

# Family Law Courts

## Launch Family Violence Best Practice Principles

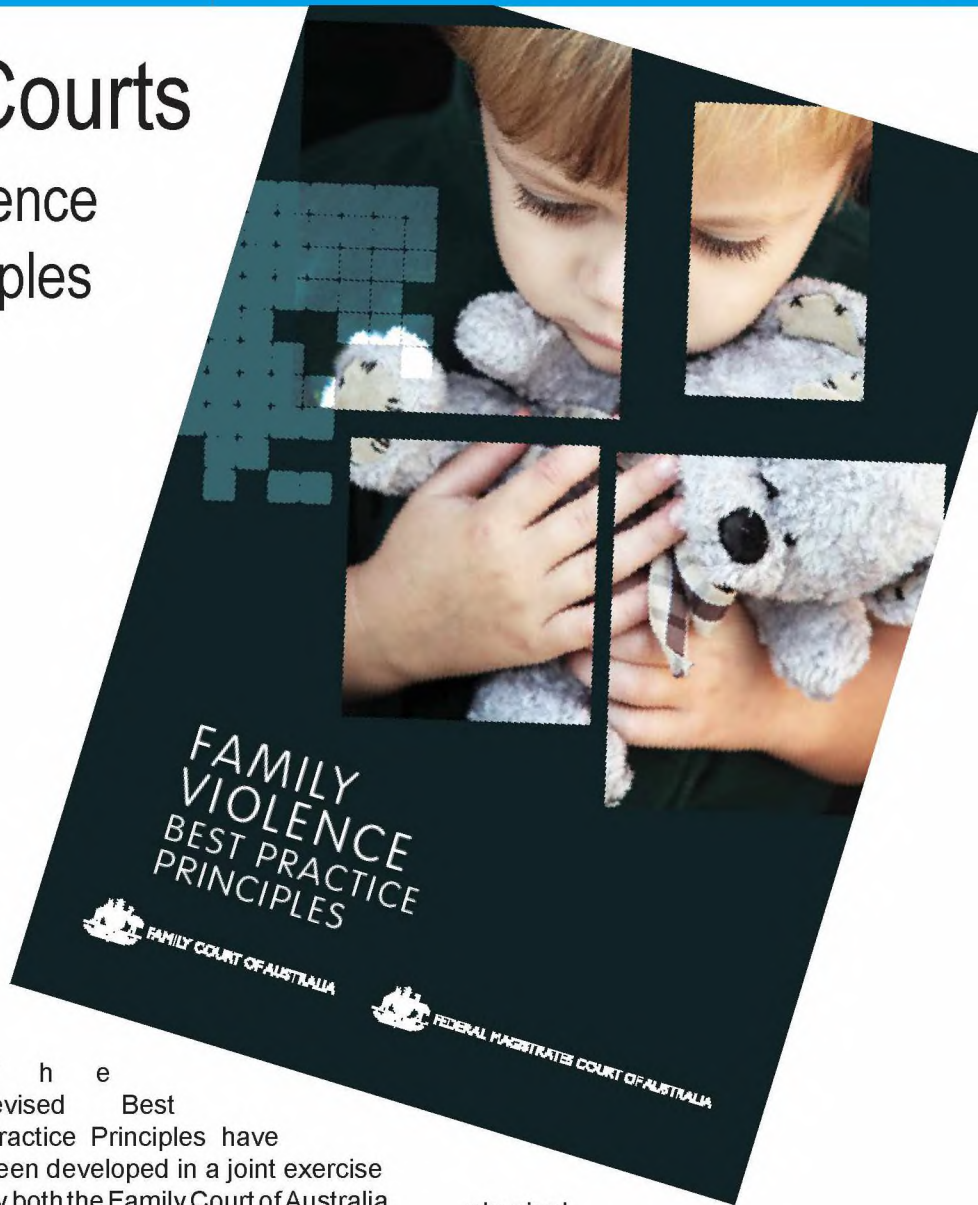
The Family Court's Best Practice Principles were first developed as part of the Family Court's Family Violence Strategy in March 2009. Those principles have since been revised and were launched by the Commonwealth Attorney-General on 19 July 2011.

The Family Violence Best Practice Principles were originally developed to provide judicial officers hearing parenting disputes in the Family Court, with practical guidance in dealing with matters where family violence, or the risk of it, had been alleged. They subsequently became helpful not only to judicial officers but also for members of the legal profession and litigants representing themselves.

Protecting families and particularly children who are engaged with the family law system from the effects of family violence is a priority for the Family Court and the Federal Magistrates Court.

The revised Family Violence Best Practice Principles assists in this critically important task by acting as a checklist of matters that judges, federal magistrates, court staff, legal professionals and litigants may wish to consider at each stage of the litigation process.

A significant change in the revised set of principles has been the inclusion of the processes used in the Federal Magistrates Court of Australia which deals with the majority of all family law matters before the courts.



The revised Best Practice Principles have been developed in a joint exercise by both the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Magistrates Court of Australia. They contribute to furthering the Courts' commitment to protecting children and any person who has a parenting order, from harm resulting from family violence and abuse.

### The Best Practice Principles recognise:

- the harmful effects of family violence and abuse on victims
- the place accorded to the issue of family violence in the Family Law Act, and
- the principles guiding the Magellan case management system for the disposition of cases involving allegations of sexual abuse or serious

physical abuse of children.

The Best Practice Principles are applicable in all cases involving family violence or child abuse or the risk of family violence or child abuse in proceedings before courts exercising jurisdiction under the Family Law Act. They provide useful background information for decision-makers, legal practitioners and individuals involved in these cases.

\* For further information or to get paper copies of this document sent to you, call 1300 352 000, or visit a family law registry near you. Alternatively, a copy may be downloaded from the Family Law Courts website at [www.familylawcourts.gov.au](http://www.familylawcourts.gov.au).