

Post parental separation families AHRC research network

Post-separation families and shared residence: setting the interdisciplinary research agenda for the future

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Focusing primarily on the cross-cutting philosophical and ethical issues raised by post-separation family life and the content and procedures being adopted in family law within different jurisdictions, this AHRC Research Network will bring together academics from different disciplines and non-academic stakeholders from the UK, EU and beyond.

Fewer children in the UK are being raised by families consisting exclusively of two biologically related parents and their other off-spring. Post-separation family life raises important issues in both law and moral philosophy about how the care of children ought to be divided between parents and the extent to which certain types of family practices should be encouraged over others. The competing interests, rights and responsibilities on all sides must be addressed: for instance, how an equitable distribution of family responsibilities and privileges between parents can be achieved; how meaningful relationships, perhaps including wider kin networks, can be promoted within the context of this distribution; and how the interests and well-being of children should be defined, safeguarded and prioritised. This international research network will explore these issues from an interdisciplinary perspective and will receive contributions from non-academic stakeholders. It will concentrate on shared residence - where children alternate their family life across the two households of their separated parents, as a potential model for post-separation family life. The aim for the network is to develop a coherent, interdisciplinary research agenda for the ethical, legal and policy issues raised by post-separation family life in general, and shared residence in particular.

The project will run from 1st September 2010 to 31st August 2012.

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