



nls law

Child Consultant Services for Mediation

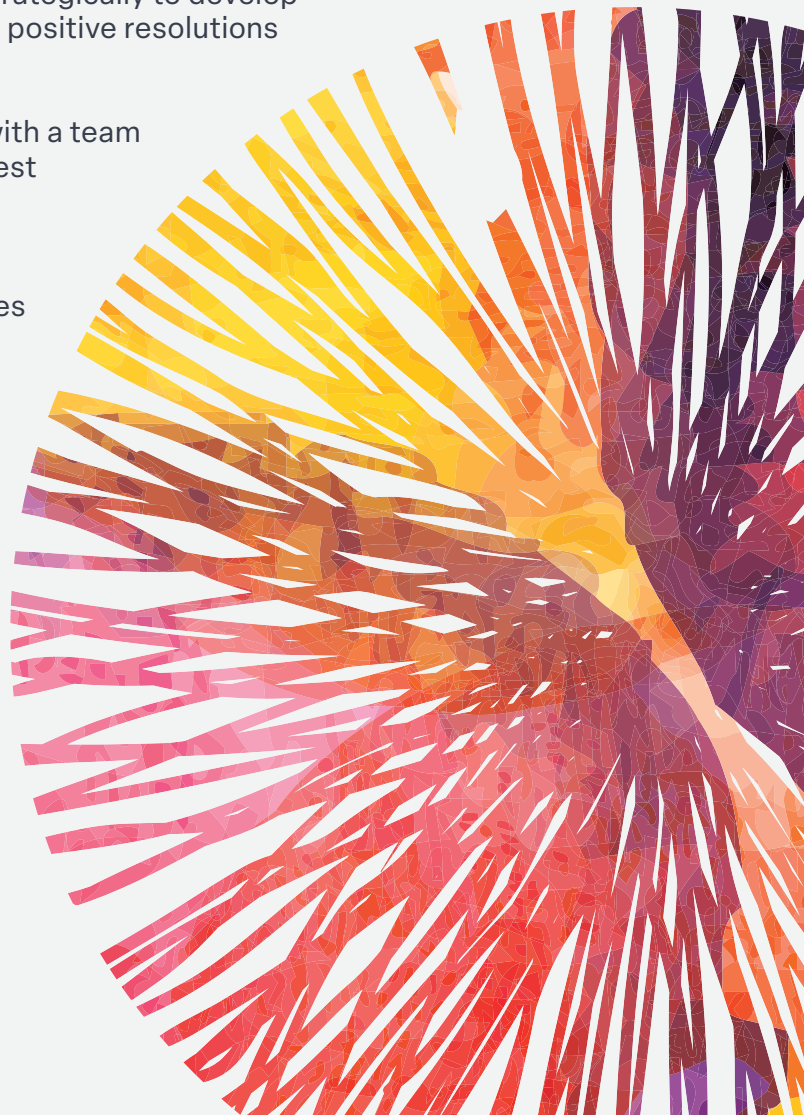
NLS Law provides Child Inclusive Services for Mediations. Neisha Shepherd, Founder and Solicitor Director, is an Independent Children's Lawyer in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, as well as a Children's Lawyer in Children's Court of NSW. Neisha is also qualified in Child Inclusive Mediation and Counselling and can be engaged as a Child Consultant Lawyer in mediation for parenting matters in Family Law matters.

In this context Neisha independently talks with the child to obtain where the child is at, and if appropriate, their views, needs and wishes with the aim to help parents focus and think strategically to develop the appropriate and workable plans to achieve positive resolutions in parenting matters.

Neisha is committed to providing her clients with a team that believes in justice and will strive for the best outcome for the client.

The role of a Child Inclusive Lawyer can assist the mediation process for parents as it provides impartiality and helps the mediation remain child focused.

To bring a voice of the child to the Mediation space may helps parents resolve disputes about parenting arrangements in a way that focuses on the child's needs and best interests.



W: www.nlslaw.com.au
E: office@nlslaw.com.au
P: 02 4927 6315



What is a Child Consultant Lawyer in the Mediation Space?

Child Consultant Lawyers are experienced professionals who specialise in working with children and young people who experience separation. They have extensive knowledge of the developmental and emotional needs of children and young people during separation, and of the issues experienced by parents. They have extensive knowledge and experience in representing children and young people in the Family Law and Children's Law area and uphold the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. Their experience also extends to understanding safety/trauma intervention, child development, family separation and family violence and child protection. They have specialist training in Children's issues and Child Inclusive Mediations.

Importance of Child Inclusive Mediations

Child Inclusive Mediation is a necessary decision if families are seeking to reach positive outcomes in mediation. Parents and carers need to be aware of how the relationship breakdown is impacting each child and be focused on solutions in residence, care and contact that support children and promote their best interests. Understanding the experiences and perspective of your children will give parents, and carers engaged in mediation, the opportunity to formulate agreements that are more likely to work. The process allows children to be heard and valued and have their needs prioritised.



What's involved in child inclusive mediation

Step 1

Parents can be referred or refer during a mediation process, or may request a session, when concerns for their child's adjustment to separation are raised.

Step 2

The Child Consultant Lawyer will obtain the written consent for their child/ren to be seen before the process can continue and information about any relevant issues is provided to the Child Consultant Lawyer by both parents.

Step 3

The Child Consultant Lawyer will then meet with the child, or in the case of sibling groups several children may be seen at the same time and in individual sessions.

Step 4

Within the Family Dispute Resolution session, parents will be provided feedback around how their child is coping with the separation and how they will be supported to assist their child to manage any problems they may be experiencing. Parents may also be provided with relevant referrals at this time.

Step 5

This information may then be used in the Family Dispute Resolution process to assist parents to make decisions in the best interest of their child.

NOTE: All communication between the child consultant and child is confidential. Child consultants assess the overall wellbeing of the child and provide feedback accordingly. However, an exception to Confidentiality may occur if a Duty of Care Issue arises. This process will only occur if it is in the best interest of the child.



Neisha Shepherd

Founder and Legal Director

Neisha is the Founder and Legal Director of NLS Law, an Accredited Specialist in Children's law, National Accredited Mediator, a trained Child Inclusive Consultant/Mediator and a Collaborative Lawyer. Neisha represents people in difficult legal matters with significant successes, which includes cases in the High Court of Australia, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of NSW, the Full Court of the Family Court of Australia, District Court of NSW, Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia, Children's Court of NSW, Local Court of NSW and the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Some of Neisha's notable cases include the High Court Family Law Case of *MRR v GR* [2010] HCA 4 and the Children's Care and Protection Case of *Re Tracey* [2011] NSWCA.

Neisha practices in the area of Children's law, Family Law, Defamation, Sports Law, Personal Injury (sexual abuse matters, claims against the State, bullying, institutional abuse), immigration, Discrimination, and Human Rights.

Neisha has extensive experience in working in the area of Family Law including complex financial/property as well as parenting matters in Australia and also matters that involve international relocation or property including Appeals. Neisha is committed to providing support and legal assistance for women who are affected by family violence or discrimination.

Neisha also has extensive experience in the area of care and protection in the Children's Court, District Court Appeals, Supreme Court Appeals and Court of Appeal as well as NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Neisha is an Independent Children's Lawyer in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

and Children's Lawyer in the Children's Court of NSW and deals with the most complex matters.

Neisha is a member of the NSW Law Society Accredited Specialist Children's Law committee and taught for many years children's law and family law at University level as well trained many Non Government Organisations and community groups in these areas of law.

In other areas of her work Neisha also provides advice in Sports Law and she has successfully negotiated sporting contracts for professional athletes, and she loves this area of work as she is able to help these athletes reach their dreams, having seen her clients attend elite events such as the Olympics and the World Games have been a highlight.

Neisha also is a mediator and can assist in the area of family law, children's law, elder law, work place disputes, discrimination, sport law, building and construction law and Human Rights Conciliations.

Neisha is committed to human rights and social justice and provides pro bono legal services in her practice, she has established and provided support to community programs and worked with remote indigenous communities. Neisha on a pro bono basis was the Co-Founder and Director of an international human rights organisation in Europe whose mandate is to promote indigenous culture around the world as part of this organisation Neisha developed an international Corporate Social Responsibility program.

Neisha speaks at national and international conferences as well as invited to speak on radio and television about human rights, children's rights and family law issues. Neisha has attended the SDG event at the United Nations in Geneva and spoken at the United Nations Women's Law event. Neisha has also received recognition for her work as a Finalist with NSW Justice Medal and NSW Women's Law Association.

Neisha is a member of the International Bar Association, NSW Women Law Association, NSW Law Society and Newcastle Law Society, , Hunter Valley Family Law Practitioners Association, Care and Protection Lawyers Association, Mediators Beyond Borders International, The Mediation Institute Australia, The Children's Rights Network, The Children Beyond Dispute Network, The Resolution Institute and International Academy of Collaborative Law Professionals.

On a personal level Neisha loves to art, she is an artist, a painter where through large works of abstract expressionism she paints stories that seek to empower, challenge and express meaning. Her work goes on exhibitions and Neisha often donates the proceeds from the sales to Charity as way to give back to the community.

The NLS Team



Jessica Fordham
Associate Solicitor

Jessica works in the area of Family and Children's Law.

Jessica is admitted as a practitioner of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the High Court of Australia.

Jessica is passionate about family violence matters, in particular, helping young mums who often don't have a lot of support. Jessica's commitment to human rights and social justice is an asset to NLS Law.

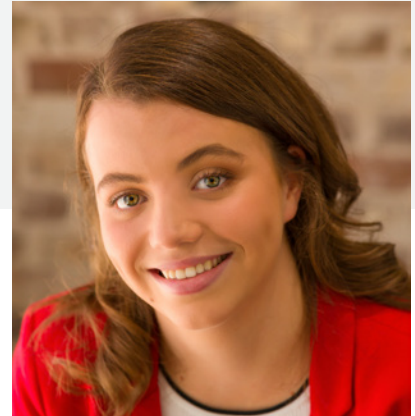


Ayden Sheperd
Solicitor

Ayden is a Solicitor at NLS Law having completed a Bachelor Laws (Honours), Diploma of Legal Practice and a Bachelor of Communications (with Distinction) at the University of Newcastle.

Ayden is passionate in various aspects of law specifically human rights and social justice.

Ayden is also a photographer, he believes that the opportunity to promote human rights and social justice through both photography and law is an important part of his future.



Lucy Coren
Law Clerk

Lucy joined the NLS Law team in 2021 and is studying a Bachelor of Law at Macquarie University.

In her role as Law Clerk, Lucy assists solicitors in all aspects of family and children's law.

Lucy has undertaken training in the areas of domestic violence and child protection.

She is passionate about human rights, social justice and the importance of helping others. Lucy wishes to pursue a career in family and children's Law.



Sue Braye
Executive Manager

Sue joined the NLS Law team in 2022 as our Executive Manager, bringing with her 25 years in the public service sector in NSW.

During her time in the public service sector, Sue developed a passion for Domestic and Family Violence, supporting the families involved and working with children.

As a skilled educator and trainer, Sue completed training for our solicitors on Domestic and Family Violence.



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At NLS Law helping children and parents navigate and survive family separation is important to us.

If you would like to discuss the involvement of Neisha Shepherd as a Child Consultant Lawyer in your case, please contact NLS Law.

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