

**List Tools**

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Collaborate Current View

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View Process Data

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**Individual Your name**

Ongoing Conduct Case	Previous Conduct Case	Individual Alert	Owner
No	No	No	<a href="#">CRM Admin</a>

**PIP Credits: PiP Credits Associated View ▼**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Created on
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parental Alienation	01/12/2017 13:32
<input type="checkbox"/>	Court Skills	01/12/2017 12:32
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disorganised Attachment and Child Protection	01/12/2017 13:17
<input type="checkbox"/>	NIGALA 21 Anniversary Conference	01/12/2017 14:00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Skills Awareness Day on Assessing Contact	01/12/2017 12:27
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Realities of Post Adoption Contact BAFF	01/12/2017 14:32

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**Information**

- General
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**Common**

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**Processes**

- Workflows
- Dialog Sessions

PIP Credits
 PiP Credits

## Parental Alienation

▼ **General**

Individual	<input type="text" value="Your Name"/>		
Activity Title	<input type="text" value="Parental Alienation"/>		
Type of Learning Activity	<input type="text" value="Non Certificated Structured Learning"/>		
Start Date	<input type="text" value="15/05/2016"/>	End Date	<input type="text" value="15/05/2016"/>
Hours Taken	<input type="text" value="4"/>	Total Credits Claimed	<input type="text" value="12"/>

▼ **Reflection**

Description

This presentation focused on the area of Parental Alienation which is prevalent in Family cases before the court and in contact disputes. My objective at the start of the course was to learn more about an area that was largely unfamiliar to me but relevant as I had just been allocated a case which possibly fitted into this category.

Reflective Account

I believe that the content of this presentation has helped to contribute to my development as a practitioner. I was able to expand my knowledge of an area that had previously been somewhat vague. I learnt the relevance of attachment theories both in the lives of the parents and the child and the idea that the attachment process begins long before birth. Theories of development are relevant in cases of Parental Alienation and the age of the child is significant at the time the parents separate. I found all this new learning to be relevant to my case where the children are aged 11 and 14. I learnt that the child's brain changes at age 13 approx and before that the child is unable to make rational neurological decisions. I found it helpful to learn about the profile of parents in cases of parental alienation: mothers who are generally cold, deeply ingrained narcissism, lack of empathetic attunement to the child; and fathers who are generally stable, normal and quite caring. There are indicators to look out for in children who don't tend to have many friends but can be high performing and achieving. The mother often pushes for an assessment of the child having ADHD/Autism and there can be suggestions of Munchausen by proxy and allegations that the father has sexually abused the child.

File PIP Credits

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Run Workflow Start Dialog Run Report

Collaborate Process Data

**Information**

- General
- Reflection
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**Related**

**Common**

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- Closed Activities
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**Processes**

- Workflows
- Dialog Sessions

PIP Credits

## Parental Alienation

PIP Credits

Credits to Claim: 8

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**

Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

I was able to reflect on the teaching on Parental Alienation and very much apply my learning to a case I had recently been allocated. I developed my understanding in this area and the skills I needed to analyse my case. I found the knowledge to be important as I formed an assessment of my case. I was able to acknowledge and had the skills to identify that the children have engaged in psychological splitting and aligned themselves with their mother's world view. The father was convinced he was a victim of parental alienation by the mother. From my understanding of the teaching I was not so convinced that it was as straightforward as he maintained and while there were some elements of parental alienation, neither parent nor children wholly fitted the profile. Following the teaching I had confidence to make that suggestion but also recognised the need for me to research the area further which I have since done through reading Canadian psychologists, Kelly and Johnstone and reading Gardner with whom the theory began.

Credits to Claim: 4

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**PiP Credit Claims**

**Notes**

**Information**

- General
- Reflection
- Impact
- PIP Credit Claims
- Notes

**Related**

**Common**

- Activities
- Closed Activities
- Connections
- Audit History

**Processes**

- Workflows
- Dialog Sessions

PIP Credits PIP Credits

## Court Skills

**General**

Individual	<input type="text" value="Your Name"/>		
Activity Title	<input type="text" value="Court Skills"/>		
Type of Learning Activity	<input type="text" value="Non Certificated Structured Learning"/>		
Start Date	<input type="text" value="09/12/2014"/>	End Date	<input type="text" value="09/12/2014"/>
Hours Taken	<input type="text" value="7"/>	Total Credits Claimed	<input type="text" value="21"/>

**Reflection**

Description

The objective of this activity was straightforward – to increase my knowledge and develop my skills in delivering a clear message and viewpoint in both my court reports and oral evidence in court. I was seeking practical tips in developing as a practitioner and improving in my ability to represent the child in court.

Reflective Account

This was a practical workshop which, therefore, met my objectives. The presentation was tailor made to set out clearly the role of the Guardian ad litem in the court and the need to help the court work out what has happened in a case and what the court ought to do. I learnt that the following areas are key: preparation; investigation; analysis; and presentation. There is a collaborative working between the legal representatives and the Guardian – working on what areas to focus questions. I found it helpful to be reminded that the voice of the child must be heard loudly in the court. There needs to be a purpose behind every question and that needs to be focussed on keeping the child at the centre of proceedings.

**Information**

- General
- Reflection
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- Notes

**Related**

**Common**  
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PiP Credits  
**Court Skills**
PiP Credits

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**  
 Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

I found this to be a practical workshop that had an impact of my practice. I feel that I benefitted from taking time out to focus on court skills – an essential skill in my job as Guardian. Writing reports is such a major part of the job that it was helpful to come away with some simple but important lessons. I now focus on what overall message do I try to convey in my reports and I reflect after reading it whether or not I succeed. I try to keep the language simple and the points succinct. I have tried to develop this skill which can often be a challenge. When it comes to giving oral evidence, the workshop was helpful on focusing on a few points. I have tried to narrow the key issues and keep them clear in my mind. I reflect on what the whole case is about and hone the major themes. I ensure that the child and the child’s needs is kept at the forefront and my arguments are focussed on the child. I found that I was able to put the learning very quickly into practice with lengthy court proceedings and time in the witness box. As I sat in the box I recalled the practical tips and kept the key themes in my head and answered cross examination by returning to the child’s perspective. My attitude to giving evidence has been altered by the training. I try to alleviate my nerves by reminding myself that this is my opportunity to put across the child's voice to the Judge and therefore have a more positive attitude about the task in hand.

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

- ▶ **PiP Credit Claims**
- ▶ **Notes**

File PIP Credits

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Run Workflow Start Dialog Run Report

Collaborate Process Data

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- General
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**Related**

**Common**

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**Processes**

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PIP Credits

## Disorganised Attachment and Child Protection

PIP Credits

**General**

Individual	<input type="text" value="Your Name"/>		
Activity Title	<input type="text" value="Disorganised Attachment and Child Protection"/>		
Type of Learning Activity	<input type="text" value="Non Certificated Structured Learning"/>		
Start Date	<input type="text" value="09/12/2014"/>	End Date	<input type="text" value="15/03/2017"/>
Hours Taken	<input type="text" value="7"/>	Total Credits Claimed	<input type="text" value="21"/>

**Reflection**

Description

The objective of the training was to look at Disorganised attachment and assess attachment through contact. There was a focus on: Attachment theories; emotional development in early childhood; and theories of trauma. The professor had practical tasks to share on how to comment on parenting capacity and identify Disconnected Insensitive Parenting. My objective from the training was to expand my knowledge base and to develop new skills to improve this area as a practitioner.

Reflective Account

The professor spent some time looking at Disconnected Insensitive Parenting. I was not familiar with this area before the training and I believe that the training expanded my knowledge and will equip me better as a practitioner with a greater understanding of the lives of the families I work with. I learnt about the importance of assessing the parent's mentalizing capacity – in other words what is in the parent's head about what is in the child's head about him/her? It was useful to learn a new method of interviewing using mentalization. For example I would be concerned if the mother thinks the baby doesn't like her. I also learnt that a mother or father who has experienced unresolved loss or trauma her/himself in the past will impede their parenting. I found it helpful to be reminded of Bruce Perry's trauma theory and his practical teaching of how to regulate, relate and reason with children whose trauma triggers challenging behaviour and when they are 'kicking off'. It was useful to think of these theories and behaviour. This is something that is very familiar in the lives of children I represent and it gave me a greater understanding of the reasons behind their difficult to manage behaviours.

**Information**

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**Related**

**Common**  
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PIP Credits  
**Disorganised Attachment and Child Protection**
PiP Credits

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**

Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

I know that this training has had an impact on me as a practitioner. For example, I now see the importance of discovering a parent's history – to look at unresolved trauma in their lives which may explain the reason for their abilities as a parent. I look out for the signs of disconnected Insensitive Parenting and their mentalizing capacity. I realised that mentalization based therapy was a new concept to me and, following the training, I researched how to use mentalization based interviewing with information from the Anna Freud Centre and have attempted to use this when interviewing parents. I had a recent case where the mother had difficulty bonding with her child. Her contact was not a positive experience for the child or for the mother. The learning from the course made me question the details of her background which had been fairly vague. I urged some work with the mother and a fuller assessment of her background history. It was not a surprise to later discover that she had been sexually abused by her father at a young age. The unresolved trauma she experienced as a child had indeed impeded her ability to parent. She was referred to a number of services in an attempt to address some issues that had never been done before. I believe that my attitude has changed and I see parents not as people to blame but realise there is a reason behind their difficulty parenting. I have seen how recognising that makes for a better working relationship and co-operation from the parent.

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

- PiP Credit Claims**
- Notes**

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**Related**

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PIP Credits

# NIGALA 21 Anniversary Conference

PIP Credits

**General**

Individual

Activity Title

Type of Learning Activity

Start Date  End Date

Hours Taken  Total Credits Claimed

**Reflection**

**Description**

This Conference was very much focussed on keeping the child at the centre. There were presentations by: Mr. Anthony Douglas, CAFCASS; DJ Nick Crichton, Family Drug and Alcohol Court; Prof Geoffrey Shannon, Rep of Ireland; Brid Featherstone, changing face of social work in UK and implication for the child's voice; and LJ John O'Hara. The highlight of the day was video from children in care and input from two young people who reflected on their experiences in foster care and in the court process and gave tips on talking to Judges. My objective for the day was to see in what way I could keep the child at the centre of my practice and learn how our current system seeks to do the same.

**Reflective Account**

I found the day extremely useful in terms of the learning from others eg how CAFCASS works in England/Wales to the practice in the republic of Ireland with a reminder of the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child and how that must underpin our practice. It was helpful to be reminded by Brid Featherstone that there is often not just one reason for neglect and emotional abuse. Depression, poverty, alcohol and drugs all play a part. I was challenged by her suggestion that we may be using neuroscience too carelessly and how, as a system, we are constantly about getting children to say goodbye. When children suffer so much separation and loss it made me reflect on children who leave a placement with important people and never see them again. I thought of how they could remain a part of the child's life in one form or another. The absolute highlight of the day was the input from the children and young people which caused me to reflect on how I work with children and relate to them, treat them and how I can allow their words to change how I practice. In my job I always offer the child the chance to meet with the Judge. I often fail to give that opportunity the weight it deserves. I had a fresh awareness of how important it is for a child/young person to meet the person who is making a crucial decision about his/her life. The meeting isn't always about a child putting a message across to the Judge but simply seeing what he/she looks like. I left the conference wanting to promote this opportunity more amongst the children I represent knowing that one day they may look back on their childhood and be glad they met the Judge.

File PIP Credits

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Run Workflow Start Dialog Run Report

Collaborate Process Data

**Information**

- General
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**Related**

**Common**

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**Processes**

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PIP Credits

**NIGALA 21 Anniversary Conference**

PIP Credits

Credits to Claim: 14

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**

Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

I want to select the input from the children and young people at the conference and how that has and will impact my practice. The knowledge of how a child has experienced the court process and care system is essential for me as a practitioner. I need to learn from what has worked for them and what hasn't worked in order to improve how I do my job and keep the child at the centre. I have altered my attitude to court report writing and now try to imagine the child reading the report about him/herself. I am conscious of the language I use and try to avoid unnecessary negative language. I am conscious that a child suffers from the high turnover of social workers – yet more loss and realise that I am often the person who has been involved in their case the longest. I am more aware that there can be a gender bias and it is often the case that a mother is favoured over a father. I will try to ensure this is not something I automatically do but treat each parent as an equal individual. I found the words of an 18 year old boy who is currently in foster care to have an impact on me as a practitioner also. He felt that he was often told lies and would rather know the truth even if it's difficult to hear. I will endeavour to talk directly and honestly about the child's situation to him/her. He reminded me that sibling relationships are the most important as there is a lifetime bond. I have several cases where it is proving difficult to organise contact between siblings. Hearing that point from the young person encouraged me to promote the sibling contact even when it is not easy to do so. The overriding message of keeping the child at the centre has stayed with me and is vital in my role as guardian ad litem. I consider my attitude to my job has changed as I am reminded that my role can make such a difference in the lives of the children I work with and I will endeavour to show them that they are valued and important when their experiences in life have often made them feel the opposite.

Credits to Claim: 7

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**PiP Credit Claims**

**Notes**

**Information**

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PiP Credits

## Skills Awareness Day on Assessing Contact

PiP Credits

**General**

Individual	<input type="text" value="Your Name"/>		
Activity Title	<input type="text" value="Skills Awareness Day on Assessing Contact"/>		
Type of Learning Activity	<input type="text" value="Non Certificated Structured Learning"/>		
Start Date	<input type="text" value="05/04/2017"/>	End Date	<input type="text" value="04/05/2017"/>
Hours Taken	<input type="text" value="7"/>	Total Credits Claimed	<input type="text" value="21"/>

**Reflection**

**Description**

Learning need/objective

The focus of the day was on observing and assessing contact with presentations on observing Attachment at Contact; the Assessment of Contact and what to look for at contact. My objective for the day was to focus on something that is a key element of my job, assessing family relationships and attachment through interaction at contact. I was aiming to learn about the theory underpinning the assessment and to take a fresh look at contact.

**Reflective Account**

I am aware that I am in constant need to develop as a practitioner. From the Skills Day I learnt that I bring something of myself and my own perceptions to contact and I need to examine whether or not I show bias and identify with the grandparent/parent/child. I was reminded of the theories underpinning various aspects of contact: systems theory; Maslow's Hierarchy of Need; Erikson's stages of development; attachment theory. I learnt to: look at the reuniting of the parent/child and the separation; look at how a parent can attune to the child's needs at the specific stage of development and how he/she regulates the child; observe the parent's ability to mentalize – to know the child's mind and what he/she wants. I also learnt to look out for the signs of different types of attachment – e.g. the ambivalent child and the disorganised child – noticing the child that plays quietly in the corner and realising the importance of what that tells me. I learnt the importance of putting the child in context. For example, if he is coming from a Residential unit then there are theories underpinning that placement: trauma and attachment will affect how the child experiences contact.

**Information**

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PIP Credits

## Skills Awareness Day on Assessing Contact

PIP Credits ↑ ↓

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**

Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

There is no doubt that this training had an impact on my practice. Having read over notes from the day, I realise that I am now better equipped to write my court reports. I am now better informed about the theories underpinning contact. This knowledge is important for me as a practitioner who uses observation of contact to make assessments of family relationships. I believe that the children at contact are able to tell me something about their attachment to their parent by their behaviour. I have developed in my practice by observing the unification and separation and parent's ability to regulate the child if upset. I have a fresh awareness of my bias and if that influences how I present a parent/child/grandparent in my reports. I am now think through where the child is coming from and returning to after contact and the conversations he/she has with a social worker on the car journey. I consider the trauma they have experienced/experience and effect that has on their ability to cope with contact itself. This was a useful piece of training as there were practical tips on what to look for and how to assess contact which I have often put into practice since. I often use a checklist when observing contact to ensure I don't miss some key elements outlined above.

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

- PiP Credit Claims**
- Notes**

File PIP Credits

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**Processes**

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PIP Credits

## The Realities of Post Adoption Contact BAAF Seminar

PIP Credits

**General**

Individual:

Activity Title:

Type of Learning Activity:

Start Date:  End Date:

Hours Taken:  Total Credits Claimed:

**Reflection**

Description

I attended a Seminar at the Bar Library where there was a presentation by: A member of the NHSCT; a young person who was adopted; a birth mother who had her child adopted; and [Roisin McCartan BL](#). The objective was to explore the area of post adoption contact and to learn from research, personal experiences of a child and a birth mother and the legal perspective.

Reflective Account

I found this to be an invaluable day in terms of learning from a number of different perspectives: a member of a post adoption support team; a young person; a birth parent; and a legal professional. The area of post adoption contact is so important and has an impact on the lives of those involved. I found it useful as a practitioner to hear from a birth mother and a child who was adopted – something I had never experienced before and it gave me a fresh insight into the consequences of the recommendations I make in court reports. It was powerful hearing from a birth mother who said she could not cope with direct contact with her child post adoption and opted out believing it was also easier for her child. The young person saw the value in having direct contact but found it emotionally hard to do and recognised that it was also difficult for his adoptive parents. The presentation from NHSCT was practical and relevant to me as a Guardian. I was reminded of the importance of issues such as flexibility, the value of indirect contact, challenges of maintaining sibling contact, ongoing support, challenges of social media, the strain of high level contact. I learnt the relevance of theory informing practice with the significance of ages and stages of development and Brodzinsky's levels of understanding affecting some children opting out of contact. I believe that the seminar helped develop my knowledge in the area of post adoption contact and my ability to make informed decisions. After the seminar I was inspired to read further and reinforced the learning with research from BAAF publication 'Contact in adoption and permanent foster care', Elsbeth Neil and David Howe.

File PIP Credits

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PIP Credits

## The Realities of Post Adoption Contact BAAF Seminar

PIP Credits

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

**Impact**

Impact/Demonstrati... of Learning

This is such a challenging area for Guardians and social workers who regularly make recommendations for post adoption contact. The learning from the seminar has, undoubtedly impacted my practice. I have seen that recently when writing a court report for a Freeing application. I have kept the words of both the birth parent and child in my head as I have wrestled with a recommendation. As a result of my learning I now thoughtfully consider each party involved and feel better placed to critically examine the issues and challenges. I am more aware of the stage of development of the child and the impact contact is likely to have on him/her depending on the attachment with the birth parent and the secure attachments formed with the adoptive parents. I have learnt that contact cannot be used as a bargaining tool at the Final Hearing and must be kept focussed on the child's needs at all times. I see that it is not a case of one size fits all and the individual needs must be considered. I recently had a case where the two half siblings had different care plans and the young brother was in the process of being freed for adoption while the older sister was in long term foster care. Bearing in mind my learning from the seminar I recommended a high level of both direct and indirect contact between the siblings while the Trust suggested half the amount. I recalled the point that sibling contact is considered challenging and needs a lot of support but thinking through the needs of both children as individuals and the history of their relationship I continued to promote this high level. I believe that my learning and the impact of the adopted child's voice that day gave me the confidence to stand firm. My attitude has changed also in that I consider each party involved and consider them as important individuals with feelings, views to consider and respect both now and into the future after the adoption takes place.,

Credits to Claim

Line Manager Verified?  No  Yes

- PiP Credit Claims**
- Notes**