

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION
P.O. Box 1028, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, A1C 5M3
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Children as Witnesses in the Criminal Courts

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

9:00 am – 4:30 pm
(Registration begins at 8:45 am)

3rd Floor, Law Society Building, 196-198 Water Street, St. John's, NL

Seminar Overview:

Until relatively recently, the Canadian criminal justice system had a deep distrust of the evidence of children, and made it very difficult for them to come to court to testify as witnesses. There have been significant changes in the law and in the supports that are provided to child witnesses, and children are now much more frequently called to testify in the criminal courts. Research has shown that children can be reliable witnesses; they can give important testimony, especially in cases involving child abuse and family violence.

The morning session will review psychological literature and Canadian case law on the assessment of competence and credibility of child witnesses. It is intended to help lawyers and other professionals better understand the significance of how children are questioned, children's communication and language abilities, memory and suggestibility, and children lying. It will include discussion of the test for assessing the competence of children to testify.

The afternoon session will review legislation, case law and practice in Newfoundland and Labrador governing accommodation of child witnesses, including consideration of screens, closed circuit television, videotapes, support persons and appointment of counsel for the purposes of cross-examination of unrepresented accused persons.

Seminar Presenter:

NICHOLAS BALA (Nick) is a leading Canadian expert on legal issues related to children, youth and families in the justice system. Nick has law degrees from Queen's University, (J.D. '77) and Harvard (LL.M. '80). Since 1980 he has been a law professor at Queen's University, teaching and writing primarily in the area of Family and Children's Law. Much of his research involves interdisciplinary collaboration, working with psychologists, social workers and other mental health professionals to address such issues as custody and alienation, views of children in family proceedings, family violence, high conflict separations, child witnesses and young offenders. His work is frequently cited by all levels Canadian courts, including the Supreme Court of Canada and the Court of Appeal of Newfoundland and Labrador. His contributions to family law research and professional education were recognized in awards from Ontario's Law Society and the Ontario Bar Association in 2009. In 2013 Nick was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

Panel Members:

The Honourable Mark T. Linehan
Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador

Renee Byrne
Victim Services

Desmond K. Parsons
NL Legal Aid Commission

Cst. Chelsey Guinchard
Royal Newfoundland Constabulary

Lisa M. Stead
Crown Attorney's Office

Four ways to Register - Registration deadline is June 15, 2018
Please make cheque payable to NL Continuing Legal Education

By Mail:
NL Continuing Legal Education
P.O. Box 1028
St. John's, NL A1C 5M3

By Fax or Telephone
f: (709) 722-8902
t: (709) 758-0817

By E-mail:
cle@lawsociety.nf.ca

Your space will not be confirmed until payment is received.

Refunds will not be issued for cancellations after June 15, 2018

Registration Form – Please Note: Space is Limited

Please register me for the “*Children as Witnesses in the Criminal Courts*” seminar scheduled for **Wednesday, June 20, 2018** at 9:00 am – 4:30 pm at the Law Society Building, 3rd Floor, 196-198 Water Street.

Name / Firm: _____

Telephone: _____

Registration Fee: \$287.50 (\$250.00 + 15% HST)

HST # R108086463

Registration Type:

In Person Webinar

Registration Includes:

1. Seminar attendance
2. Sandwiches and light refreshments (for in-person attendees)
3. Evening reception (subject to sufficient demand – details to follow)

N.B. Subject to the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Requirements, this seminar would constitute 6.5 hours of eligible CLE activities.