



## **INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE**

### **Child-inclusive family dispute resolution and the best interests principle: Experiences and perceptions of family dispute resolution practitioners**

My name is Christie Welsh and I am a Bachelor of Social Work Honours student with Deakin University. I am undertaking research exploring the experiences and perceptions of family dispute resolution practitioners and how they apply the best interests principle in their practice, under the supervision of Drs Sevi Vassos and Rojan Afrouz.

#### **Study Aim**

This study seeks to explore the extent and ways in which the 'best interests of the child' are progressed through child-inclusive family dispute resolution from practitioners' perspectives. Research to date indicates the advantages of child-inclusive programs, with long-term benefits including responsive co-parenting arrangements, child adjustment and wellbeing, and importantly, children's right to a voice. However, little is currently known about the perspectives and experiences of practitioners who work within these services. As practitioners who work most closely with children and families in dispute resolution, you are best placed to advise on how to enhance services. Exploring your knowledge and experiences will provide deeper insight into the topic, including how you practice with families and engage with children; what factors influence your practice decisions and responses; and outcomes for families and children. This project has received Deakin University ethics approval (reference number HEAG-H 44\_2023).

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

If you are family dispute resolution practitioner who has engaged in child-inclusive, child-focused, or child-informed dispute resolution programs in Victoria, I invite you to consider sharing your practice wisdom as part of this research study.

#### **Interview Process**

Taking part in this research is voluntary and all information will be confidential. If you decided to participate, you will be invited to an interview of up to an hour, that will be held online over Zoom or Teams, depending on your preference.

#### **How to become involved**

If you would like any further information about this research, please contact me via email [celyons@deakin.edu.au](mailto:celyons@deakin.edu.au). Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

Warm regards,

Christie Welsh