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### President's Message



#### AFCC President

Michael A. Saini, PhD, MSW, RSW

As AFCC prepares to welcome the insightful, deeply principled, and quietly formidable Hon. Dolores A. Bomrad as its next President at the upcoming conference in New Orleans, I find myself reflecting on a year of meaningful growth, collaboration, and transition. It has been an honour (with Canadian spelling ☺) to serve the AFCC community, a group that continues to lead with integrity and clarity in the ever-evolving field of family law and conflict resolution.

[Continue Reading](#)

### Ask the Experts



#### 10 Tips for Assessing Truth Telling, Credibility, & Reliability in Family Law

*Jessica P. Greenwald O'Brien, PhD*

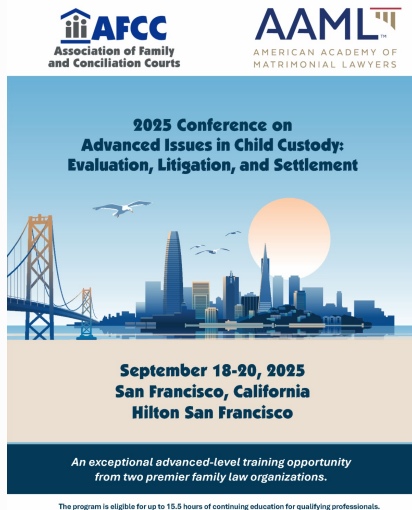
Judges, attorneys, and clinical evaluators are confronted with endless sources of information in their daily practice. Often the information conflicts, and the parties in a family law matter are particularly motivated to have us believe their version of the truth. How do we evaluate how much stock to put in each of these sources? What do we believe?

[Continue Reading](#)

[AFCC-AAML Conference](#)

*Advanced Issues in Child Custody:*

[New Online Training!](#)



Join AFCC in San Francisco for our advanced level conference co-hosted with AAML!

**Register Now!**

Interested in exhibiting at this conference? See the [exhibitor prospectus](#) for more details.

## **Safety First: Strengthening Family Law Responses to Violence and Coercive Control**

June 16-17, 2025

AFCC is pleased to offer an all-NEW comprehensive online training program focused on family violence. Safety First: Strengthening Family Law Responses to Violence and Coercive Control is a two-day, 15.5-hour intensive online training designed to meet the urgent need for clarity, consistency, and accountability in how professionals understand and respond to family violence within the family law system.

### **Participants will explore:**

- Evolving definitions of family violence and the implications of “concept creep”
- Trauma-informed screening tools and risk assessment strategies
- The unique and often invisible nature of coercive control
- Culturally responsive approaches for working with immigrant racialized and marginalized families
- The developmental impacts of violence on children
- The design of parenting plans that reflect safety, accountability, and healing

**Register Now!**

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## **AFCC Webinars!**

### **Using Mediation / Arbitration to Resolve Parenting Disputes: Benefits, Challenges & Other Considerations**

Barbara Fidler, PhD, CPsych  
June 24, 2025



Mediation-arbitration (med/arb) is one of

### **More Upcoming Webinars!**

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#### **When Criminality and Family Court Collide: The Best Interests of Whom?**

Daniel Bloom, JD & Dawn Smith JD  
July 10, 2025

#### **DE&I Series: Before You File: The Hidden Immigration Risks in Family Law**

Maha Kamal, JD & David Simmons, JD  
July 24, 2025

#### **Family Systems: A Primer**

Mindy F. Mitnick, MEd, MA & Lori Thibodeau, MA, LMFT  
August 14, 2025

#### **Legal Abuse as a Continuation of Coercive Control**

Ellen R. Gutowski, PhD, CPsych  
September 10, 2025

many available confidential dispute resolution processes, which includes both a mediative and evaluative component. This webinar will define and differentiate med/arb from other common dispute resolution options such as mediation, coparenting consultation, and parenting coordination. Questions addressed will include: When is med/arb suitable and not suitable? What are some ethical and procedural challenges inherent in this dual role? How can the voice of the child be obtained? What training and qualifications are necessary to perform this role?

### Registration

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$50

### Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$20



[Register Now!](#)

## DE&I Series: Demystifying Chinese Parenting: An Essential Workshop for Court-Involved Professionals

Maria Young, LMFT

October 16, 2025

## Cross Examination for Parenting Plan Evaluations

Anna Street, JD

October 23, 2025

## Screening for Intimate Partner Violence in Mediation: Tools, Ethics, and Practice Tips

Kelly Browe Olson, JD, LLM & Joi Hollis, PhD

November 4, 2025

## Year in Review: The 2025 Social Science Roundup for Family Law Professionals

Michael A. Saini, PhD, MSW, RSW

December 11, 2025



## 62nd Annual Conference

*Bridging Perspectives: Pioneering Solutions in Family Law*

May 28-31, 2025 | New Orleans, Louisiana

AFCC is all packed for our 62nd Annual Conference in New Orleans next week. Are you ready to go?

Join us as we convene the world's leading experts to build bridges that span the gaps between professional approaches and priorities.

## Fall Virtual Conference

November 12-14 and 17-18, 2025



Family law is constantly evolving, with overburdened courts, more self-represented litigants, and limited access to expert services. A shortage of professionals and the seemingly increase in polarization make creativity and adaptability essential. As the saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention. This year, AFCC is expanding access to education with a virtual conference—an opportunity for professionals to engage with a diverse offering of innovative programs and interventions while staying close to family and office obligations. Join us live and online as we explore fresh approaches to familiar challenges in family law.

All proposals are due by midnight, Pacific Time, April 27, 2025. Please use the online form to submit your proposal. Proposals may draw on one of the concepts above, a topic below, or propose a completely different topic. AFCC is seeking proposals related to new, creative, and innovative approaches to common family law problems, including but not limited to:

- Out-of-Court Resolution
- Appropriate Use of Minors' Counsel
- Parenting Coordination
- Conciliation Court Programs
- Brief Focused Evaluation
- Early Neutral Evaluations
- Coaching
- Family Therapy
- Ethical Considerations for Innovative Programs
- Empirical Evidence for Innovative Programs
- Coparenting after IPV
- Collaborative Professional Teams
- Parent Education
- Adaptations for Neurodiversity and Special Needs
- Private Judging
- Technological Enhancements to Traditional Court Processes
- Problem-Solving Courts
- Parenting Coordination
- Discovery to Enhance Settlement Efforts
- Reaching the "Hard-to-Reach"
- Pro Se Litigants
- Virtual Parent-Child Relationships
- Relocation Issues and Distance Parenting Plans

\*AFCC is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and encourages presenters to incorporate discussion of diversity and/or culture, as it relates to the proposed program.

\*\*University faculty are encouraged to include their students as co-presenters. Seasoned professionals are encouraged to consider co-presenting with professionals who are newer to the field of family law.

\*AFCC encourages workshop proposals with more than one presenter.

Family law is evolving—overburdened courts, self-represented litigants, and limited access to services demand creative, adaptable solutions. As the saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention. Save the date for this online learning event! Full program set to be released by mid-summer.

**Save the date!**

## Member News



**Liberty Aldrich**, AFCC board member from New York was recently selected to receive the Public Service Award from New York University School of Law. Liberty is the Executive Director of The Children's Law Center which represents 5000 children per year in New York City. She sat as a Family Court Judge in Bronx NY and was the Managing Director of the Center for Justice Innovation. Congratulations, Liberty!



**Richard Warshak**, AFCC member from Texas was recently selected to be the 2025 recipient of the Ned Holstein Shared Parenting Research Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations, Richard!

## Chapter News



Congratulations to the **Utah Chapter** for hosting another successful Mediation Day! This is an event in which AFCC members volunteer their time and offered free mediation and legal services to underserved members of the community. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event a success and for exemplifying the spirit of service and collaboration at the heart of AFCC! [Click here](#) to catch a glimpse of this event!

## Upcoming Chapter Events

### AFCC Minnesota Annual Conference

July 24, 2025  
Minneapolis, MN

### AFCC Arizona Family Court Orientation & Training

September 12, 2025  
Phoenix, AZ

### AFCC Florida Annual Advanced Education Program

October 8-10, 2025  
Orlando, FL





**Premela Deck**, AFCC member from Massachusetts was recognized as a Distinguished Alumni by University of North Carolina School of Social Work. Congratulations, Premela!

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## Thank You to Our 62nd Annual Conference Sponsors & Exhibitors!

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PBH Behavioral Consulting and Counseling  
Mediate.com  
Fresh Starts Registry  
Between Two Homes  
Active Parenting Publishers  
Association of Conflict Resolution (ACR)  
Child-Focused Choices  
Bravo Care/HiDow  
Parental Alienation Study Group (PASG)  
Kids First Divorce Education Resource  
Family Court Review (FCR)  
The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court (NCJFCJ)



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The AFCC eNEWS is the monthly e-newsletter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The eNEWS provides up-to-date information for professionals including practice tips, international news, and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The AFCC eNEWS is provided at no charge to you; anyone can [\*\*subscribe\*\*](#).

*AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.*

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