

Alison O'Neill – Clinical Psychologist
PhD Candidate, M.Psych (Clinical), B.A (Hons), M.A.P.S., Member of Clinical College (APS)

ACCREDITATIONS:

- Registration with the Psychology Board of Australia
- A Full Member of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) since 1998
- A Member of the Clinical College of the Australian Psychological Society
- Authorised Clinician for the Children's Court Clinic
- Approved Supervisor for the Registration of Psychologists
- Justice of the Peace
- Formal training in the Permanent Impairment Guidelines – Psychiatric Impairment Rating Scale (PIRS) for medico-legal assessments

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

I am a Director of LSC Psychology; Clinical and Forensic Psychology Services. I manage the Child and Family Division of the practice and have over 14 years experience assessing and treating children and adults, using evidence-based practice. I conduct clinical and forensic assessments and provide psychological treatment for children, adults and families in the criminal and civil domains. The majority of my current practice is devoted to the assessment of families in the Children's Court, Federal Circuit & Family Court and the Supreme Court. Specifically, I write independent expert reports for a range of issues, including relocation, family violence, the impact of substance use and mental illness upon parenting capacity and when children reject a parent. When there are concerns about child sexual & physical abuse, neglect, and/or non-accidental injury, I utilise formal risk assessment tools. I also conduct assessments for surrogacy matters, out of home care and adoption. I am an Independent Expert on family violence for the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), an Authorised Clinician for the Children's Court Clinic and I was a Regulation 7 Family Consultant for the Federal Magistrates and Family Court of Australia for four years. Additionally, I am a guest lecturer at UNSW for the Forensic Masters Program and I present regularly at conferences and training seminars. I currently debrief lawyers involved in the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse.

Previously, I have run private practices in Sydney and rural NSW where I specialised in the treatment of children and adults with clinical disorders and/or relationship issues. Additionally, I conducted developmental, educational, neuropsychological and medico-legal assessments for both children and adults. I have also worked with war veterans for the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and have conducted group treatment programs for Depression, Anxiety and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in the veteran population. I have written courses and trained medico-legal professionals in large corporations regarding mental health in workers compensation issues. I held casual teaching positions for over 10 years at the University of Sydney; both at the main campus and Cumberland. I was a tutor and casual lecturer at the University of Sydney for 2nd and 3rd Year Psychology, and a variety of Health Science Degrees. I also wrote tutorial programs and lectured to students completing their Honours and Masters Degrees. I have also been involved in many research projects as a Research Assistant; conducting assessments, using statistical analysis and helping write and edit journal articles.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

I am currently writing a PhD at Macquarie University with Associate Professor Kay Bussey, investigating the quality of single expert reports in the Family and Federal Circuit Courts of Australia. I am one of three investigators awarded a grant from the NSW Council of Psychology to conduct the research. The aim is to develop Australian guidelines to enhance the quality of the reports written in the family law proceedings. I have a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology from the University of Sydney, which was conferred in 1998. During the Masters Program, I specialised in the assessment and treatment of both children and adults with mental health disorders. My thesis researched 'Panic, Anxiety and Depression in lung transplant candidates and recipients'. This thesis was conducted at St Vincent's Hospital, Darlinghurst. In addition to the Masters, I have an Honours degree in Psychology and wrote two theses; 'Psychology and the Insanity Defence' and 'Predicting the response of stimulant medication in boys with ADHD'. I completed my Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, where I did a double major in Psychology and Social Policy and Administration.