

2016 Legal Aid NSW Criminal Law Conference

Legal Aid Child Sexual Assault Pilot Panel
1st June 2016

Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot

NSW Government Reforms

- Specialist District Court Judges
- Aim to improve Justice experience for child sexual offence victims and their families
- Children's Champions/Witness Intermediaries
- Pre-recording of whole of evidence (including cross examination)
- Increased maximum penalties and standard non parole period

District Court Judge Kate Traill brings empathy and experience to child sexual assault trials

October 12, 2015

☆ Read later



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"They can't see anyone in the courtroom, except for the barristers asking the questions and the judge": Judge Kate Traill. *Photo: Steven Siewert*

Children's Champions

What do they do?

- A person appointed as a Children's Champion for a witness is to communicate:
- To the witness, questions put to the witness, and
- To any person asking such a question, the answers given by the witness in replying to them,
- And to explain such questions or answers so far as necessary to enable them to be understood by the witness or person in question.

Pre-recorded Evidence

Removing the child from the Court Room

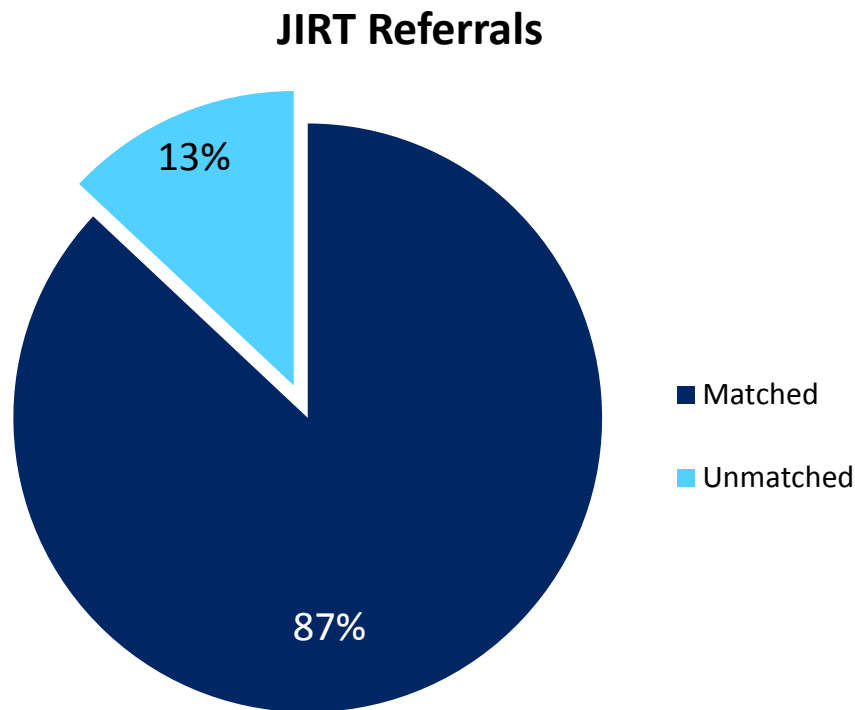


- Child will attend a new pre-recorded hearing held much sooner than the trial date
- Child will give evidence from a remote witness room, separate to the Court room
- Judge, Defence, Defendant and Prosecution in the Court room – no Jury
- Recorded cross examination is played later at trial to a jury

Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot

Some early figures

- 99 referrals received from JIRT
- 5 referrals from Sydney District Court received
- 4 Pre-recorded hearings conducted
- Youngest child referred 2½ years old



Child Sexual Offence Evidence Pilot

Questions

Thank you