AFCC is an interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

Modern Families:
New Challenges, New Solutions

AFCC 53rd Annual Conference
MODERN FAMILIES:
New Challenges, New Solutions

Sheraton Seattle Hotel • June 1-4, 2016

About the Conference
AFCC strives to offer a wide range of conference sessions highlighting different research, advocacy positions, policies, practices, programs, procedures and ideas. Some programs may be evidence-based while others may report on works in progress, emerging practices or policy initiatives. The goal of the conference is to enhance learning while encouraging respectful inquiry, discussion and debate consistent with AFCC organizational values. AFCC does not necessarily endorse or support the views of the conference presenters.
Today's modern family is a far cry from images of the so-called traditional family of the 1950s. Family structures now include heterosexual marriage, unmarried cohabitants, same-sex partners (married and unmarried), adoptive children, children of assisted reproductive technologies, single parent and multigenerational families, kinship care, foster care and more. With more complex family structures come more complex legal, social and psychological challenges for professionals and families alike. Join AFCC as we explore the impact of changing family structures on our work, our families and our lives.

**Three Keynote Addresses!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyle Pruett, MD</th>
<th>Stephanie Coontz</th>
<th>Justice Mary Yu</th>
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<tr>
<td>Author, <em>Fatherneed</em></td>
<td>Author, <em>The Way We Never Were</em></td>
<td>Washington State Supreme Court</td>
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**More than 100 conference sessions!**

- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Effective Child Interviews
- Child Custody and Domestic Violence
- Research on Mediation and Intimate Partner Violence
- Addictions and Family Court
- Coercive Powers of the Court
- Reunification Techniques
- Step-Up Parenting Plans
- Enhancing Families through Literature
- Enhancing Compliance with Court Orders
- Vicarious Trauma and Burnout
- Same-Sex Parenting

- An international faculty including representatives from Australia, Canada, England, France, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United States.

- Up to 20.5 hours of continuing education for psychologists, lawyers, counselors, social workers, mediators, custody evaluators and mental health professionals (see page 27 for details).

- A truly interdisciplinary gathering including judicial officers, lawyers, mental health and dispute resolution professionals, researchers and students.

- Amazing and fun networking opportunities at receptions, the annual banquet, silent auction, luncheon and world renowned hospitality suite!

**Conference Scholarships are Available!**

Scholarships cover the cost of registration for the conference and a pre-conference institute. If you could use assistance to attend the conference, apply for a scholarship online via the AFCC website www.afccnet.org before March 1, 2016. Recipients will be notified in mid-to-late March. See page 27 for details.

**Help Colleagues Attend AFCC Conferences**

AFCC members have helped hundreds of deserving professionals and students attend AFCC conferences by giving to the AFCC Scholarship Fund for fifteen years. Give to the AFCC Scholarship Fund along with your registration or online. Any amount you can give helps. Your generosity ensures colleagues can stay up-to-date, learn from the best, and benefit from the professional camaraderie that makes AFCC conferences so great.

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The AFCC 53rd Annual Conference in Seattle, which will be held between 1–4 June 2016, will centre around the theme of *Modern Families: New Challenges, New Solutions.* This conference will bring a rich selection of topics, current views and findings. The content of the pre-conference institutes, plenaries and workshops is of such high quality. I warmly invite you to attend one of the best themed international conferences in recent times, so that you can hear and learn from what is on offer.

We wanted this conference to present some of the most current perspectives on a range of issues pertaining to modern parenting. And so, in the pre-conference institutes, we present the opportunity to spend quality time on such issues as alienation and estrangement, mediation when there is intimate partner violence, giving real effect to the voice of the child and analysing what modern day access to justice really is. One of the institutes deals with how animal-based therapy can help high conflict families.

In our three plenary sessions, we will learn about marriage and family trends, modern fathering, and then turn to a view from the bench on same-sex marriage, adoption and families.

It is always important to ensure that we have a wide range of subject matter available in our workshops because all of you will have your specific interests. And so, we have ensured that practitioners from all disciplines have workshops dealing with skills in mediation, evaluation, parenting coordination, court techniques, as well as new ideas and opportunities. But you will see that we have also expanded our horizons to bring you some information on such things as the role of race and culture in marriage dissolution, perspectives in same-sex families and surrogates in parenting. There are also some issues that I think we are right to focus on, such as parents with autism, addiction or substance abuse.

Again, consistent with our theme of modern families, there are workshops focusing on fostering permanency, grandparents and other family members as primary caregivers, international custody mediation and resilience in children growing up in military families.

For judicial officers, our special judicial forum will centre on litigant parents who breach court orders and just how far a judicial officer should go and in what form, in acting coercively. What is the balance between being firm on the one hand, while causing possible damage to children on the other?

As well as our professional programme, the conference will offer truly excellent opportunities for socialising and networking. As usual, the hospitality suite, always popular, will offer you, at no cost, a social haven, and the various receptions and lunches will enable you to meet old friends and new colleagues.

The diversity of subject matter, as well as the number of countries represented by the presenters, is very encouraging to me. Seattle is a remarkably attractive city and I hope that those of you from outside North America will see this as an ideal opportunity to learn from international colleagues and experience the richness that a conference like this offers.

I invite you to make the commitment to come, to mark the time and to then put your attendance plans into action. You will not regret it.

Peter Boshier
AFCC President
## Conference at a Glance

### TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2016
- **6:00pm–8:00pm** Conference Registration

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2016
- **7:30am–6:00pm** Conference Registration
- **8:00am–9:00am** Coffee and Rolls for Institute Registrants
- **8:00am–5:00pm** Exhibit Forum
- **9:00am–5:00pm** Pre-Conference Institutes
- **10:30am–10:45am** Break
- **12:00pm–1:30pm** Lunch on your own
- **12:00pm–4:30pm** AFCC Board of Directors Meeting
- **2:45pm–3:00pm** Break
- **5:00pm–6:00pm** New Member and First Time Attendee Orientation
- **6:00pm–7:00pm** Opening Reception
- **7:00pm–8:00pm** AFCC Awards Ceremony
- **9:00pm–12:00am** AFCC Hospitality Suite

### THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2016
- **6:15am–6:30am** Meditation
- **6:30am–7:15am** Yoga
- **7:30am–8:30am** Chapter Council Meeting
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Conference Registration
- **7:30am–8:45am** Coffee and Rolls
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Exhibit Forum
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Poster Gallery
- **8:30am–10:00am** Workshops 37-48
- **10:00am–10:30am** Break
- **10:30am–11:15am** Plenary Session I
- **11:15am–12:00pm** Plenary Session II
- **12:00pm–1:30pm** Lunch on your own
- **12:00pm–1:30pm** Family Court Review Editorial Board Meeting
- **1:30pm–3:00pm** Workshops 49-60
- **3:00pm–3:30pm** Break
- **3:30pm–5:00pm** Workshops 61-72
- **5:30pm–7:00pm** Silent Auction and Reception
- **7:00pm–9:30pm** AFCC Annual Banquet
- **9:30pm–12:00am** AFCC Hospitality Suite

### FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2016
- **6:15am–6:30am** Meditation
- **6:30am–7:15am** Yoga
- **7:15am–8:15am** AFCC Committee Meetings
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Conference Registration
- **7:30am–8:30am** Coffee and Rolls
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Exhibit Forum
- **7:30am–5:00pm** Poster Gallery
- **8:30am–10:00am** Workshops 37-48
- **10:00am–10:30am** Break
- **10:30am–11:15am** Plenary Session I
- **11:15am–12:00pm** Plenary Session II
- **12:00pm–1:30pm** Lunch on your own
- **12:00pm–1:30pm** Family Court Review Editorial Board Meeting
- **1:30pm–3:00pm** Workshops 49-60
- **3:00pm–3:30pm** Break
- **3:30pm–5:00pm** Workshops 61-72
- **5:30pm–7:00pm** Silent Auction and Reception
- **7:00pm–9:30pm** AFCC Annual Banquet
- **9:30pm–12:00am** AFCC Hospitality Suite

### SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2016
- **6:15am–6:30am** Meditation
- **6:30am–7:15am** Yoga
- **7:30am–12:30pm** Conference Registration
- **8:00am–9:00am** Coffee and Rolls
- **8:00am–12:30pm** Exhibit Forum
- **8:00am–12:30pm** Poster Gallery
- **8:00am–9:00am** AFCC Membership Meeting
- **9:15am–10:45am** Workshops 73-84
- **10:45am–11:00am** Break
- **11:00am–12:30pm** Workshops 85-94

### HOUSEKEEPING
- **2:45pm–3:00pm** Break
- **5:00pm–6:00pm** New Member and First Time Attendee Orientation
- **6:00pm–7:00pm** Opening Reception
- **7:00pm–8:00pm** AFCC Awards Ceremony
- **9:00pm–12:00am** AFCC Hospitality Suite
1. Access to Justice: Don’t Tell Me What You Can’t Do, Tell Me What You Can Do

The task is improving access to justice. Who changes? Litigants? Lawyers? Judges? Court administrators? How and what do they change and who is responsible for facilitating the change? Who does the change benefit? Presenters in this institute will focus on identifying innovations that can enhance the experience and toolbox of those struggling with family law issues in challenging times. This interactive institute will be of special interest to judges and court administrators.

Hon. Mark A. Juhas, Los Angeles Superior Court, Los Angeles, CA
Bonnie Rose Hough, MPA, JD, Judicial Council of California, San Francisco, CA
William J. Howe, III, JD, Gevurtz, Menashe, Larson & Howe, PC, Portland, OR
Justice Jim Williams, Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, Family Division, Halifax, NS, Canada

2. Before Too Much Damage is Done: Early Intervention with Parent-Child Contact Problems

High conflict and disrupted parent-child relationships create extreme risks of maladjustment in children. Too often, these families do not receive specialized intervention until a parent-child relationship is fractured, exchanges are disrupted or the child is exhibiting entrenched dysfunctional behavior. Delay compounds both the cost and complications of intervention and reduces the chance of success. This institute will present strategies for creative interventions with high conflict families, including those with young children, addressing dysfunctional behavior without compromising external investigations. Emphasis will be placed on systemic, practical, community-based interventions, including recreational, educational, therapeutic and judicial management components.

Lyn R. Greenberg, PhD, ABPP, Los Angeles, CA
John A. Moran, PhD, Phoenix, AZ
Hon. Marjorie A. Slabach (Ret.), Fremont, CA


This institute introduces practical means of understanding, assessing and intervening in the often circular dynamics of the conflicted, court-involved family system. Topics will include: (1) alienation, estrangement, enmeshment and the hybrid model; (2) understanding and assessing the systemic pressures that commonly corrupt the child’s voice, recognizing and responding to the “chameleon child”; (3) improving the success of child-centered interventions (e.g., child therapies and reunification) by balancing the parents’ roles; and (4) the added value and efficiencies of conducting process-oriented family assessments. Video illustrations of specific topics and case vignettes will be included. Participants will learn innovative methods to better conceptualize and respond to the dynamics of the conflicted, court-involved family system.

Benjamin D. Garber, PhD, HealthyParent.com, Nashua, NH

4. From Barnyard to Courtroom: The Application of Animal-Assisted Therapy to Families in High Conflict

Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) has long been used to engage treatment resistant populations. This institute will present a brief history of AAT’s evolution into the mainstream therapeutic community and discuss its utility with families for whom traditional mental health interventions are limited, including families experiencing high conflict divorce, a group with a marked resistance to change. Presenters will suggest correspondence between the benefits of AAT and the therapeutic and educational needs of families in high conflict and describe a range of applications of AAT for high conflict families through a review of literature, case studies and video demonstration. Presenters will emphasize the translation of AAT principles and practices to the actual settings in which clinicians and attorneys work.

Abigail Judge, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, MA
Rebecca Bailey, PhD, Transitioning Families, Glen Ellen, CA
Cynthia Psaila, MS, LMFT, Transitioning Families, Glen Ellen, CA
Charlyn Belluzzo, PhD, MD, Kenwood, CA

5. Family Mediation with Parents Reporting High Levels of Intimate Partner Violence: Using Theory, Research and Experience to Guide Us

This institute will examine research, practice and preliminary data from an ongoing NIJ-funded study of the effectiveness of mediating cases with high levels of intimate partner violence. The study randomly assigned cases to shuttle or videoconferencing mediation, or “return to court.” Presenters will (1) share the manual prepared for the study, which was used to train and support the mediators; (2) review the underlying research; (3) demonstrate the different forms of mediation used; (4) provide initial data and feedback from parties and mediators; and (5) discuss concerns when mediating these cases.

Amy G. Applegate, JD, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, IN
Connie J.A. Beck, PhD, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
Darrell F. Hale, JD, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Washington, DC
Amy Holtzworth-Munroe, PhD, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, IN

6. Cadillac or Chevy? Providing High Quality, Affordable and Trustworthy Processes

The cost of child custody evaluations and related services is prohibitive for many families. Hundred-page reports and multiple consultants are available for the affluent, but how are the needs of people of modest means and in jurisdictions with limited resources served? How can services be provided in rural communities where mental health professional may be asked by the judge to serve two roles for one family? This institute will examine the spiraling costs related to child custody disputes and examine alternative models that address the issues of quality, jurisdictional expectations, comprehensiveness and cost in various geographic regions and across socioeconomic strata.

Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD, Riegler, Shienvold & Associates, Harrisburg, PA
Brent Cashatt, JD, Des Moines, IA
Hon. William C. Fee, Angola, IN
Leslie Todd, LCSW, Baton Rouge, LA
7. Voice of the Child in Parenting Coordination: If, When and How

It is vital to consider the child’s voice when resolving family disputes. This institute will examine the social science research on the benefits and cautions of listening to the voices of children and adolescents. Factors affecting the reliability of their input, such as interviewer bias, selective attention, memory, suggestibility and maturity, will be discussed. A developmentally-informed interview protocol, applicable to different dispute resolution processes, will be provided. The involvement of children in parenting coordination will be elaborated on and illustrated with case examples and group discussion.

Barbara Jo Fidler, PhD, CPsych, Toronto, ON, Canada

8. Moving Families Forward: A Coordinated Therapeutic Response to Parental Alienation, Estrangement and High Conflict Family Situations

Attachment disruption presents some of the most difficult family situations for lawyers and mental health professionals to address. This institute will present courageous counseling as an approach to these challenging cases, and will provide practical building blocks for a coordinated community approach. Participants will observe and practice how case management, teamwork and communication protocols provide a foundation for a successful intervention. Sponsored by the AFCC Washington Chapter.

Alyson Jones, MA, West Vancouver, BC, Canada
Shelley Hardy, MA, North Vancouver, BC, Canada
Rebecca Smyth, MA, West Vancouver, BC, Canada
Saba Golchin, MA, West Vancouver, BC, Canada

Join AFCC Today!

Not only will you save up to $175 on registration when you pay by March 7, 2016, you will be joining the premier interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict.

AFCC is the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts—members are dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict. AFCC brings together professionals from multiple disciplines in the private, public and nonprofit sectors from all over the world. AFCC is unique in that members do not share a common profession. Instead, AFCC members share a strong commitment to education, innovation and collaboration in order to benefit communities, empower families and promote a healthy future for children.

Join AFCC when you register for the conference and save $10 on your first year’s membership and up to $175 on conference registration. Select the “New Member Special” when completing the registration form and register at the AFCC member rate.

AFCC Member Benefits Include:
• Family Court Review, the quarterly academic and research journal of AFCC in print and electronic format with full access to the online archives dating back to the first issue in 1963.
• Online Membership Directory of more than 5,000 colleagues worldwide in a searchable format.
• AFCC eNEWS, the monthly electronic newsletter from AFCC delivers the latest developments in the field straight to your inbox.
• Parenting Coordination Network listserv of AFCC members to share tips, advice, referrals, and network with others who serve as PCs or are interested in the role.
• Substantial Member Discounts on registration for AFCC conferences and training programs; a 15% discount on AFCC publications; and 20% discount on publications from Wiley Publishing.
• Professional Liability Insurance for arbitrators, hearing officers, mediators, parenting coordinators and educators through Complete Equity Markets, Inc.

Add an AFCC Chapter to Your Membership!

AFCC Chapters provide an opportunity for AFCC members to network and share their interdisciplinary view of family court matters on a local level. AFCC Chapters may sponsor roundtable discussions, conferences, newsletters and additional opportunities to get together with other AFCC members. All chapter members must belong to AFCC. There are AFCC Chapters in the following locations:

Alberta
Arizona
Australia
California
Colorado
Florida
Illinois
Indiana
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Missouri
New Jersey
New York
Ohio
Ontario
Oregon
Texas
Washington
Wisconsin
AFCC New Zealand Network

www.afccnet.org
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2016**

- 7:30am-6:00pm Conference Registration
- 8:00am-9:00am Coffee and Rolls for Institute Registrants
- 8:00am-5:00pm Exhibit Forum
- 9:00am-5:00pm Pre-Conference Institutes (See pages 4 and 5)
- 10:30am-10:45am Break
- 12:00pm-1:30pm Lunch on your own
- 12:00pm-4:30pm AFCC Board of Directors Meeting
- 2:45pm-3:00pm Break
- 5:00pm-6:00pm New Member and First Time Attendee Orientation
- 6:00pm-7:00pm Opening Reception
- 7:00pm-8:00pm AFCC Awards Ceremony
- 9:00pm-12:00am Hospitality Suite

**THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2016**

- 6:15am-6:30am Meditation
- 6:30am-7:15am Yoga
- 7:30am-8:30am Chapter Council Meeting
- 7:30am-5:00pm Conference Registration
- 7:30am-8:45am Coffee and Rolls
- 7:30am-5:00pm Exhibit Forum
- 7:30am-5:00pm Poster Gallery
- 8:45am-10:00am Opening Session

**Welcome: Hon. Peter Boshier, AFCC President, Wellington, New Zealand**

**For Better and Worse: Marriage and Family Trends in the 21st Century**

Modern family life and relationship patterns are being changed by two contradictory trends. On the one hand there has been a dramatic increase in support for civil rights and interpersonal equality. On the other hand, families have experienced an equally powerful increase in economic inequality and insecurity. Stephanie Coontz, director of research and public education at the Council on Contemporary Families, will discuss how these contradictions impact the modern family. Ms. Coontz is professor emerita at The Evergreen State College, and the author of seven books on the social history of marriage, gender, relationships and families.

**Stephanie Coontz, Author, The Way We Never Were, The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA**

- 10:00am-10:30am Break

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*Every good idea I have had for a new family law program was inspired by something I learned at an AFCC conference.*

Stacey Marz, JD
Director, Family Law Self-Help Center, Alaska Court System, Anchorage, Alaska
1. Bias in the Family: The Role of Race and Culture in Custody Disputes

Even after the US Supreme Court's decision in Palmore v. Sidoti (1984), some courts continue to consider the parents' or the child's racial or ethnic background in custody disputes involving parents of different races. Assuming that in some cases consideration of these factors might be in the child's best interests, there remain reasons to be concerned. Judges and custody evaluators (like the rest of us) might be influenced by explicit or implicit biases, or place too much weight on the racial, ethnic or cultural background of one parent, thereby trumping other, potentially more important factors such as intimate partner violence. This session will analyze how courts have balanced these factors and explore possible reforms to ensure that custody decisions are based on the child's best interests.

Solang Maldonado, Seton Hall Law School, Garwood, NJ
Hon. Ramona Gonzalez, La Crosse, WI
Stacey Platt, JD, Loyola Univ. Chicago School of Law, Chicago, IL
Larry Fong, PhD, Calgary, AB, Canada

2. Reunification Techniques in High Conflict Divorce and Family Abduction Cases

Reunifying children following family abduction, and in high conflict divorce where children are alienated from one parent, presents special challenges for the courts and mental health practitioners. Effective intervention with these families requires a multifaceted-team approach. A reunification team empowered by strong court orders is imperative. This seminar will outline the special issues in these cases and tips for working with these complex family systems. Suggestions for how mental health professionals can develop a reunification team in their own community will be offered.

JoAnn Behrman-Lippert, PhD, Transitioning Families, Reno, NV
Rebecca Bailey, PhD, Transitioning Families, Glen Ellen, CA
Abigail Judge, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, MA
Cynthia Psaila, MS, LMFT, Transitioning Families, Glen Ellen, CA

3. Negotiating and Mediating with Game Theory Principles

This workshop examines the application of game theory to negotiating and mediating family law disputes. Presenters will provide an overview of game theory and related research findings. In addition, three easily learned and immediately applicable game theory principles will be distilled to bargaining stages that help disputing parties reach optimal outcomes. This presentation questions the fundamental assumption underlying a dispute while demonstrating how to expand the pie for both parties to reach optimal outcomes.

Kenneth H. Waldron, PhD, Monona Mediation and Counseling, Monona, WI
Allan R. Koritzinsky, JD, Middleton, WI

4. Child Custody and Domestic Violence: New Interactive Online Practice Guides

The Battered Women’s Justice Project (BWJP), in consultation with AFCC and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, developed a framework and practice guides to help family court practitioners better identify, understand and account for the context and implications of domestic violence in child custody cases. An increasing number of jurisdictions and family law professionals have adopted this approach and integrated the practice guides into their daily work. In response to this growing demand, BWJP built a prototype for freely accessible interactive online versions of these materials. During this session, the prototype development team will explain its features and functionality, and demonstrate how practitioners in various professional roles can use these new online resources.

Gabrielle Davis, JD, Battered Women’s Justice Project, Minneapolis, MN
Loretta Frederick, JD, Battered Women’s Justice Project, Minneapolis, MN
Nancy Ver Steegh, JD, MSW, William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, MN

5. Effective Interviews with Children

Interviewing children in the context of family divorce is not simply a matter of sitting them down and asking them questions. Many well-meaning family court professionals make critical mistakes in the process. This session will provide participants with an opportunity to observe a videotaped child interview (not a role play) and to encounter best practices in conducting child interviews from a presenter with 35 years of experience. Participants will see how to build rapport, frame questions to elicit meaningful answers, and structure the conversation according to the child’s developmental level.

Kyle Pruett, MD, Yale Study Center, New Haven, CT


Professionals working in the family justice system of British Columbia will discuss the impact of the new Family Law Act implemented in March 2013. The new law has created a more collaborative environment where the best interests of the child are paramount. The services provided by publicly funded family justice counsellors who mediate parenting plans and write specialized parenting assessment for the courts, will be described.

Lisa Bury, BA, Ministry of Justice of British Columbia, Nanaimo, BC, Canada
Patricia Elliott, LLB, Family Justice Services Division, Victoria, BC, Canada
7. Changes to the New Zealand Family Justice System: The Effect on Lower Socioeconomic Groups

Changes to the private law family justice system in New Zealand have resulted in a structure that is complex, difficult to negotiate and presents major barriers to those seeking resolution of care/guardianship disputes concerning children. The right to representation has been severely limited and has resulted in a two-tier justice system. An analysis of the unintended consequences will be presented for discussion.

Allan Cooke, PhD, LLB, Auckland, New Zealand
Hana Ellis, LLB, Auckland, New Zealand

8. Biology, Status, Donors and Surrogates: Determining Parentage in the 21st Century

Post Obergefell, troubling dissolution issues remain regarding the legitimacy of children of same-sex couples. This session will help participants understand: (1) the complexity of parentage determination in a same-sex union; (2) how state courts have applied the legal presumption of legitimacy to births resulting from alternative insemination and surrogacy; and (3) new issues that are likely to arise in the future including the ramifications of statutes permitting the recognition of the rights of three or more parents.

Hon. Amy M. Davenport (Ret.), Montpelier, VT
Hon. William Cohen, Rutland, VT

9. Hybrid Parent Training to Reduce Familial Stress During Separation and Divorce

This session will examine the research on how the negative effects of stress during separation and divorce can adversely impact parenting and child development. An evidence-based approach to reduce stress and reactivity and strengthen well-being will be presented. This approach is an integral part of a newly designed online and group-based hybrid parent training program using Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT). Tools practitioners can use to help parents reduce stress, strengthen their co-parenting relationships, and parent more effectively will be shared.

Laura Backen Jones, PhD, Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR


Testing is a commonly used component of custody evaluations even though it is not required by practice guidelines. This workshop will provide an interdisciplinary perspective on the usefulness of psychological testing in child custody evaluations, particularly as it pertains to the issue of parenting.

Robert A. Simon, PhD, San Diego, CA
Hon. Thomas Trent Lewis, Los Angeles Superior Court, Los Angeles, CA
Ronald W. Nelson, JD, Lenexa, KS

11. Voice of the Child in a Diverse Society: Singapore Family Justice Courts

This workshop will highlight the complexities of mediation and adjudication in the unique context of a multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious society of many different nationalities. Presenters will share Singapore’s perspectives on how family disputes involving children are dealt with through child focused and child inclusive dispute resolution approaches as a way to protect children from parental conflict. Through the use of a case study, key principles from Singapore’s model of family justice for family disputes will be discussed.

Hon. Valerie Thean, Family Justice Courts, Singapore
Hon. Angelina Hing, Family Justice Courts, Singapore
Sylvia Tan, MPsych, Family Justice Courts, Singapore

12. Enhancing Families Through Literature: An Innovative Way to Decrease Conflict

How can a discussion of Kafka’s The Metamorphosis reduce conflict and improve parenting? Come learn about an innovative program that unleashes the power of literature to change the manner in which disputing parents communicate and co-parent with each other. Modeling how parents can incorporate reading into the fabric of parenting, the program enlists the participation of a judge, court family service officer, English professor and childhood educator.

Hon. Richard A. Simons, Massachusetts Probate and Family Court, Pittsfield, MA
Amy A. Koenig, MA, Massachusetts Probate and Family Court, Pittsfield, MA

12:00pm-1:30pm  AFCC Luncheon
Presiding: Hon. Peter Boshier, AFCC President, Wellington, New Zealand

1:30pm-3:00pm  Workshops 13-24

13. Managing and Evaluating Your Relocation Case

Many judges, attorneys and child custody evaluators consider relocation cases to be troublesome, largely because the choices are limited and difficult for children. This workshop will examine the relevant legal and psychological literature and help participants guide their work. It will focus on critical and relevant facts, risks and protective factors, and provide constructive arguments or well-constructed recommendations to the court in these difficult and challenging cases.

Philip M. Stahl, PhD, ABPP, Queen Creek, AZ
14. Enhancing Compliance with Family Law Orders

Compliance with family law orders plays a pivotal role in the well-being, success and health of children and families. This workshop presents a model of factors affecting the ability to comply with a wide range of orders. The model includes such factors as race, income, education and social equity issues; key trends in life expectancy, relationship stability, family size and complexity; homelessness and household configuration; child support arrears; and reintegration of formerly incarcerated parents into family and community.

Charlene Depner, PhD, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, San Francisco, CA
Nancy Taylor, MA, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, San Francisco, CA
Anna Maves, JD, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, Sacramento, CA
Chelsie Bright, PhD, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, San Francisco, CA

15. Reassessing Domestic Violence: Analyzing, Treating, Lawyering and Judging

The panel will review the development of domestic violence as a psychological, sociological and legal concept. Panelists will review and discuss data that challenges many ideas about domestic violence, the nature of its occurrence, diagnosis and treatment, as well as the challenges courts face in handling the multiple issues for victims, perpetrators and families in domestic violence cases. This workshop will also address ways in which the mental health and legal communities can work together more effectively in addressing domestic violence issues.

Donald G. Dutton, PhD, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Hon. Mark A. Juhas, Los Angeles, CA
Michael J. Kretzmer, JD, Los Angeles, CA
Leslie M. Drozd, PhD, Newport Beach, CA
Amy Holzworth-Munroe, PhD, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, IN

16. The Impact of Parental Autism Spectrum Disorder on Conflict Resolution

The majority of married adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) remain undiagnosed, contributing significant and unexplained challenges to all spheres of family functioning. Healthcare providers, educators and family law professionals who do not discern how parental ASD impacts conflict resolution face the risk of compounding a family’s presenting issues. This workshop offers a thorough review of the current literature on adult ASD, and presents data from a new study on co-parenting when a partner has ASD.

Cathryn Rench, PhD, Univ. of Massachusetts-Boston, Lyon, France

17. Tearing Your Hair Out: Exploring New Interventions in High Conflict Cases

High conflict cases are some of the most challenging that the family court system encounters. This interactive workshop will examine existing interventions used by courts and identify critical considerations when working with high conflict parties. The presenters will propose a specialized docket for high conflict parents and will explore other creative ways to leverage the resources of the courts to reduce high conflict between parents and harm to children.

Christine A. Coates, JD, MEd, Boulder, CO
Hon. Denise McColley, Napoleon, OH

18. The Forgotten Fathers: Examining the Experiences of Diverse Fathers

Fathers are often granted “visitation” and called “babysitters,” “deadbeat dads” and “baby daddies,” however many are struggling to be respected as single, adoptive or involved fathers. The presenter will discuss the current research in the area of fatherhood and make recommendations for professionals to incorporate and improve clinical practices when working with fathers. Participants will engage in discourse about the contributing factors that have made parenting difficult for fathers.

Mercedes E. Ebanks, PhD, Howard Univ., Washington, DC


This workshop will examine the use of mediation in open adoption. Presenters will define open adoption, explore the benefits of open adoption for children, adoptive families and biological parents, and illustrate open adoption in practice. The presenters will provide participants with practical suggestions working with post-adoption communication agreements and for overcoming challenges that often are inherent in working with families exploring adoption.

Julie Gentili Ambrust, JD, Mediation Northwest, Eugene, OR
Meg Goldberg, MS, JD, Goldberg Mediation, Portland, OR
Caitlyn Jackson, MS, Lane County Family Mediation, Eugene, OR
Nathaline Frener, MS, Lane County Family Mediation, Eugene, OR

20. Behind the Bars: A New Zealand Initiative Providing Family Dispute Resolution in Prisons

New Zealand’s Family Dispute Resolution Act has provided an opportunity to develop an initiative in prisons for children to maintain a connection to their parent throughout the period of incarceration and upon release. This workshop will showcase the initiative, opportunities and challenges, including the involvement of the indigenous Maori community.

Nicola M. Hartfield, Napier, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand
Keri M. Morris, Wellington, New Zealand

A family member who suffers from addiction or substance abuse has a profound impact on family dynamics in the best of times. During a divorce or separation, the disease's impact can have life-changing and permanent consequences. This workshop will examine ways in which family courts can intervene to address the needs of families coping with addiction. Presenters will explain how courts can develop and implement a holistic approach to substance abuse and addiction among separating and divorcing families.

Barbara A. Babb, MS, JD, Univ. of Baltimore School of Law, Baltimore, MD
Gloria H. Danziger, JD, MPhil, Univ. of Baltimore School of Law, Baltimore, MD
Judge Cathy Hollenberg Serrette, Prince George's County Circuit Court, Upper Marlboro, MD
Lionel Moore, Prince George's County Circuit Court Family Division, Upper Marlboro, MD

22. It's My Life Too: Radical Innovations in Child-Inclusive Dispute Resolution

This workshop will consider radical new developments in child-inclusive practice in England and Wales, with a particular focus on family mediation. Presenters will discuss changes in policy and practice, thorny legal, ethical and welfare dilemmas, and the views of children and young people who have experienced the family justice system. Case studies will illustrate new child-inclusive approaches in mediation and participants will be invited to share their experiences, views and concerns about including children and young people in dispute resolution.

Janet Anne Walker, BA (Hons), BPhil, Newcastle Univ., Fairlight, East Sussex, England
Chris Sherwood, BA (Hons), Relate, London, England

23. Twenty Years On and Moving Forward: Child Protection Mediation in British Columbia

This interactive workshop will present successful outcomes and lessons learned over two decades in using child protection mediation (CPM) in British Columbia. Particular focus will be on recent initiatives and successful strategies attributed to the continued use of CPM for children, families and communities throughout the province. Participants will learn about CPM and domestic violence, mediating with Aboriginal families and bringing the child's voice to CPM.

Daniel VanderSluis, MA, Family Justice Services Division, Ministry of Justice, Victoria, BC, Canada
Andrea Clarke, MSW, Family Justice Services Division, Ministry of Justice, Victoria, BC, Canada


This session features three presentations based on empirical studies conducted among Chinese judges, parents and children. The first will illustrate cultural group differences in parenting practices, including the effect of acculturation on Chinese immigrants’ parenting. The second will highlight how the content of a court-related parenting education program should be modified for divorcing Chinese parents. Finally, the moderating effects of Chinese parenting and the father-child relationship between interparental violence and child victimization will be presented.

April Chiung-Tao Shen, PhD, National Taiwan Univ., Taipei, Taiwan
Yi-Ping Hsieh, PhD, Univ. of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Ching-Yu Huang, PhD, Alliant International Univ., San Diego, CA

3:00pm-3:30pm Break

3:30pm-5:00pm Workshops 25-36

25. Getting to “Yes, And”: How Core Improv Comedy Techniques Enhance Mediation Skills

Participants in this high energy and interactive workshop will engage in comedy improv training activities that promote interpersonal acceptance, deep listening, authenticity, collaboration and team building. Discussion will focus on how these techniques can be directly applied to teaching and practicing effective negotiation and mediation skills. Participants will learn how “yes, and” responses build a more collaborative process and help to promote an interest based process. Similarly, participants will see how “yes, but” and “no” are more typical of positional negotiations and limit the opportunity for developing creative and maximally beneficial solutions.

Gregory Firestone, PhD, Tampa, FL

26. Collaborative Practice: Skills and Solutions for Every Restructuring Family

Collaborative practice gives clients control and privacy. By focusing on the future, parents in conflict are guided to resolve problems in ways that serve their families for the long term. This session will explore how collaborative practice works to resolve difficult cases; how much it costs, including lower cost and pro bono models; and how the collaborative method can be applied to all family disputes, including non-married parents, same-sex unions, elder law, probate and premarital agreements.

Deborah O. Day, PsyD, Psychological Affiliates, Winter Park, FL
Elaine T. Silver, JD, Silver Divorce Center, Lake Mary, FL
Adam T. Magill, MBA, Valuation & Litigation Services, Orlando, FL
27. Snubbing the DSM-5: Reports without Diagnoses

When two parents are involved in litigation concerning access to or custody of their children, and when one of the two parents carries the weight of a diagnostic label, it is not uncommon for the other to presume that his or her effectiveness as a parent will be deemed superior. Presenters in this workshop will explore the reasons that diagnostic labels are frequently more prejudicial than probative.

David A. Martindale, PhD, ABPP, St. Petersburg, FL
Hon. Jane Pearl, New York, NY
Jeffrey P. Wittmann, PhD, Albany, NY

28. Family Court Social Services in the Eyes of the Clients

This workshop will present the findings of a nationwide study of interventions by the Israeli Family Court Social Services, which assessed the effectiveness of the service by obtaining evaluations from clients. The study showed a high level of client satisfaction, even when no agreement was reached, despite the high incidence of violence in the family. The study helps service providers to identify, early in the process, the factors which point to the likelihood of success, even in high conflict disputes.

Hon. Philip Marcus (Ret.), Jerusalem, Israel
Tali Bayer-Topilsky, PhD, Engelberg Center for Children and Youth, Jerusalem, Israel
Anat Inbar, MSW, Family Court Social Services, Jerusalem, Israel

29. Legal and Psychological Perspectives on Same-Sex Parent Families

The gay and lesbian “baby boom” of the last few decades has resulted in the formation of a diverse range of family structures. Frequently the legal and social science communities have not been able to accommodate the diversity of same-sex parent families or understand their unique strengths and vulnerabilities. When these families come into contact with the family court system, these factors can have a significant impact on the experience of children and parents. This workshop will equip legal, mental health and forensic practitioners with a clear understanding of the unique factors to consider when same-sex families separate.

Catherine M. Boland, PhD, Sydney, NSW, Australia
Hon. Alexandra L. Harland, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

30. He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother: Understanding Vicarious Trauma and Burnout

Families with court involvement may present a host of emotionally draining issues, including high conflict, alienation, physical and sexual abuse and intimate partner violence. These cases take up a significant amount of time and resources, which makes them professionally and personally exhausting. This workshop will identify some core warning signs for vicarious trauma among court professionals such as burnout, exhaustion, depression, bias and loss of patience. The presenters will focus on ideas for reducing court professionals’ susceptibility to vicarious trauma and developing wellness strategies to better serve families in crisis.

Ruth Ouzts Moore, MEd, PhD, Lamar Univ., Savannah, GA
Ann M. Ordway, JD, PhD, Lamar Univ., Chattanooga, TN

31. Stepping Up Our Understanding of Parenting Plan Modifications

Step-up planning involves moving from an existing parenting access schedule to one where a parent assumes more access and responsibility for the child. This may occur when a child is very young and initial plans were limited, when a parent moves closer, when mental illness or substance abuse is successfully treated, or for a variety of other reasons when more time is warranted and/or agreed upon. In this presentation, a model to guide these decisions will be proposed.

Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, William James College, Wellesley, MA
Marsha Kline Pruett, PhD, ABPP, Smith College, Northampton, MA
Leslie M. Drozd, PhD, Newport Beach, CA
Hon. Thomas Trent Lewis, Los Angeles Superior Court, Los Angeles, CA

32. Attorney and Parenting Evaluator: Collaboration to Best Serve the Modern Family

When a parenting evaluation is ordered, attorneys and parenting evaluators have several points of contact: at the time of the referral, during the evaluation, when the report is issued, during post-report communications, and during trial. At each point, there are opportunities for improved collaboration and opportunities for confusion. This workshop will help professionals better understand their respective roles and obligations in an effort to more effectively serve the families they are trying to assist.

Jennifer Wheeler, PhD, Seattle, WA
Stacy D. Heard, JD, The Law Office of Stacy D. Heard, Seattle, WA

AFCC presents THE most valuable conferences for professionals who work with families and courts in interdisciplinary roles. I strongly recommend it and plan to attend one per year.

Denise B. Cleveland, EdD
Dothan, Alabama
33. Grandparents, Family Members and Other Nonparents as Primary Caregivers

It has become quite commonplace for grandparents, family members, and other nonparents to assume the responsibilities of a child’s primary caregiver for biological parents who, for whatever reason, have become unwilling or unable to properly care for their child. This workshop will address in what context these types of situations may arise and what a primary caregiver’s rights are. It will also address what a caregiver can do to manage and properly provide for such a child while in their care.

Glenn Slate, JD, MA, Kennewick, WA

34. International Custody Mediation: Parenting Coordination as Process Enhancement

This workshop will describe a unique US State Department and law school run international family mediation pilot project launched in the US in 2009 and expanded in 2013 to include parenting coordination as part of its service model. The interdisciplinary project is aimed at addressing the growing problem of international child abduction, enhancing the prospects of dispute resolution in this area, and providing an aftercare process to monitor and support compliance with agreements and the psychological adjustments of children and parents.

Debra K. Carter, PhD, National Cooperative Parenting Center, Bradenton, FL
Douglas N. Frenkel, JD, Univ. of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, PA

35. Modern Families Getting Older: The Evolution of Eldercaring Coordination

Families don’t disappear when children turn 18—they continue to grow as the oldest generation ages, with similar issues and dynamics. Five states are piloting eldercaring coordination, focusing on the conflicts that arise when elder parents become the focus of attention, rather than children. Participants in this workshop will learn the differences between eldercaring coordination, mediation and parenting coordination, as well as how to expand services so they can also apply to high conflict families involving elder concerns.

Linda Fieldstone, MEd, Family Court Services, Miami, FL
Sue Bronson, LCSW, New Prospects, Milwaukee, WI
Jacqueline C. Hagerott, JD, LLM, Hocking College, Nelsonville, OH

36. Judicial Officers Forum

The Coercive Powers of the Court: Finding a Balance

Judicial officers may be torn between the needs of children, the rights of parents, and how to ensure compliance with court orders. Litigants who have no respect for the authority of the court create a particular challenge. What is the best course of action when children or parents refuse to comply? How are underlying issues best surfaced? Is it ever appropriate for a judicial officer to sanction children? This session provides an opportunity for judicial officers to participate in a facilitated discussion about these vexing matters.

Participation is limited to judicial officers only.

Hon. Marjorie Slabach (Ret.), Fremont, CA
Hon. Lori K. Smith, King County Superior Court, Seattle, WA

5:15pm-6:15pm International Attendee Reception
Evening Taste of Seattle
9:00pm-12:00am AFCC Hospitality Suite

37. How to Deal with Clinical Issues, Clinical Evidence and Clinical Experts

This workshop is for expert witnesses, attorneys and judges who deal with mental health and other clinical issues in court. The emphasis will be on practical tips, specific techniques and common errors. These will be presented at an advanced level. Specific topics will include deposition issues, trial strategy, framing techniques, opening arguments, direct and cross-examination, use of the clinical literature, impeaching experts, dealing with psychological testing, and addressing psychopathology such as mental illness and personality disorders.

Steven G. Miller, MD, Massachusetts Medical Education Group, Waltham, MA
38. Therapeutic Reunification in Alleged Abuse Cases

Allegations of physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and substance abuse are often the cause of a breach in contact between the alleged perpetrator and their children, and are common in the divorce arena. This workshop presents two models drawn from other therapeutic contexts, and adapts them specifically to the area of high conflict divorce. Interventions such as these, with specific protocols for safety and accountability, offer children, therapists and judges alike a roadmap to the possible repair and healing of broken relationships.

Beth Winters, MA, Esperero Family Center, Tucson, AZ
Susan Winder, MSW, Tucson, AZ

39. Same-Sex Parenting: The Experiences of Professionals with Parents Navigating Family Justice

Same-sex couples have a unique set of needs and issues, which are most clearly demonstrated if children are involved post-separation. This workshop will highlight findings from a survey of legal and mental health professionals of the post-separation challenges expressed by their same-sex clients when it comes to co-parenting, navigating the family law system, and biases in the family justice system.

Shely Polak, MSW, RSW, Richmond Hill, ON, Canada
Rachel Birnbaum, PhD, LLM, King’s Univ. College, Western, London, ON, Canada
Alex Finlayson, LLB, Toronto, ON, Canada

40. Examining Attorney-Expert Relationships: Ethics and Choices

This advanced workshop examines the expectations and obligations of the privately retained mental health expert in a child custody case. Attorney-expert relationships occur in a complex context that is governed by legal, ethical and contract principles. It is through negotiation of contracts that mental health experts can maintain their “practice style” and choose the activities they will perform and the conditions under which they will perform these activities. This workshop articulates models to inform these decisions and negotiations.

Milfred D. Dale, PhD, JD, Topeka, KS
Matthew J. Sullivan, PhD, Palo Alto, CA
Hon. William C. Fee, Angola, IN

41. Notes from a Masterclass in Child-Informed Mediation

This presentation briefly describes the international and legal contexts in which child-informed mediation is occurring, and current research into its efficacy. Five advanced clinical strategies for working powerfully and supportively with children and parents in child informed mediation settings will be shared. The Children Beyond Dispute online training materials will be illustrated.

Jennifer McIntosh, PhD, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

42. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders in the Parenting Context

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs), caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, affect between 5-17% of the US population. Thus, it is quite possible that professionals may encounter parents and children with FASDs in the family law context. This workshop focuses on how to identify the behavioral and adaptive manifestations of the brain damage associated with FASDs so as to inform assessment decisions and recommendations for treatment/interventions.

Natalie Novick Brown, PhD, Univ. of Washington, Seattle, WA
Hon. Anthony Wartnik (Ret.), Mercer Island, WA

43. Global Responses to Family Violence: Comparing Grave Risk and Best Interests

The treatment of family violence in proceedings under the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention will be compared with international relocation cases. Issues to be considered include what constitutes family violence, when family violence can present a grave risk or create an intolerable situation, the role of expert evidence, and the weight courts give to the best interests of the child in deciding whether to order return, or permit relocation.

Justice Steven Strickland, Family Court of Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia

44. Seeing Color in a White World: Working With Families across Cultural Lines

How are culturally relevant factors recognized in a custody hearing or mediation? When family professionals do not acknowledge the implicit bias built into white middle class institutions, family court professionals tend to stumble. How can professionals be neutral mediators and evaluators of a cross-cultural case if they are unwilling or unable to see different perspectives as valid? This session will explore alternative models of analyzing cases and give practitioners tools to examine the unspoken biases we bring to our work.

Alise M. Sanchez, BA, NAYA Family Center, Portland, OR
April D. Nelson, JD, Delaware County Juvenile Court, Delaware, OH

45. Minnesota’s New, Child-Focused Best Interest Factors

This workshop will focus on Minnesota’s 2015 revamping of its best interest factors used in child custody determinations in three segments: (1) historical overview of Minnesota’s best interest factors, which originated from the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act, and the ensuing judicial and legislative struggles over the factors; (2) how a group of stakeholders with very different perspectives on parents’ “battles” and joint custody were able to reach consensus on an overhaul of the factors; and (3) practical applications of Minnesota’s new best interest factors to specific cases.

Mindy F. Mitnick, EdM, MA, Edina, MN
Michael Dittberner, JD, Edina, MN
46. Crossover Cases: Child Protection Services in High Conflict Cases

Parents in high conflict separations sometimes make allegations that result in the involvement of a child protection service (CPS) agency. This can result in crossover cases of concurrent family and child welfare or criminal proceedings. Adding to the complexity of these cases, CPS workers or police may be witnesses or resources for the family court process. This workshop will include discussion of recent research by the presenters on these challenging cases, and suggestions for policy reform and professional best practices.

Nicholas Bala, JD, LLM, Queen’s Univ., Kingston, ON, Canada
Michael Saini, MSW, PhD, Univ. of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada
Claire Houston, LLB, Watertown, MA

47. Parental Child Abduction: The Law, the Challenges and the Search for Solutions

Parental child abduction is a worldwide phenomenon where families and the jurisdictions impacted continue to grow as more people move across international borders for work, recreation and refuge. This workshop reviews the contemporary operation of the Hague Convention and its application in England/Wales, Israel, New Zealand and the US. The implications of the convention for children’s rights, research on the long-term effects of parental abduction, and ways to best support abducted children over their lifetimes will also be addressed.

Marilyn Freeman, LLM, PhD, Westminster Law School, London, England
Nicola Taylor, LLB, PhD, Univ. of Otago, Dunedin, Otago, New Zealand
Rhona Schuz, PhD, Sha’arei Mishpat Academic Center, Hod HaSharon, Israel

48. The Montreal Parenting Coordination Pilot Project: Research Results

This workshop will present research results from the Montreal Parenting Coordination Pilot Project that took place between 2012 and 2014. Ten high conflict families received free parenting coordination sessions. Techniques and clinical tools used by the parenting coordinators will be detailed. Results describing the impact of this intervention on families, as well as the perceptions of parents, children, lawyers, judges and parenting coordinators will be presented. Challenges and recommendations will be discussed.

Francine Cyr, PhD, Univ. of Montreal, Montreal, QC, Canada
Dominic D’Abate, PhD, Montreal, QC, Canada
Catherine Quigley, BA, Univ. of Montreal, Montreal, QC, Canada

10:30am-11:15am    Plenary Session I
Welcome: Marsha Kline Pruett, PhD, MSL, AFCC President Elect, Northampton, MA

Modern Fathering: Where is it Now, How Did it Get Here, and Where is it Going?
Drawing from original research and family epidemiology, Dr. Kyle Pruett, clinical professor of child psychiatry at the Yale Study Center, will detail how fatherhood has changed in the hands of the millennial generation and what those changes may mean to and for their children, their partners, and our social and economic communities. From this platform, the audience will be engaged in some guesses about next steps in this evolving historical process, which some observers view as revolutionary. Dr. Pruett is past president of Zero to Three, National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, author of Fatherneed, and co-author with his wife (and AFCC President Elect) Marsha Kline Pruett of Partnership Parenting: How Men and Women Parent Differently — Why it Helps Your Kids and Can Strengthen Your Marriage.

Kyle Pruett, MD, Yale Study Center, New Haven, CT

11:15am-12:00pm    Plenary Session II
Welcome: Annette T. Burns, JD, AFCC Vice President, Phoenix, AZ

Protecting the Families We Create: Reproduction, Adoption and Marriage — a View from the Bench
Justice Mary Yu of the Washington Supreme Court is a former trial court judge who has presided over hundreds of same-sex marriages and more than a thousand second parent adoptions. She will share her experiences and offer some reflections on the remaining challenges that same-sex couples and families face.

Justice Mary Yu, Washington Supreme Court, Olympia, WA

12:00pm-1:30pm    Lunch on your own
12:00pm-1:30pm Family Court Review
Editorial Board Meeting

1:30pm-3:00pm Workshops 49-60

49. Neurodiversity in Family Court: Autism Spectrum Disorder in Children and Parents
There is an increasing presence in family courts of divorcing families that have a child with autism spectrum disorder. Because of the genetic links of this widespread neurodevelopmental disorder, professionals may also deal with a parent with a similar condition, without even knowing it. This workshop will present current research, specialized knowledge, and pragmatic strategies needed to develop unique parent plans for these families that promote success in co-parenting and judicial case management after divorce.

Don Saposnek, PhD, Family Mediation Service, Apts, CA
50. Examining the Who, Why and How of Self-Represented Litigants in Family Court

Many people entering family court navigate the system without an attorney. The Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) Cases Without Counsel Study, building on the Canadian National Self-Represented Litigants Project, brings the voice of the litigant into this important conversation. IAALS researchers will present their findings on self-representation in family court and engage participants in a discussion about how the data inform court and community innovations designed to assist self-represented litigants.

Natalie Knowlton, JD, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, Denver, CO
Corina Gerety, JD, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, Denver, CO
John M. Greacen, JD, Greacen Associates LLC, Regina, NM

51. Pathways to Family Justice and Court Outcomes in Quebec and Ontario

The presenters will discuss some key findings of their two studies of court files in family cases in Ontario and Quebec (n=1,000 in each jurisdiction), and a survey of family litigants (both with and without lawyers). Presenters will examine the effects of participation in mediation, having a custody evaluation or having a lawyer for the child in these two jurisdictions. They will discuss implications of this research for practice and family justice policy.

Rachel Birnbaum, PhD, LLM, King's Univ. College, Western, London, ON, Canada
Nicholas Bala, JD, LLM, Queen's Univ., Kingston, ON, Canada
Karine Poitras, MPs, PhD, Univ. of Quebec, Trois-Rivieres, QC, Canada
Francine Cyr, PhD, Univ. of Montreal, Montreal, QC, Canada

52. Implications of Technology and Social Media for Domestic Violence and Family Court Cases

This interactive workshop will explore the implications of technology in domestic violence cases. Professionals will learn how batterers use phone technology, social networking and GPS to circumvent injunctions for protection, supervised visitation and child custody. The panel will explore how victims of domestic violence can overcome communication issues using mobile and online communication tools designed specifically for high conflict parents.

Katrina Volker, MAOL, OurFamilyWizard.com, Minneapolis, MN
Hon. Sandy Karlan (Ret.), Miami, FL
Jack Moring, JD, Crystal River, FL

53. Online Parent Education for Divorcing Fathers: Fathering Through Change

This workshop presents Fathering Through Change (FTC), an online and group based intervention for divorcing fathers of young children. Funded by the NICHD, FTC is designed to address a need in court and community-based services. FTC is delivered via three in-person sessions and nine online interactive modules including online coaching. Sessions include using effective directions, teaching children through encouragement (i.e., token systems), navigating the court system, emotion regulation and stress reduction, effective limit setting, effective co-parenting and managing conflict.

David S. DeGarmo, PhD, Univ. of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Jeremy Jones, PhD, NCSP, Eugene, OR

54. Unsubstantiated Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: An Integrative Approach

This workshop will present an integrated and complex conceptualization of the problems faced by evaluators of families with previously unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse. Restrictive and protective gatekeeping, along with research on children’s cognition and memory, as well as the newest thinking on alienation, will be addressed. Presenters will discuss the assessment of the quality of previous investigative work, and the advantages and disadvantages of conducting new forensic interviews.

Pamela Ludolph, PhD, Ann Arbor, MI
William Austin, PhD, Lakewood, CO

55. Should Mediation be the First Step in All Family Law Proceedings?

An increasing number and more types of families are accessing the justice system to resolve disputes. In Australia, this includes married and never-married couples. It is necessary to attend, or attempt to attend, mediation before commencing court action in parenting proceedings, but it is not required in property proceedings. Using a substantial data sample and relevant literature, this session will explore whether mediation should be a compulsory pre-action procedure in all cases.

Hon. Joe Harman, Federal Circuit Court of Australia, Parramatta, NSW, Australia

56. Randomized Trial of a Parenting Program for Divorcing Mothers and Fathers

This presentation describes a randomized trial of the New Beginnings Program (NBP) for divorcing parents in four courts across the state of Arizona. The NBP is a 10-session parenting-after-divorce program with the most extensive evidence of positive long-term impact on children’s adjustment outcomes fifteen years after participation. The current randomized trial tested NBP effects to strengthen parenting and improve child adjustment outcomes when offered to divorcing parents in four courts. Positive effects were found for both mothers and fathers.

Irwin N. Sandler, PhD, Arizona State Univ., Tempe, AZ
Sharlene Wolchik, PhD, Arizona State Univ., Tempe, AZ
57. Representing Children from Meeting to Courtroom: Ethics, Statutes and Research

This presentation will examine the role of children's representatives in family and juvenile court by focusing on historical and current research. The University of Arizona is conducting research on the roles of both children's attorneys and guardians ad litem in Arizona dependency cases, but the implications of this research cross jurisdictional boundaries. Presenters will examine their research findings and the research of others to explore the meaning for practitioners representing children.

Rebecca M. Stahl, JD, LLM, Children's Law Center, Monterey Park, CA
Connie J.A. Beck, PhD, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
Jennifer Duchschere, BS, Tucson, AZ
Edith A. Croxen, JD, Pima Co. Office of Children's Counsel, Tucson, AZ

58. Through a Glass Darkly: Using Literature and Cinema to Deepen Our Practice

This interactive literature and cinema-based workshop will survey classic and contemporary literary works as presenting particularly pertinent values to court professionals, including judges, prosecutors, defenders, guardians ad litem, mental health professionals, mediators and parenting coordinators, all engaged in serving the best interests of children involved in family court proceedings. Short readings and viewings will be used to develop ethical perspectives and insight to better serve families involved in court proceedings.

Hon. Charles G. Reynard, 11th Judicial Circuit of Illinois, Bloomington, IL
John W. Kydd, MSW, JD, Seattle, WA
Daniel J. Rybicki, MS, PsyD, Gig Harbor, WA
Hon. Susan Snow (Ret.), Palos Park, IL

59. Co-Resolution and Legal Practice Groups: Innovations for the Modern Family

This workshop introduces co-resolution, a cooperation-focused system of advocacy that uses the ongoing relationship between two conflict coaches to ensure cooperative interaction between the parents. The presentation then applies the success of co-resolution to the concept of legal practice groups—limited groups of opposing attorneys who recreate the cordiality of small-town practice through repeated interactions. These ADR innovations demonstrate that an ongoing relationship between opposing advocates produces cooperative interactions that are unfortunately disappearing in big-city family law.

Nathan D. Witkin, JD, The Alliance of Co-Resolution Professionals, Marion, OH
Amy Armstrong, MSW, The Center for Family Resolution, Worthington, OH
Deborah Frazier, MSW, The Center for Family Resolution, Worthington, OH

60. Best Practices in Assessing Parents with Physical Disabilities

This workshop presents a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to assessing parents with disabilities. Topics from historical oppression and discrimination experienced by parents with disabilities to ethical responsibilities of practitioners, teachers, researchers and policymakers who engage in the assessments of parents with disabilities will be covered. Participants will learn how to properly assess whether or not tools and measurements are properly assessing parenting capacities in parents with disabilities and valid methods for evaluating parenting knowledge and skills will be reviewed.

Alette Coble-Temple, PsyD, John F. Kennedy Univ., Pleasant Hill, CA

3:00pm-3:30pm Break

3:30pm-5:00pm Workshops 61-72

61. Resuscitating Frye: The General Acceptance Factor Never Died

Presenters will offer for discussion the position that child custody evaluators constitute the “relevant scientific community” whose guidelines and standards should be consulted when decisions are being made regarding the general acceptance (or lack thereof) of various assessment procedures. In particular, the position will be advanced that some of the assessment procedures used in health care settings are not (and should not be) generally accepted by custody evaluators.

David A. Martindale, PhD, ABPP, St. Petersburg, FL
James R. Flens, PsyD, ABPP, Valrico, FL
Sol Rappaport, PhD, ABPP, Libertyville, IL
Charles J. Meyer, JD, Philadelphia, PA

62. Scholar-Advocacy in Family Law

Controversy and confusion about some issues in family law—such as co-parenting of young children, alienation and intimate partner violence—arise in part because some “scholar-advocates” have blurred the lines between responsible reporting of social science literature and political advocacy. This premise has been articulated by the AFCC Researchers’ Roundtable, a group of seven leading researchers convened by AFCC to study the problem. In this session, roundtable members will share insights and explore with participants how to become more critical consumers of research who can help identify, prevent and break cycles of biased use of research evidence.

AFCC Researchers’ Roundtable
63. Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse during a Child Custody Evaluation—Now What?

What happens when allegations of child sexual abuse are made during the course of a child custody evaluation? Issues such as the mental health professional’s competency to conduct a child sexual abuse forensic evaluation, proper protocols to follow when evaluating allegations of child sexual abuse arising during the child custody evaluation, the issue of parental alienation, mandatory reporting laws, and the involvement of child protective services and law enforcement, are some of the issues to be addressed.

Lawrence Jay Braunstein, JD, White Plains, NY
Kathleen McNamara, PhD, Ft. Collins, CO

64. New Challenges and Solutions in Drafting Mediated Settlement Agreements

This workshop will outline the Texas Supreme Court opinion In re Lee. It will address the policy reasons behind the enforcement of a mediated settlement agreement that did not truly protect the best interests of child. Presenters will examine what lawyers and advocates should do to ensure the protection of the child in a custody case. Additionally, it will address the need for the ability to carve out a best interests of the child exception to the enforcement mediated settlement agreements.

Janet Heppard, JD, Univ. of Houston Law Center, Houston, TX
Tasha Willis, JD, LLM, Univ. of Houston Law Center, Houston, TX
Ann E. Webb, JD, LMSW, Houston, TX
Hon. John A. Coselli, Jr. (Ret.), Harris County, TX

65. What Keeps Mediators Awake at Night: Addressing Fears Common among Mediators

Mediation can be a lonely adventure, particularly for sole practitioners. It’s just the mediator and the parents behind closed doors. How do mediators know if they are really fostering party self-determination, if they have moved from giving information to giving advice, or if their interventions are ethical? Join what promises to be a lively discussion of what keeps mediators awake at night and learn some tips to get you back to sleep.

Rebecca T. Magruder, MSW, JD, St. Charles, MO

66. “What About Me?” Said the Child

Family court is supposed to be all about the child, yet professionals are divided on whether or not a child should be heard and if so to what degree. Court systems around the world vary from having the child talk to the judge, professionals report the child’s opinion to the judge, or not having any forum for the child’s opinion. Psychological and developmental aspects of child development and functioning will be used to help explain why it should not be an either/or decision, but one of how much weight and when.

Philip Watts, PhD, South Perth, WA, Australia

67. The Role of Language: Brain-Based Thought Construction

Language shapes our thoughts; our thoughts guide our perceptions, parenting styles and conflicts. Recent neuroscience research shows us how different languages impact cognitive skills, and shape thinking and the complexity of culture. This workshop will explore recent neuroscience research on the complexity of social emotions and the need for social connectedness. Participants will explore how this biologically guides behavior, choices and the need to make culturally appropriate meaning of their experience in the world. Strategies of growth and change will be introduced.

Jennifer D. Krege, MA, St. Helena, CA

68. Cloud-Based Case Management and Document Development for Family Mediation and Service Programs

This session will review and discuss available opportunities for cloud-based caseload management and document development for family courts, agencies and community programs. Caseload Manager, MediationMate and Complete Case will be reviewed to illustrate emerging cloud-based best practices for managing cases, calendars, activities, correspondence, reports, agreement and document development.

Clare E. Fowler, EdD, Mediate.com, Eugene, OR
James Melamed, JD, Mediate.com, Eugene, OR
Brad Holmes, MBA, MediationMate, Waltham, MA

69. Parenting Under Fire: Resilience in Children Growing Up in Military Families

Children and adolescents of military parents are a diverse population around the globe; however, compared to the general population of children and young people, they face a range of unique stressors due to their particular family circumstance. This workshop will explore challenges and opportunities related to parenting in military families. Drawing on research and policy from across the globe, the presenters will invite participants to consider the implications for children, the challenges for military parents themselves, family law processes, and to explore the issues and complexities in decision-making in relation to military families.

Gabriela Misca, PhD, MSc, Williams James College, Newton, MA
Robin Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, Williams James College, Newton, MA

I love going to AFCC conferences because I always learn useful information and am reminded of why I do the work that I do.

Rebecca T Magruder, MSW, JD
St. Charles, Missouri
70. Designing Child Rights Education for Professionals Working with Children

Children have many legal rights that cut across all of the modern family topics, yet many professionals are unaware of them. This workshop will consider essential elements of a successful child rights education program, identifying both substantive child rights and effective design processes. The presenters will discuss their experiences in Canada developing a comprehensive online toolkit for lawyers and judges and the interdisciplinary Access to Justice for Children Conference. Participants will discuss challenges and best practices.

Hon. Donna J. Martinson (Ret.), Vancouver, BC, Canada
Caterina E. Tempesta, LLB, Office of the Children’s Lawyer, Toronto, ON, Canada
Suzanne S. Williams, JD, International Institute for Child Rights and Development, Victoria, BC, Canada

71. Swedish Parents in Custody Disputes: Who, Why and What Support Do They Need?

In Sweden, custody disputes have significantly increased in the last decade partially due to new family patterns. This session will present results from recently conducted research describing which parents and children are involved in the disputes and what kind of conflicts, problems and needs they have.

Annika Rejmer, Lund Univ., Lund, Sweden
Ann-Sofie Bergman, PhD, Linnaeus Univ., Vaxjo, Sweden

72. Disposable Relationships, Disposable Children? Repair Before Rupture?

The mission statement of AFCC identifies its members as “… dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.” Do we have a subordinate responsibility consistent with this mission statement, the legal and ethical obligations of our many jurisdictions and professions to work first and foremost to preserve the family? This panel will facilitate a group discussion including consideration of the value of preserving the intact family, the conflict of interest inherent in a process that pays participants to stir up conflict and the empirical ramifications of family stability versus family change for children.

Benjamin D. Garber, PhD, Nashua, NH
Megan L. Hunter, MBA, Scottsdale, AZ
Michael Aaron, JD, Tucson, AZ

73. Perspectives of Court-Ordered Supervised Parenting Time

In this workshop presenters will identify criteria for determining the appropriateness of court-ordered supervised parenting time, illustrate program guidelines for ensuring safe and meaningful contact between supervised parents and their children, and frame supervised parenting time in the larger picture of domestic relations work by exploring steps for supporting families as they transition in and out of court-ordered supervised parenting time programs.

Nathaline Frener, MS, Lane County Family Mediation, Eugene, OR
Hon. Lauren Holland, Lane County Circuit Court, Eugene, OR
Sara Rich, MSW, Eugene, OR
Patrick Melendy, JD, Leahy, VanVactor, Cox & Melendy, LLP, Springfield, OR

74. The Interdisciplinary Settlement Conference: Eight Years of Insights and Experience

In 2007, the nation’s first interdisciplinary settlement conference program—a groundbreaking program in which a judge, lawyer and psychotherapist worked together in a judicial settlement conference to resolve high-conflict custody disputes—was created. The program approached custody battles as a complex dynamic of human relationships and attempted to resolve the conflicts holistically, informed by current psychological research and principles of law. Two of the program’s founders share insights and data gathered over the last eight years.

Stephen H. Sulmeyer, JD, PhD, Corte Madera, CA
Hon. Beverly Wood, Marin County California Superior Court, San Rafael, CA
75. Fostering Permanency for Children: The Case for Quicker Permanency
Children in foster care are much more likely to experience mental health issues, homelessness, lack of education, unemployment and ultimately, incarceration. This workshop will present a two-headed plan of attack to combat the rising lack of permanency, which could ultimately lead to greater benefits for our most vulnerable children, and a significant reduction in social costs.

Marie N. Tilden, JD, Tilden & Associates, Vancouver, WA
Tyler G. Neish, JD, Tilden & Associates, Vancouver, WA

76. Substance Abuse Evaluations: Options for Access to Children
Substance abuse allegations are common in child custody disputes. Custody evaluators can be expected to assess such allegations and make recommendations to the court regarding the degree of a substance abuse problem and how it affects parenting. This workshop will describe the nuts and bolts of how to conduct a substance abuse evaluation and discuss options for parental access to children.

Harry J. Somers, EdD, North Andover, MA

77. Increasing Parent Capacity to Hear the Child’s Voice: Five Strategies for Dispute Resolution Practitioners
This workshop introduces participants to the Parent Readiness Scale, a non-standardized tool intended to assist practitioners in identifying potential parent readiness to receive direct or indirect input from their children related to the development of a parenting plan. The workshop focuses on five projective activities that assist dispute resolution professionals to increase the capacity of parents to hear and engage with their children's needs and concerns.

Lorri Yassenik, PhD, Calgary, AB, Canada
Jon Graham, LLB, Five Dock, NSW, Australia

78. Reforming the Law to Meet the Needs of Modern Families
This workshop will explore the legal changes that are on the horizon, or that should be on the horizon, to address changes in family demographics. The topics will include the following: functional parenthood in light of Obergefell v. Hodges; defining the father for demographics. This workshop will present a two-headed plan of attack to combat the rising lack of permanency, which could ultimately lead to greater benefits for our most vulnerable children, and a significant reduction in social costs.

Merle H. Weiner, JD, LLM, Univ. of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR
Leslie Harris, JD, Univ. of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR
Lisa A. Kelly, JD, Univ. of Washington School of Law, Seattle, WA
Julie Shapiro, JD, Seattle Univ. School of Law, Seattle, WA

79. New Ways for Families: Teaching Your Clients Four Big Skills In-Person and Online
New Ways for Families is a simple, structured method of teaching parents conflict resolution skills to settle their cases out of court, and to follow their agreements or court orders. This session will explain the basics of this interdisciplinary method, including domestic violence and child alienation issues, and its success in several family court jurisdictions. The online class method will be explained, including how it can prepare clients for mediation and how it can be enhanced by online coaching.

William A. Eddy, MSW, JD, High Conflict Institute, San Diego, CA
Andrea LaRochelle, BA, Calgary, AB, Canada

80. Building a Successful Peacemaking Practice with Attention to Three Details
Putting up a website, the modern version of a shingle, does not a successful peacemaking practice make. To be successful in today's economy with today's client, a successful practice must address three key areas: innovative and flexible services; differentiating and conveying services to others; and converting referrals into actual clients. This workshop will help the mental health professional, mediator, collaborative lawyer and divorce financial professional consider those three key areas to build, brand and succeed in their practice.

Gary Direnfeld, MSW, RSW, Interaction Consultants, Dundas, ON, Canada

81. Basic Needs Informed Care: The Myth of Self-Sufficiency
This interactive session will provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact poverty has on the development of a child. Personal feelings about poverty as well as the role that poverty plays in toxic stress will be examined. Strategies for asking questions differently will be discussed and practical tools to take home will be provided.

Joanne Goldblum, MSW, National Diaper Bank Network, New Haven, CT

82. Oregon's Multidisciplinary Tools for Creating Parenting Plans for Young Children
This session will offer an introduction and hands-on demonstration of Oregon’s newly-created materials for judges, mediators, evaluators and parents to help create parenting plans for children under the age of four. These tools incorporate ideas and principles expressed in the consensus report and follow-up materials by Pruett, McIntosh and Kelly (2014) into materials created within Oregon.

Linda Scher, JD, Portland, OR
Tracy Vogeltanz, MS, LPC, Multnomah County Family Court Services, Portland, OR
Jane Parisi Mosher, MA, LMFT, McMinnville, OR
83. Same-Sex Parenting: Legal Questions, Research Needs and Practical Solutions

Professionals working in the legal arena will be presented with the information necessary to avoid problems regarding the legal status of same-sex parents. They will be provided the developmental and parenting research upon which they may rely for their opinions and recommendations. The experiences of parenting evaluators and guardians ad litem who have had the opportunity to work with same-sex parents and their children will be discussed.

Wendy Hutchins-Cook, PhD, ABPP, Seattle, WA
Naomi Oderberg, PhD, Seattle, WA
Joseph Shaub, JD, LMFT, Seattle, WA
Frances W. Kevetter, JD, Burien, WA

84. How Groups Can Make Custody Evaluations Smarter While Controlling for Bias: An Empirically Driven Approach

This workshop outlines the consensus approach to conducting an empirically driven, team-approach to child custody evaluations. Presenters will review: (1) a variety of ways that bias poses a threat to the validity of child custody evaluation findings; (2) how these biases can be amplified in a team approach; and (3) how the use of standardized/structured procedures, assigning expert roles, use of an outside consultant and a highly standardized group process can actually reduce both individual and group bias.

Alissa Sherry, MA, PhD, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX
Michelle Munevar, MA, Legal Consensus, Austin, TX

10:45am-11:00am Break

11:00am-12:30pm Workshops 85-94

85. Courts and Therapists: Together At Last?

Although both are working to help families, the therapeutic community and the court community sometimes have a tenuous relationship at best. The increase in families in which children resist parental contact post-separation is just one of the recent trends that highlight this difficulty. This workshop explores a model that allows the court to hear integrated therapeutic information about the family without therapists needing to testify. This promises to help the court be more in tune with diverse families beyond the polarizing process of litigation.

Susan J. Gamache, PhD, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Hon. Peter Leask, Supreme Court of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada

86. Supervised Access Services: Perspectives of Users and Providers

Supervised access and custody exchange services have operated in many court districts since the 1980s, yet there remains much confusion about which families are best suited for these services and whether families benefit from them. This workshop will showcase the supervised access programs offered in Quebec and Ontario. Current research will be reviewed and the views of those using and providing services, as well as the impact of services on children and parents, will be discussed to highlight the issues and challenges.

Annick St-Amand, PsEd, PhD, Centre Univ. du Quebec, Montreal, QC, Canada
Marie-Christine Saint-Jacques, SW, PhD, Univ. Laval, Quebec City, QC, Canada
Sevil Deljavan, MSc, Toronto, ON, Canada

87. Parenting Coordination: Research on the Experiences of Conflicted Parents

The development of parenting coordination (PC) as an intervention for separating and divorcing parents requires a thorough understanding of PC and its impact on conflict between parents no longer living together. Two studies explore multiple questions using an anonymous survey and interviews with parents. Results illustrate co-parenting styles typical for these parents: the need for further education, training and supervision; effective PC interventions; and the inter- and intrapersonal dynamics between parents.

Kelly E. Mandarino, PhD, MSW, Toronto, ON, Canada
Tracye A. Polson, PhD, LCSW, Jacksonville, FL

88. Coercive Control: Assessment, Treatment and Custody Matters

Patterns of coercive control are oftentimes insidious, hard to detect and difficult to prove. This workshop will provide participants with information that will assist them in identifying patterns of coercive control and offer insight into how to best address these issues within the context of family law matters. Recommendations will be made for attorneys, evaluators and mental health professionals who find themselves confronted with these patterns of behavior.

Christina Robert, MA, PhD, Roseville, MN
Susan Gallagher, JD, RN, Eagan, MN
Joseph Noble, MA, Edina, MN
Hon. Ann McKeig, Family Justice Center, Minneapolis, MN

For anyone practicing in the area of family/domestic relations, this conference is a one stop shop. There are workshops to address the many issues that plague us on a daily basis in our practices, and there are opportunities to talk about what works and what doesn’t, and what people are trying in other jurisdictions.

Melissa Peper Firestone, JD
Attorney and Assistant Prosecutor, Napoleon, Ohio
### 89. The 800 Megabyte Gorilla in the Courtroom: Syncing Electronically Stored Information with Custody Litigation

Try to remember the last domestic matter you handled that didn’t involve texts, emails, digital photos, Facebook posts, etc. Chances are it was quite some time ago. With 99% of information now being created digitally, family law professionals cannot ignore the intersection of electronically stored information (ESI) in even the most basic of family law cases. This panel of legal, mental health and judicial professionals will explore the prevalence of ESI in family law matters.

- **Cari M. Pines, JD**, Encino, CA
- **Kevin J. Mooney, JD, MBA**, Newport Beach, CA
- **Danny Paskin, PhD**, Long Beach, CA
- **Ian Russ, PhD**, Encino, CA

### 90. Augmented Reality: Helping Families Access and Apply Research-Based Information

Envision credible information literally appearing in front of you. Developments with augmented reality (AR) are quickly making this possible. AR does not test possible scenarios, as with virtual reality, but rather provides solutions in real-time by projecting layers of data onto real world environments, creating deeper and more meaningful experiences for users. This presentation shares the development process and pilot test results of how AR enhanced a resource designed to coach adults through talking with children about puberty, sex and sexuality.

- **Heather S. Wallace, PhD, CFLE**, Univ. of Tennessee Extension, Knoxville, TN

### 91. #MyAdolescent: An Asset to Parenting Plans

Teenage children in divorcing families are often placed in a stereotyped package as “the crazed ones.” Our premise is that we as evaluators, providers and attorneys would benefit from viewing them more as “the wise ones.” This workshop incorporates research and clinical practice to facilitate understanding of adolescent brain development and critical components of social and cognitive development to more effectively involve teenagers in parenting plans. Participants will leave with a more complete understanding of teenagers and practical tools to better communicate.

- **Daniel J. Mosley, EdD**, Colorado Family Center, Littleton, CO
- **Heidi A. Sauder, PhD**, Lone Tree, CO

### 92. Mediation in Child Protection: Connecting with Families and Building a Team

Case management of foster care cases can be complex. Child protection mediation brings together family members and child welfare professionals, along with their individual agendas, preconceptions and goals. Mediation affords the family, attorneys and other professionals an opportunity to be together in the same place at the same time to discuss issues that are important to the case, and how everyone can work as a team to meet their individual needs and interests, as well as the best interests of the child.

- **Terría Dunlap-King**, Circuit Court of Cook County Child Protection Division, Chicago, IL
- **Sue Trezevant, MSW, LCSW**, Circuit Court of Cook County Child Protection Division, Chicago, IL

### 93. Resolving and Evolving: Helping Families with an Effective Professional Team

The combination of a highly skilled co-parent coach and experienced attorney working together brings extraordinary value to today’s modern families as they navigate the often-difficult terrain of creating, sustaining and restructuring “family.” These families have new and complex needs, including surrogacy agreements, adoptions, divorces, and parenting plan building for parents who never intended an ongoing relationship. A child’s sense of family depends on our capacity to evolve our practices to keep pace with the complex needs of today’s parents.

- **Karen Bonnell, ARNP, MS**, Bellevue, WA
- **Justin Sedell, JD**, Seattle, WA

### 94. The Importance of Multipartiality in Parental Alienation and Estrangement Cases

This workshop will focus on the concept of multipartiality in dealing with parental alienation and estrangement. Despite the fact that there is no one proven model for successful reunification, professional development of working relationships with all family members and court orders that support this are likely to increase the probability of positive outcome. Common dilemmas that occur in such families, like domination of the process by one parent or refusal to comply with a reunification plan, will be addressed.

- **Jane Appell, PhD**, Concord, MA
- **John Baker, PhD**, Belmont, MA

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### Save the Dates!

**AFCC 12th Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations**

- **November 3-5, 2016**
- **Sheraton Atlanta Hotel**
- **Atlanta, Georgia**

**AFCC 54th Annual Conference**

- **May 31-June 3, 2017**
- **Sheraton Boston Hotel**
- **Boston, Massachusetts**
More so than in any other form of forensic evaluation, mental health professionals who conduct parenting plan evaluations must have an understanding of the most current evidence in the areas of child development, optimal parenting plans across various populations, behavioral psychology, family violence, and legal issues to inform their opinions. In addition, family law judges and legal professionals require the best available evidence to support their decisions and positions.

Parenting Plan Evaluations has become the go-to source for the most current empirical evidence in the field of child custody disputes. Fully updated in this Second Edition, the volume continues its focus on translating and implementing research associated with the most important topics within the family court. It presents an organized and in-depth analysis of the latest research and offers specific recommendations for applying these findings to the issues in child custody disputes. Written by international experts in the field, chapters cover the most important and complex issues that arise in family court, such as attachment and overnight timesharing with very young children, co-parenting children with chronic medical conditions and developmental disorders, domestic violence during separation and divorce, alienation, gay and lesbian co-parents, and relocation, among others. This volume assists forensic mental health professionals to proffer empirically based opinions, conclusions, and recommendations and assists family law judges and attorneys in evaluating the reliability of the information provided to the courts by mental health professionals in their reports and testimony. Not just for forensic evaluators, Parenting Plan Evaluations is a must-read for legal practitioners, family law judges and attorneys, and other professionals seeking to understand more about the science behind parenting plan evaluations.

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A compilation of the frequently recurring column from the AFCC eNEWS, Ask the Experts, is now available in book form! Find practice tips written by AFCC members and experts in the field in areas including: intimate partner violence, alienation, high conflict, parenting coordination, mediation, parent education and more.

Find this and other helpful tools on the Resources for Professionals page of the AFCC website.

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In partnership with the IAALS, AFCC has developed a guides and toolkits on unbundled legal services/limited scope representation for clients, non-legal professionals, lawyers, and courts.

Available free at www.afccnet.org
Important Conference Information

AFCC Silent Auction
The 18th Annual AFCC Silent Auction will take place Friday, June 3, at 5:30pm. Auction proceeds support AFCC projects and initiatives. Contributions will be recognized in the auction catalog and in the AFCC eNEWS. If you would like to donate an item, please contact AFCC Marketing and Communications Manager, Erin Sommerfeld, at 608-664-3750 or esommerfeld@afccnet.org.

Continuing Education Credits
AFCC will provide a certificate of attendance for a processing fee of $15 for members and $20 for non-members. Attendees may access their certificate of attendance at www.afccnet.org after the conference concludes. The certificate will verify attendance at conference sessions and may be used to apply for continuing education credits with the registrant's accrediting institution. Instructions for obtaining your certificate will be available at the registration desk, along with a list of sessions eligible for continuing education credit.

Psychologists: AFCC is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. AFCC maintains responsibility for this program and its content. The program is eligible for up to 20.5 hours of continuing education for psychologists. All sessions are eligible except for Institute 1 and Workshops 36, 68, 78, 80, 81, 89 and 90.

Mental Health Professionals: An application for continuing education approval from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) will be submitted for up to 20.5 CE credits; however, individuals will need to verify approval with their credentialing or licensing boards.

AFCC is NBCC-Approved Continuing Education Provider (ACEPTM) and may offer NBCC-approved clock hours for events that meet the National Board of Certified Counselor requirements. The ACEPTM is solely responsible for all aspects of the program. Up to 18.75 hours may be earned. All sessions are eligible except for Institute 1, the Opening Session, Plenary Session II and Workshops 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 21, 22, 33, 36, 37, 43, 44, 50, 52, 55, 64, 68, 70, 75 and 78.

Mediators: All conference sessions are eligible for continuing education units through the Association for Conflict Resolution.

California Custody Evaluators and Mediators: Applications will be submitted to the Judicial Council of California. The views expressed in the program are those of the faculty and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the Judicial Council of California.

Ontario Lawyers and Paralegals: An application will be submitted to the Law Society of Upper Canada to accredit the educational program content for professionalism hours (Continuing Professional Development or CPD) for lawyers.

US Lawyers: An application for approval of CLE credit will be submitted to the Washington State Bar Association, Oregon State Bar, Idaho State Bar, Nevada Board of Continuing Legal Education and the Utah State Bar. US lawyers may use the certificate of attendance to apply to their state bar for credit.

Conference Scholarships
For fifteen years, AFCC members have helped deserving professionals and students attend AFCC conferences by giving to the AFCC Scholarship Fund. Scholarships include pre-conference institute registration, conference registration, welcome reception, luncheon and annual banquet tickets, access to the AFCC hospitality suite, and a certificate of attendance. A limited number of scholarships include stipends to help offset the cost of travel and accommodations for recipients. Preference for stipends is given to applicants with higher travel costs, international applicants and those who demonstrate financial need. The scholarship application is available on the AFCC website, www.afccnet.org. The deadline to apply is March 1, 2016. Recipients will be notified mid-to-late March.

Exhibit Forum
The Exhibit Forum will be open during conference hours and provides an opportunity to meet face-to-face with representatives to discuss your needs and the products and services they offer. AFCC will be take orders for publications. If you are interested in an exhibit table or distributing materials to conference attendees, please contact AFCC Marketing and Communications Manager, Erin Sommerfeld, at 608-664-3750 or esommerfeld@afccnet.org.

Conference Bookstore
UnHooked Books will sell books in the Exhibit Forum during the conference. If you would like to have your book displayed, please email Myke Hunter at myke@unhookedbooks.com with the book name and ISBN by March 31, 2016, with “AFCC Bookstore” in the subject line.

AFCC Hospitality Suite
The AFCC hospitality suite will be open for informal networking and refreshment Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00pm–12:00am and Friday from 9:30pm–12:00am. Please wear your name badge. The hospitality suite location will be included in attendee emails and onsite room assignment information.

Taste of Seattle
Thursday evening is your opportunity to enjoy the area with friends and colleagues. Sign up before 1:00pm on Thursday to join a group of 8–12 for dinner at a local restaurant. Restaurant menus and sign-up sheets will be available onsite Thursday morning. Participants are responsible for food, beverage and transportation costs.

Meditation and Yoga
Start your day in the right frame of mind for concentration and learning! Join AFCC colleagues for morning meditation and yoga, led by AFCC members and certified yoga instructors Sherry Cassedy and Rebecca Stahl. Meditation is from 6:15am-6:30am followed by yoga from 6:30am-7:15am, Thursday-Saturday mornings. Please bring a yoga mat if you have one.

No personal audio/video recording or photographing of sessions is permitted.
Registration Information
Please read before completing your conference registration!

AFCC Members Save up to $175 on Registration Rates: Register and pay by March 7, 2016, to receive the lowest rates for the conference! The early bird special rates are available only to AFCC members. Not a member? Read the New Membership Special information below and join today.

New Membership Special: Join AFCC when you register for the conference and receive a twelve-month membership for $150—a $10 discount—and save up to $175 by registering at the AFCC member rate! To join, simply select the new membership special on the registration form. The new membership special rate is available only to first-time AFCC members.

Pre-Conference Institute Registration: Includes attendance at a pre-conference institute, refreshment breaks and institute materials. Institute registration is a separate fee from registration for the full conference.

Conference Registration: Includes all conference sessions, electronic conference materials, refreshment breaks, opening reception, luncheon, annual banquet and access to the AFCC hospitality suite. Pre-conference institutes require a separate registration fee.

Spouse/Guest Registration: Available only to a spouse or significant other, not a business associate or staff colleague, accompanying a full-conference registrant. Includes plenary sessions, opening reception, luncheon, annual banquet and access to the AFCC hospitality suite.

Conference Presenter Registration: Available only to conference presenters. Includes all conference sessions, electronic conference materials, refreshment breaks, opening reception, luncheon, annual banquet and access to the AFCC hospitality suite. A separate registration fee is required for presenters who wish to attend pre-conference institutes.

Full-Time Student Registration: Includes all conference sessions and electronic conference materials. Meal functions are not included; however, meal tickets may be purchased separately. Registration must include proof of full-time student status. A separate registration fee is required for pre-conference institutes.

Certificate of Attendance: AFCC will provide a certificate of attendance for a processing fee of $15 for members and $20 for non-members.

Additional Luncheon Ticket
The luncheon is included in the conference registration fee. Additional tickets are available for $70. Meal ticket prices reflect the estimated cost to AFCC.

Additional Annual Banquet Ticket
The annual banquet is included in the conference registration fee. Additional tickets are available for $90. Meal ticket prices reflect the estimated cost to AFCC.

Special Needs
If you have dietary restrictions or other special needs, please make a note on the registration form. The Sheraton Seattle Hotel’s meeting facilities, guest rooms and common areas are in compliance with the public accommodation requirements of the ADA.

AFCC reserves the right to cancel or substitute any presenter or session should circumstances arise beyond our control.

Travel and Lodging Information

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www.sheratonseattle.com

Steps from Pike Place Market and the Seattle waterfront, Sheraton Seattle Hotel is a contemporary urban retreat in the heart of downtown Seattle, Washington. Discover a vibrant destination with innovative hospitality and a warm personality that inspires you to work, play, relax, and connect in the Emerald City. Seattle visitor information is available at www.visits Seattle.org.

Make your reservations today! The Sheraton Seattle Hotel is offering a special rate of $189/night for single occupancy and $209/night for double occupancy to AFCC attendees. On May 2, 2016, any unreserved rooms in the AFCC block will be released and the special rate will no longer be guaranteed. Rooms may sell out before the room block is released. Make your reservation by calling 1-888-627-7056 and request the AFCC special rate or reserve online by visiting www.afccnet.org and clicking the reservations link. AFCC attendees are responsible for making their own hotel arrangements.

Air Travel Information
The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) is located approximately 15 miles from the Sheraton Seattle Hotel. International and major airline carriers provide service to the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. For more information, visit www.portseattle.org/Sea-Tac.

Ground Transportation
A taxi from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport to the Sheraton Seattle Hotel costs approximately $40 and takes 20–25 minutes, depending on traffic. Taxis are available on the third floor of the parking garage. Seattle Shuttle Express provides transportation to and from the airport. The cost is approximately $18 one way or $31 round trip to the Sheraton Seattle Hotel. Shuttles depart from third floor of parking garage/island 2, call 425-981-7000. Tickets are sold in advance online or by phone. The Sound Transit’s Link Light Rail, also provides service to and from the airport. Cost is approximately $2.75 each way, and takes approximately 35 minutes each way, depending on the route.

Parking
Parking rates at the Sheraton Seattle Hotel are currently $50 per day for valet with unlimited in/out privileges.

Climate
In early June, temperatures in Seattle range from a high of 70°F to a low of 52°F (21°/11°C) and humid. Meeting rooms and hotel facilities can be cool, so take a light jacket or sweater.
Conference Registration Form
AFCC 53rd Annual Conference • June 1-4, 2016 • Seattle, WA

Please register by May 2, 2016, to ensure that your name appears on the list of conference attendees included in the electronic conference materials.

Register online at www.afccnet.org

Please print clearly. This form may be duplicated.

First Name (Dr. / Mr. / Ms. / Judge) ______________________ M.I. ___ Last Name ______________________ Degree ______

First Name or Nickname (as you would like it to appear on your name badge) ______________________

Title/Profession ___________________________________________ Organization _________________________________

Street Address ____________________________ City ___________________ State/Province _______ Country _______ Postal Code _______

Phone ______________ Email _______________________________________

Is this your first AFCC Conference? Yes No

Do you have dietary restrictions or other special needs? Luncheon/Banquet Meals

Other Registration Rates

New Membership Special
Join AFCC, save $10 on your first year of membership and register at member rates!
First-time members only.

Pre-Conference Institute Registration Rates

Conferences registration – AFCC Member

Conferences registration – Non-member

Conference Registration Rates

Full Day Institute Registration – AFCC Member

Full Day Institute Registration – Non-member

Conference Presenter Rate – AFCC Member

Conference Presenter Rate – Non-member

Full-time Institute Registration – AFCC Member (ID required. No meals included.)

Full-time Institute Registration – Non-member (ID required. No meals included.)

Other Registration Rates

Certificate of Attendance – AFCC Member

Certificate of Attendance – Non-member

Additional Luncheon Ticket

Additional Banquet Ticket

Spouse/Guest Registration Rate (Meals and plenary sessions only.)

Scholarship Fund Donation

TOTAL

Method of Payment
Registrations must be paid in full prior to attendance.

Payment of $ ____________ is enclosed (US currency only please)

Please charge $ ____________ to my Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Credit card transactions will be processed in US dollars; exchange rate on day of transaction will apply.

Card Number _______________________

Exp. Date ______ / ______ / ______ Security Code ________

Card Holder’s Signature __________________________

Cancellation Policy: Transfer of registration to another person may be done once, at any time without a fee. All requests for refunds must be made in writing. Written notice of cancellation received by fax or postmarked by May 2, 2016, will be issued a full refund minus a $75 service fee. Written notice received by fax or postmarked by May 13, 2016, will have the $75 service fee deducted and the balance issued as a credit for future AFCC conferences, publications or membership dues. No refunds or credits will be issued for cancellations received after May 13, 2016.

Institute Selections—Wednesday, June 1, 2016

If you have registered for an institute, please check only one of the following boxes:

Pre-Conference Institutes 9:00am–5:00pm

1. Access to Justice: Don’t Tell Me What You Can’t Do, Tell Me What You Can Do

2. Before Too Much Damage is Done: Early Intervention with Parent-Child Contact Problems


4. From Barnyard to Courtroom: The Application of Animal-Assisted Therapy to Families in High Conflict

5. Family Mediation with Parents Reporting High Levels of Intimate Partner Violence: Using Theory, Research and Experience to Guide Us

6. Cadillac or Chevy? Providing High Quality, Affordable and Trustworthy Processes

7. Voice of the Child in Parenting Coordination: If, When and How

8. Moving Families Forward: A Coordinated Therapeutic Response to Parental Alienation, Estrangement and High Conflict Family Situations

Conference Workshop Selections

Seating is not guaranteed and will be first-come, first-served. Your selections will ensure that sessions with more attendees are scheduled in larger meeting rooms.

(please write in one workshop number per time slot)

Thursday, June 2
10:30am–12:00pm 1–12 ______

Thursday, June 2
1:30pm–3:00pm 13–24 ______

Thursday, June 2
3:30pm–5:00pm 25–36 ______

Friday, June 3
8:30am–10:00am 37–48 ______

Friday, June 3
1:30pm–3:00pm 49–60 ______

Friday, June 3
3:30pm–5:00pm 61–72 ______

Saturday, June 4
9:15am–10:45am 73–84 ______

Saturday, June 4
11:00am–12:30pm 85–94 ______

Conference Registrant Meals

To ensure sufficient space and quantities, while reducing waste, please indicate which meals you plan to attend:

Wednesday Opening Reception Yes No

Thursday Luncheon Yes No

Friday Annual Banquet Yes No

You may register online at www.afccnet.org or return the completed form and payment to:

AFCC
6525 Grand Teton Plaza
Madison, WI 53719
Phone: 608-664-3750
Fax: 608-664-3751
afcc@afccnet.org
Association of Family and Conciliation Courts
AFCC 53rd Annual Conference

**MODERN FAMILIES:**
New Challenges, New Solutions
Sheraton Seattle Hotel
June 1-4, 2016

**Conference Sessions Include:**
- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Reunification Techniques
- Effective Child Interviews
- Step-Up Parenting Plans
- Child Custody and Domestic Violence
- Enhancing Families through Literature
- Research on Mediation and Intimate Partner Violence
- Enhancing Compliance with Court Orders
- Addiction and Family Court
- Vicarious Trauma and Burnout
- Coercive Powers of the Court
- Same-Sex Parenting

Diamond Sponsor:
OurFamilyWizard.com

Register online at
www.afccnet.org