2. Overall, do you have any ideas on how to improve the preparation phase?

Process

3. What are your views on the NMC process on the day?
 - Were participants aware of the main issues and options?
 - Was there adequate time allowed?
4. What was the atmosphere like in the room?
 - Did you feel it was a constructive environment?
 - Was the tone of the conversation positive/negative?
5. What are your views on the role of the convenor?
 - Were the conversations child focused?
 - Did the convenor have authority and appropriately intervened when required?
6. Did you feel that families were engaged?
 - Were families able to voice their issues and be heard?
 - Were families prepared and informed of the NMC process?
 - Were they given the opportunity and encouragement to participate?
7. Overall, what are the main differences in the NMC process compared to that of the DRC?

Outcomes

8. What are your thoughts on the outcomes achieved through the NMC process?
 - Do they have an appropriate focus on the child?
 - Impact on relationships between Child Protection practitioner and the family?
 - Do you think the process assisted in achieving agreement?
9. Of the cases you have participated in, were there any (case-related) common factors that led to successful outcomes or less successful outcomes?
10. Overall, how do the outcomes achieved in the NMC differ from those in the DRC?
11. Is there anything else you wish to add in relation to your views on the NMCs?

Semi-structured interview guides: convenors

Preparation

1. Can you talk me through the preparation processes you go through for the NMC?
 - What have been the positive/negative impacts for you?
 - How have these processes impacted on your ability to perform your role?
 - Are there any recurring barriers or problems?
2. Overall, do you have any ideas on how to improve the preparation phase?

Process

3. What are your views on the NMC process on the day?
 - Were participants aware of the main issues and options?
 - Was there adequate time allowed?
4. What was the atmosphere like in the room?
 - Did you feel it was a constructive environment?
 - Was the tone of the conversation positive/negative?
5. What was the most challenging aspect of the convenor role?
 - Do you feel participants adhered to the NMC principles?
 - Did you have to intervene as much as anticipated?
 - Do you think the authority of the convenor was respected by all parties?
6. Did you feel that families were engaged?
 - Were families prepared and informed of the NMC process?
 - Were they given opportunity and encouragement to participate?
 - Are they able to voice their issues and be heard?

Outcomes

7. What are your thoughts on the outcomes achieved through the NMC process?
 - Do they have an appropriate focus on the child?
 - Has there been any impact on relationships between child protection practitioners and families?
 - Do you think the process assisted in achieving agreement?
8. Of the cases you have participated in, were there any (case-related) common factors that led to successful outcomes or less successful outcomes?
9. Is there anything else you wish to add in relation to your views on the NMCs?

Semi-structured interview guides: Intake Officers

1. Can you talk me through the preparation processes you go through for the NMC?
 - What have been the positive/negative impacts for you?
 - What have been the main issues that you have encountered in your role?
 - Are there any recurring barriers or problems?
2. What have been the main strengths/challenges of the preparation phase?
 - Timely submission of complete preparatory documents?
 - Risk and eligibility assessment processes?
 - Any opportunities for improving the preparatory processes?
3. How did the parties respond to the NMC preparation and processes?
 - Which parties had the most problems submitting documents on time?
 - How did families respond to the new preparation phase?
 - How did legal practitioners and child protection practitioners respond to the new preparation phase?
4. What aspects of the preparation phase do you think could be improved?
 - Is there anything that you think needs to be amended before full roll-out of the NMCs?
5. What would assist you when parties are not following the procedure guidelines?
6. Can you tell me a bit about the other work that you do around NMCs?
 - Any issues/challenges encountered in this?
 - Any improvements?
7. Is there anything else you wish to add in relation to your views on the NMCs?

Focus group guides: ADR working group

1. Can you please introduce yourself and briefly explain your role as it relates to the NMCs?
2. At a strategic level, what have been the factors that have had an enabling impact on the NMCs?
3. At a strategic level, what have been the central challenges faced in the roll-out of the NMCs?
4. To what extent do you think the NMCs are moving towards achieving some of the intermediate goals set out in the Program Logic?
5. In what ways could the NMC process be improved for the wider metropolitan roll-out?
6. Is there anything else you wish to add in terms of your experience so far with the roll-out of the NMCs?

Focus group guides: Magistrates

1. Can you please introduce yourself?
2. What do you consider have been the benefits of the NMC process?
3. Are there any elements of the processes/procedures that you consider require amendment prior to full roll-out?
4. Do you have any views about the timing of referral for NMCs?
5. What has been your experience upon NMCs returning to Court (both where agreements have been reached and where agreements have not been reached)?
6. Is there anything else you wish to add in terms of your experience so far with the roll-out of the NMCs?

Appendix Five: Family Satisfaction Surveys

— New Model Conferences (NMCs)—

Family Satisfaction survey

We would like to ask you a few questions about your experience of the New Model Conferences (NMCs). Clear Horizon is a private company and we have been asked to give an independent evaluation of the NMCs to assess the experience of families and other participants, and to monitor if the NMC process has any effect on the longer term outcomes of the Children’s Court. Your responses to this survey will help us do this assessment and your contribution will help improve the NMC for others in the future.

This survey is anonymous and won’t be seen by anyone related to your case. Nobody in the court will see your responses. Only the independent evaluator will see them. The only information that we’d like to collect about the case is when it was held. This information cannot be used to identify you. **We ask that you do not discuss with us or mention any non-adjudicated offences – that is, any offences that the Court has not adjudicated on.**

Once completed please put it in the stamped, addressed envelope provided and mail it back to us. If you have any questions about this survey or would prefer to share your experiences with us over the phone, please contact Zoe Dawkins or Paul Crossley at Clear Horizon on (03) 9425 7777. You can also complete this survey on-line if you prefer. You can find the survey at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NMCs_family_survey

1. When did you participate in an NMC? (Please put month of the NMC or months if more than one)

2. Preparing for the New Model Conference (NMC)

Arriving at the NMC, did you feel that you...	Not enough	A little	Enough	Plenty
... had enough information on what to expect from the NMC process?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... have had the opportunity to tell your legal representative the issues that most concern you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... have had the opportunity to make suggestions about potential resolutions or options?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. During the New Model Conference (NMC)

During the NMC process, to what extent did you feel ...	Not at all	A little	Enough	A lot
... encouraged to participate in the process?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... heard throughout the process?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... that what was said in the room will remain confidential?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...that the process was fair and open?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regarding the other participants in the room, do you think that the ...	Not at all	A little	Enough	A lot
... convenor kept the conversation focused on the interests of the child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... convenor worked to keep the discussion non-adversarial and respectful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... other Parties focused on strengths and options?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... other Parties worked together toward a solution?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. After the New Model Conference (NMC)

After going through the process, do you think ...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Un-decided	Agree	Strongly agree
... that the agreements and resolutions are realistic & will be kept to by all parties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... your relationship with the Child Protection Practitioner has benefitted from this process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... the discussions in the process have helped you to look at things differently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... you feel more positive about the case than you did before the process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Do you have any other comments about your experience of the NMCs?

Contact details if you'd like to provide further feedback to us

We are also interested in hearing more about your experiences. If you would like to have a more in-depth discussion about your views and opinions of the New Model Conferences with the evaluator we can arrange to call you and discuss your views further over the phone or arrange a time and place for a face-to-face interview. These discussions will be in complete confidence and your privacy protected. Nobody related to the court process will be aware that you have volunteered for the interview and nobody related to the court process will have access to the information you provide.

If you would like to participate in an interview please provide your contact details below and we will call you back to discuss your views. Alternatively, you can contact Clear Horizon by telephone and we will arrange a time for an interview.

Do not write your contact details below unless you would like to participate in a short telephone interview about your experiences

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Best time to contact you: _____

Once you have completed the survey, please mail it to Clear Horizon using the stamped addressed envelope provided.

Thanks – your feedback is appreciated.

Clear Horizon Consulting
129 Chestnut St., Richmond VIC 3121
Phone: 03 9425 7777 admin@clearhorizon.com.au

Appendix Six: Data from Conferences Unit (Jan-Oct)

Intake data

Region	no.	%
Footscray	206	49.88%
Preston	207	50.12%
Grand Total	413	100.00%

Joint/ shuttle	no.	%
Joint	310	77.31%
shuttle	91	22.69%
Grand Total	401	100.00%

Venue	no.	%
Court	190	46.45%
RDM	219	53.55%
Grand Total	409	100.00%

Cancellations	no.	%
No	343	83.05%
Yes	70	16.95%
Grand Total	413	100.00%

Cancellations by region	no.	%
Footscray	206	100.00%
No	170	82.52%
Yes	36	17.48%
Preston	207	100.00%
No	173	83.57%
Yes	34	16.43%
Grand Total	413	100.00%

ATSI	no.	%
No	366	89.71%
Yes	42	10.29%
Grand Total	408	100.00%

ATSI by region	no.	%
Footscray	201	100.00%
No	195	97.01%
Yes	6	2.99%
Preston	207	100.00%
No	171	82.61%
Yes	36	17.39%
Grand Total	408	100.00%

EA: Eligibility assessment (mins)	no.	%
0	1	0.25%
10	5	1.25%
15	121	30.33%
20	194	48.62%
25	63	15.79%
30	6	1.50%
35	5	1.25%
45	4	1.00%
Grand Total	399	100.00%

RA: Risk assessment (hours)	no.	%
0.5 to 1	4	1.10%
1 to 1.5	11	3.01%
1.5 to 2	35	9.59%
2 to 2.5	222	60.82%
2.5 to 3	78	21.37%
3 to 3.5	10	2.74%
3.5 to 4	5	1.37%
Grand Total	365	100.00%

Total intake time (EA+RA+other)	no.	%
0 to 0.5	2	0.51%
0.5 to 1	8	2.06%
1 to 1.5	10	2.57%
1.5 to 2	5	1.29%
2 to 2.5	11	2.83%
2.5 to 3	54	13.88%
3 to 3.5	165	42.42%
3.5 to 4	97	24.94%
4 to 4.5	22	5.66%
4.5 to 5	12	3.08%
5 to 5.5	2	0.51%
5.5 to 6	1	0.26%
Grand Total	389	100.00%

Convenor data

Application type	no.	%
PA by Apprehension	142	41.52%
PA by notice	41	11.99%
Ext CSO	26	7.60%
Breach SO	18	5.26%
Ext & Vary CSO	12	3.51%
IPO Return	11	3.22%
Ext & Rev SCO	9	2.63%
Ext SO	9	2.63%
Breach of SO	8	2.34%
Breach SCO	5	1.46%
PA	5	1.46%
Ext SCO	4	1.17%
Return of IPO	4	1.17%
Ext GSO	3	0.88%
Vary CSO	3	0.88%
Ext & Vary CSO; PA by app	2	0.58%
Ext CTSO	2	0.58%
IPO Breach	2	0.58%
Rev SCO, App CSO	2	0.58%
Breach & Ext SCO	1	0.29%
Breach & Ext SO	1	0.29%
Breach IAO	1	0.29%
Breach of SPO	1	0.29%
Breach SPO	1	0.29%
CSO Variation	1	0.29%
Ext & Breach SO	1	0.29%
Ext & Rev CSO	1	0.29%
EXT & Rev CSO; App PC	1	0.29%
Ext & Revo CSO	1	0.29%
Ext & Vary SCO	1	0.29%
Ext & Vary SCSO	1	0.29%
Ext CSO & PA by App	1	0.29%
Ext CSO, Breach SCO	1	0.29%
Ext of SO	1	0.29%
Ext SCO & Ext CSO	1	0.29%
Ext TTO	1	0.29%
Extend & Vary SCO	1	0.29%
IAO Breach	1	0.29%
PA	1	0.29%
PA and IAO Breach	1	0.29%
PA and Variation to IAO	1	0.29%
Permanent Care	1	0.29%
Rev CSO	1	0.29%

Rev CSO, app GSO	1	0.29%
Rev CSO, App Perm Care	1	0.29%
Rev PCO	1	0.29%
Sxt SCO	1	0.29%
Therapeutic Treatment	1	0.29%
Vary and breach of SCO	1	0.29%
Vary and Extend CSO	1	0.29%
Vary IAO	1	0.29%
Vary PCO	1	0.29%
Vary SCO	1	0.29%
Grand Total	342	100.00%

Venue	no.	%
Court	168	48.98%
RDM	175	51.02%
Grand Total	343	100.00%

Duration (hours)	no.	%
0.5	2	0.78%
1	4	1.56%
1.5	33	12.84%
2	52	20.23%
2.5	94	36.58%
3	33	12.84%
3.5	37	14.40%
4	2	0.78%
Grand Total	257	100.00%

On time?	no.	%
No	131	50.97%
Yes	126	49.03%
Grand Total	257	100.00%

Minutes late	no.	%
<15	48	36.92%
15-29	64	49.23%
30-44	14	10.77%
45-60	3	2.31%
60<	1	0.77%
Grand Total	130	100.00%

Late attendee	no.	%
DHS	11	10.38%
Family	66	62.26%
Lawyers	29	27.36%
Grand Total	106	100.00%

Format change?	no.	%
No	236	91.83%
Yes J to S	5	1.95%
Yes S to J	16	6.23%
Grand Total	257	100.00%

Number of prior mentions	no.	%
0	1	0.29%
1	42	12.35%
2	73	21.47%
3	65	19.12%
4	46	13.53%
5	28	8.24%
6	14	4.12%
7	7	2.06%
8	14	4.12%
9	9	2.65%
10	2	0.59%
11	7	2.06%
12	3	0.88%
13	4	1.18%
14	2	0.59%
15	2	0.59%
16	3	0.88%
17	4	1.18%
18	1	0.29%
19	1	0.29%
22	1	0.29%
23	1	0.29%
24	2	0.59%
25	3	0.88%
26	1	0.29%
29	2	0.59%
46	1	0.29%
49	1	0.29%
Grand Total	340	100.00%

Children attending?	no.	%
No	179	70.75%
Yes	74	29.25%
Grand Total	253	100.00%

Reason for children attending	no.	%
No childcare	39	52.70%
To participate	30	40.54%
To give instructions	4	5.41%
Contact with father	1	1.35%
Grand Total	74	100.00%

NMC outcome	no.	%
Full settlement	107	41.47%
Adj for mention	69	26.74%
Adj for further NMC	18	6.98%
Interim settlement	17	6.59%
Not settled (contest confirmed)	47	18.22%
Grand Total	258	100.00%

Cancelled?	no.	%
No	257	74.93%
Yes	86	25.07%
Grand Total	343	100.00%