



FOUNDED IN 1963



AFCC eNEWS

MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

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Top Ten Reasons to Join AFCC in Albuquerque

AFCC's *Eighth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations*, September 25-27, 2008 and *Eighth International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs*, September 26-27, 2008 in Albuquerque, New Mexico are fast approaching. Click below to read our top ten reasons why you should join us in Albuquerque.

[Read now...](#)

Early Bird Registration and Hotel Reservations Deadlines

Albuquerque conference registration rates will increase after **August 31, 2008**. Register now and take advantage of the lowest rates offered for the conferences. The AFCC block of rooms at the Albuquerque Marriott will be released to the public on **September 1, 2008**, so please make your reservations today if you are planning to attend. AFCC has secured a special room rate of \$122 per night. Reservations may be made by calling the Albuquerque Marriott at (505) 881-6800 or (800) 334-2086.

[More information...](#)

New Orleans Call for Presenters

AFCC is accepting proposals for its 46th Annual Conference, *Children, Courts and Custody: Back to the Future or Full Steam Ahead?* May 27-30, 2009 in New Orleans. Last year's conference featured 190 presenters, 80 conference sessions and more than 1,000 delegates in attendance. If you are interested in participating as a presenter, please submit a proposal before October 6, 2008.

[Call for Presenters \(PDF\)...](#)

2008-2009 AFCC Training Programs Announced

AFCC is pleased to announce its 2008-2009 training program schedule. The two-day trainings feature topics on parenting coordination, advanced parenting coordination, father involvement and advanced child custody. The trainings will take place in Kansas City, Baltimore, New Orleans and Chicago, and feature expert presenters Matthew J. Sullivan, Ph.D., Christine A. Coates, M.Ed., J.D., Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D., M.S.L., Robin M. Deutsch, Ph.D., Arnold Shienvold, Ph.D., Nancy W. Olesen, Ph.D. and Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D. A description of each training, including the training dates, locations and registration form can



AFCC Eighth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations

September 25-27, 2008
Albuquerque Marriott
Albuquerque, New Mexico

AFCC Eighth International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs

September 26-27, 2008
Albuquerque Marriott
Albuquerque, New Mexico
[Conference Brochure \(PDF\)](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

46th Annual Conference
Children, Courts and Custody: Back to the Future or Full Steam Ahead?

May 27-30, 2009
Sheraton New Orleans
New Orleans, Louisiana
[Call for Presenters \(PDF\)](#)

be found in the training brochure by clicking the link below. Early registration is recommended as trainings may sell-out.

[View training brochure \(PDF\)...](#)

The History of AFCC

A Legacy of Innovation and Collaboration

AFCC recently updated the history page on its Web site to include new information on its projects and initiatives. From reconciliation in the 1960s, to divorce with dignity in the 1970s, to mediation in the 1980s, to working with high-conflict and violent families in the 1990s, click the link below to read how AFCC and its members have collaborated to improve the experience of families in the legal system for more than 45 years.

[Read now...](#)

FEATURED VIDEO INTERVIEW

Mediate.com Featured Interview with Hugh McIsaac

Courtesy of Mediate.com

Mediate.com and the *AFCC eNEWS* are pleased to feature this issue's video interview series with Hugh McIsaac. An early member of AFCC, Hugh has been working in the field for 38 years and developed California's mandatory mediation bill in 1981. He also assisted the New Zealand court with establishing their family law system in 1985 under Fulbright and Winston Churchill Fellowships. He is former director of Family Court Service agencies in Los Angeles, CA and Portland, OR and served as editor of the *Conciliation Courts Review* (now *Family Court Review*) from 1986-1997. A long-time AFCC Board member, he was President of AFCC in 1987-1988 and was a founding member of the AFCC California Chapter.

[Watch now...](#)

ASK THE EXPERTS

Top Ten Tips for Mediators to Move through Emotions

by Sue Bronson, Milwaukee, WI

AFCC eNEWS asked AFCC member and popular presenter, Sue Bronson, for her top ten tips for mediators to deal with emotions. Sue has been helping resolve family and workplace disputes for 25 years and is the Past Chair of the Association for Conflict Resolution Family Section.

[Read now...](#)

AFCC PAMPHLET OF THE MONTH

Information for Never-Married Parents

Developed especially for never-married parents, this pamphlet addresses their unique concerns, including establishing paternity, developing parenting skills and information on parenting plans. This pamphlet is also available in Spanish. Written in easy-to-understand language, AFCC offers eleven pamphlets that are invaluable learning tools used by a growing number of private practitioners and divorce education classes throughout North America. A description of each pamphlet and ordering information can be found at [AFCC's Online Shopping](#)

AFCC Trainings

[Training Brochure \(PDF\)](#)

Parenting Coordination

Matthew Sullivan, Ph.D.

October 23-24, 2008

Kansas City, Missouri

Parenting Coordination

Christine Coates, J.D.

December 8-9, 2008

Baltimore, Maryland

Father Parent Differently Than Mothers

Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D.

December 10-11, 2008

Baltimore, Maryland

Parenting Coordination

Robin M. Deutsch, Ph.D.

February 9-10, 2009

New Orleans, Louisiana

Attachment, Alienation and Access

Arnold Shienvold, Ph.D.

February 11-12, 2009

New Orleans, Louisiana

AFCC Chapters

Texas Chapter Annual Conference

October 3-4, 2008

South Texas College of Law

Houston, Texas

www.texasafcc.org

Arizona Chapter Annual Conference

January 30-February 1, 2009

Hilton Sedona Resort and Spa

Sedona, Arizona

www.azafcc.org

California Chapter Annual Conference

February 6-8, 2009

The Mark Hopkins Hotel

San Francisco, California

www.afcc-ca.org

Florida Chapter Annual Conference

Center.
[View Pamphlet \(English | Spanish\)...](#)

RESEARCH UPDATE

Study Examines Teens' Adjustment in Blended Families

Courtesy of J.M. Craig Press, Inc.

We have published articles that emphasize the importance of interpersonal relations in the divorce process. This article goes further and discusses the effect of a wider circle of relationships on the adjustment process of teens.

[Read more...](#)

FEATURED ARTICLE

California Administrative Office of the Courts Domestic Violence Task Force to Implement Proposals to Improve Courts

The Judicial Council of California issued a press release on June 10, 2008 announcing the Domestic Violence Practice and Procedure Task Force has been officially charged with implementing the comprehensive guidelines and practices in its final report. In 2005, the 18-member task force was asked to make recommendations to improve the practice, procedure and administration of cases involving domestic violence allegations in California. More information on the task force and its final report is available by [clicking here](#). Please click the link below to read the press release.

[Read now \(PDF\)...](#)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Norway Becomes Sixth Country to Permit Gay Marriage

Courtesy of the Associated Press

Gay men and lesbians in Norway will be granted the same rights as heterosexuals to marry and to adopt children under a law approved by the upper house of Parliament. It replaces a 1993 law that gave gay men and lesbians the right to enter civil unions, but did not permit church weddings or adoption. The law also allows lesbians to have artificial insemination. Individual churches and clergy members may perform weddings for gay men and lesbians, but will not be legally obligated to do so. Norway becomes the sixth country to allow gay marriage, joining Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, South Africa and Canada in legislating full marriage equality.

NEW! FEATURED NEWSLETTER AND MEDIA

Jobs in Dispute Resolution Email Blast

Courtesy of the New York State Dispute Resolution Association

We are pleased to announce a new column in the *AFCC eNEWS* that highlights e-newsletters, blogs and other media in the family law, mental health and dispute resolution field. The New York State Dispute Resolution Association offers a free email blast that features jobs in dispute resolution. To view a recent email blast and for subscription information, please click the link

February 27-28, 2009
Renaissance Hotel
Tampa, Florida
www.afccnet.org

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ABOUT AFCC eNEWS

AFCC eNEWS is a monthly e-newsletter published by the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC). *AFCC eNEWS* provides professionals with time sensitive and up-to-date topics including practice tips, research innovations and international news.

[AFCC eNEWS archive...](#)

Web Site Version:

If you are having trouble viewing this email correctly, please view the Web site version by [clicking here](#).

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AFCC welcomes your comments, questions or feedback. Please email the

below.

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Submit News Items to the AFCC eNEWS

Have you read an article that you would like to share with your colleagues? *AFCC eNEWS* invites subscribers to submit news articles on topics related to family law, mental health and dispute resolution. Please send articles with links to the editor at editor@afccnet.org.

editor by [clicking here](#).



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Professionals dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict



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History

A Legacy of Innovation and Collaboration

The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) took root in California in the spring of 1963 with the creation of the *California Conciliation Courts Quarterly*, the first publication to promote the interchange of ideas between California's conciliation courts. Judge Roger Alton Pfaff, presiding judge of the Superior Court of Los Angeles, wrote:

California has become a model for conciliation services as a part of the judicial function for other states to emulate and each year we find jurisdictions creating such services. It may well be that in the not too distant future this little publication may have a wider dissemination with similar courts in other states.

Judge Pfaff's words proved truly prophetic. The publication, which now goes by the name *Family Court Review*, is presently read by thousands of subscribers around the world in countries including Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Germany, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Meanwhile, AFCC has grown from a handful of California counselors and judges to an international association of judges, lawyers, mediators, custody evaluators, parenting coordinators, parent educators, court administrators, counselors, researchers, academics, and other professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict.

In the nearly five decades since its inception, AFCC has changed dramatically in size, scope, geography and membership. AFCC members have led the way in developing new processes and programs to meet the needs of families in conflict. Members of the association have conducted research and written books that have served as the impetus for reform in family courts and public policy arenas throughout the world. Indeed, the changes in family court systems and within AFCC over the years have been remarkable. What has not changed, however, are the ideas that inspired AFCC's founders: that an organization facilitating an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and information can serve as an agent of change and a catalyst for the needs of families, and especially children, in conflict.

In the Beginning: AFCC in the 1960s

The first AFCC conference was held on Saturday, September 7, 1963, in Los Angeles. Conciliation counselors and judges from six counties in California gathered to talk shop well into the evening. Among those participating in the first inaugural event were two Los Angeles Conciliation Court counselors who would lead AFCC in the future. Meyer Elkin, who would serve as AFCC President in 1977 and as editor of the *Review* from 1963 to 1986, and Stanley Cohen, AFCC Executive Director from 1983 to 1988 and co-editor of the *Review* from 1986 to 1991.

Interest in court-connected services spread beyond California as courts in Hawaii, Idaho, Ohio, Oregon, Michigan, Arizona, Montana and several Canadian provinces began establishing court services. By 1964, the AFCC

conference had grown to a two-day event with 90 participants coming from several states outside of California. In May of 1967, AFCC held its conference outside of California for the first time in Phoenix, Arizona.

AFCC's founding members had a different focus from those working in family courts and court services today. The job title for many court service staff members was "marriage counselor." The work of the counselors focused on reconciliation between husbands and wives. Conference programs and *Review* articles emphasized the role of the court as a provider of short-term marriage counseling services and the use of husband-wife agreements to resolve marital disputes to promote reconciliation. The use of trial separation agreements as a way to effect reconciliation was discussed as a novel, albeit controversial, technique. AFCC went on record encouraging then California Governor Ronald Reagan to continue the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Family and "to begin a concerted assault on the high incidence of divorce in our society and its tragic consequences." *Blueprint for a Successful Marriage*, a brochure developed by the Los Angeles Conciliation Court, was made available to other courts through AFCC.

By 1965, AFCC had adopted bylaws and a constitution, and "California" was dropped from the organization's title. The name was changed to the Conference of Conciliation Courts, recognizing that the appeal of the organization had spread beyond California. By the end of the decade AFCC committees were established to focus on legislation, professional standards, publications and membership.

As the 1960s drew to a close, worldwide social and political changes did not escape AFCC. A 1968 survey of all 50 states and the District of Columbia found that 19 states had some form of court-connected counseling services. No fault divorce became law in California. The December 1969 issue of the *Conciliation Courts Review* introduced a new concept to the movement with an editorial by Meyer Elkin titled, "A Conciliation Court Is More Than a Reconciliation Court." Other articles focused on the role of the attorney in divorce and the development of visitation guidelines. Former AFCC President, and prominent judge, Hon. Byron Lindsey of San Diego, wrote an article questioning whether we were expecting too much of marriage.

The 1970s: From Reconciliation to Divorce with Dignity

By the early 1970s, AFCC's conferences had traveled some distance from their original California home. Annual conferences had been hosted by court personnel in Honolulu, Phoenix, Detroit and Chicago. Family court services were beginning to turn their attention to helping couples end their marriages with a greater sense of dignity and self-worth and with less trauma to themselves and the children.

The *Review* began to establish itself as a significant publication, having grown in size and scope and served as a harbinger of things to come for family courts worldwide. The September 1970 issue featured an article titled, "The Modern Family Rescue Team—Judge, Lawyer and Behavioral Scientist," by Andrew S. Watson, M.D. The article called for an interdisciplinary approach to court services, an increased numbers of counselors and thorough education of the bench and bar. In that same issue, Jack Bradford and Jean Brindley, marriage counselors from the Third Judicial Circuit in Detroit, wrote about group orientation and group intake processes, a precursor to the parent education programs that would proliferate so dramatically two decades later.

In 1975, *Review* Editor Meyer Elkin editorialized on the language of family law:

Why do we continue to use the language of criminal law in family law? Is it primarily tradition that causes us to continue to use the old words in family law? Or is it something else? Is it a reflection of the prevailing ambivalence of this society which, on the one hand, tells people that divorce is okay, but by its actions, or lack of it, shows that many still do not accept the idea of divorce in a pair-oriented society? We need to develop new words that will alleviate stress on the divorcing family rather than add to stresses already present....Family law is entering a new period. There is now present an opportunity for introducing new practices and procedures—and words that will represent the combined expertise of both law and the behavioral

sciences who, after all, are equally concerned and have similar goals regarding the strengthening of the family. Lets us now start the search for the words.

AFCC members and courts continued to lead the way in developing new services throughout the 1970s. In 1973, the Los Angeles Conciliation Court began a pilot program to mediate custody and visitation disputes. Divorce education workshops for parents began to emerge in several AFCC member courts.

Ten years after its inception, the Conference of Conciliation Courts had members in 15 states and several Canadian provinces, and 34 members on its Board of Directors. The 1973 Annual Conference was held in Chicago.

The theme was, "Alternatives to Divorce." Regional conferences were also being added to AFCC's list of professional offerings, bringing the organization closer to its members and tailoring conferences that addressed issues germane to the region.

Throughout the 1970s, the Conference of Conciliation Courts became increasingly interdisciplinary and international. Conferences featured presenters from Canada, England, New Zealand and Australia, and *Review* articles featured contributions from judges, lawyers, academics, clergy and behavioral scientists. In 1976, the Conference of Conciliation Courts changed its name to Association of Family Conciliation Courts.

In 1978, AFCC held its first annual conference outside of the United States in Vancouver, British Columbia, and concepts such as family self-determination and mediation were the subject of discussion. Gender issues were emerging. The Divorce Experience, a didactic orientation program for divorcing parents and their children, was introduced.

The late 1970s marked the beginning of a new organizational trend. AFCC members in California came together to form the first AFCC chapter. In the years to follow, the AFCC California Chapter would be joined by chapters in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ontario and Texas.

By the end of the 1970s, AFCC membership had grown to 900 members, and the Board of Directors had expanded to 50 members. Professional networking opportunities were highly valued by conference attendees, as was the opportunity for camaraderie between the association's members who participated in pre- and post-conference trips to Alaska, New Zealand, Australia, England and Sweden.

The association was also becoming a business. AFCC's first executive director was California Counselor Frank Bailey, whose main job was to keep a current list of the members and put out the AFCC newsletter, keeping members apprised of association activities. The AFCC office moved to Portland, Oregon, when Professor Jay Folberg became executive director (1975-1980).

The 1980s: The Mediation Explosion

In 1981, AFCC offices moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, when Nova Law School Professor Laurence Hyde was named executive director (1981-1983). In 1983, the National Center of State Courts in Williamsburg, Virginia, was contracted to serve as secretariat of the organization, and Stanley Cohen, sociology professor at the University of Oregon Health Sciences and a founding member of AFCC, was named executive director, serving in that role until 1988. AFCC's headquarters moved back to Portland, Oregon, in 1984 when the university and Dr. Cohen assumed the administration of the association.

Publications and pamphlets such as *Parents Are Forever* and *Guide for Stepparents* were being developed and offered for sale. Through Dr. Cohen's efforts, the association secured a grant to produce an award-winning film, "A Family Affair," narrated by actor Edward Asner, on family violence. The Children's Bureau of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare awarded AFCC a research grant to study the effects of mediation on custody and visitation disputes in courts in Connecticut, Los Angeles and Minneapolis.

Interest in court-connected reconciliation counseling was diminishing, and joint custody, mediation, domestic violence and stepfamilies were becoming central issues. The legislation boom had begun, and it was moving in a strong wave from California across the United States.

Mandatory mediation and joint custody were hot topics.

AFCC's Mediation Committee hosted three national symposia on mediation standards between 1982 and 1984. Representatives of more than thirty organizations participated in developing the first set of Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation. By the late 1980s, mediation of custody and visitation disputes was mandatory in jurisdictions in more than 33 states.

Separated and divorcing parents were becoming a new constituency. Fathers were organizing groups to advocate for their parenting interests, and mothers were drawing attention to the economics of divorce and child support arrearages. AFCC's conferences featured children and parents recounting their divorce and custody disputes and the resolution of these disputes through mediation and joint custody.

Meyer Elkin's eloquent editorials in the *Review* continued to capture the spirit and commitment of AFCC members. In the 20th Anniversary issue, he noted the ripple effect that the association had on the field of divorce:

Cast a Pebble in the Pond

Let all of us, in our own unique way, recommit ourselves to the search for the pebbles of change that can be cast into the social pond. Let us create a divorce process that recycles divorce pain into new patterns of personal and familial growth, which, in turn, will also strengthen our entire society. Let us protect our children from the unnecessary hazards of the divorce experience so that they, like their parents, can be strengthened by divorce rather than defeated by it. And let us never forget that if the lights go out in our children's eyes, be they children of divorce or any other children, we will all live in darkness.

Immediately preceding AFCC's 20th Anniversary, AFCC changed its name again. Although the term "conciliation court" was unfamiliar to many members, it was also a part of AFCC's heritage. In an effort to bridge these interests, the new name of the organization became the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts.

In 1983, AFCC elected its first Canadian president, Hon. John VanDuzer from Hamilton, Ontario, and the association's conference was held in Toronto. AFCC conferences had become major events by this time, demanding hundreds of hours of volunteer members' time and effort. Conferences had grown to five days including pre-conference institutes, committee meetings, and board meetings in addition to plenary sessions and multiple workshops. The number of pamphlets and publications produced by AFCC was also growing, and AFCC began to offer videotapes on custody resolution counseling and divorce.

By the mid-1980s, family court service programs were feeling the strains of the economy, and AFCC membership leveled off. The use of custody evaluations, overshadowed by the advent of mediation, was reemerging as custody disputes were becoming more complex and high-conflict families were challenging the capacity of the court system.

1988—AFCC's 25th Anniversary

The 25-year mark in AFCC's history was significant. AFCC returned to its roots in Los Angeles for its annual conference. The conference theme, "Helping Children and Families—The Best of AFCC," set the stage for the children and family member participants from the conference ten years earlier to return to provide a retrospective look at divorce and its impact.

AFCC conferences had developed a loyal following as members planned their vacations around conferences and spouses and children became like extended family. The friendships and kinships between members continued to grow as members kept in touch between conferences, corresponded, traveled together, shared family events, and laughed and grieved together.

As AFCC completed its first quarter century, some significant changes took place. Meyer Elkin retired as editor of the *Review* and turned over the journal to co-editors Stanley Cohen and Hugh McIsaac, Los Angeles, CA. It seemed significant that two were chosen to replace one. The *Review*

Editorial Board had grown from eight members to 38 members from around the world and individual issues of the *Review* were now more than 80 pages in length. Putting out a journal of this size had become more than a cottage industry, and in 1990 Sage Publications took over publishing and marketing responsibilities for the *Review*. In 1988, Stanley Cohen retired as executive director, and Ann Milne, a long-standing AFCC member, became executive director in 1989. The administrative office moved to its present home in Madison, Wisconsin. At the end of the decade, AFCC membership was approaching 1,200.

The 1990s: Complex Family Issues

AFCC entered the 1990s and its growing membership was being professionally challenged by increasingly difficult family issues. The *Review* and conferences served as a forum to explore the many controversies emerging in the field. The 1989 Annual Conference in Chicago featured a pre-conference symposium on mediation and domestic abuse, and in 1992 AFCC received a \$200,000 grant from the State Justice Institute to collaborate with The Urban Institute in Washington, DC to study the impact of mediation on custody disputes involving allegations of domestic violence.

The challenges posed by high-conflict families were front-and-center issues for most courts, and AFCC members led the way in developing new processes and techniques for working with these challenging family members. AFCC continued to serve as a catalyst for the dissemination of information through conferences, training programs, publications, and videotapes. Parenting coordinators, domestic abuse, mediation-arbitration, collaborative law, supervised visitation, custody evaluation, and child protection and dependency mediation began to appear on conference programs as members searched for effective family dispute resolution processes.

1993—AFCC's 30th Anniversary

AFCC celebrated its 30th Anniversary in New Orleans in May 1993. The conference theme and opening night videotape, "The Economic Impact of Divorce," provided an opportunity for more than 700 delegates to look at the big-picture impact of divorce and celebrate the largest conference attendance to date.

In 1993, the association received a major grant from the Hewlett Foundation that enabled AFCC to add additional staff and absorb some of the work of AFCC's many hard-working volunteer members. In 1994, Peter Salem joined the AFCC staff to become AFCC's associate director. Conference planning was centralized in the administrative office and AFCC began to offer additional training and consulting services.

Second World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth

In 1997, AFCC partnered with Australia's World Congress, Inc. to host the Second World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth. Chaired by AFCC's first non-North American president, Hon. Alastair Nicholson, Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, the three-year planning effort involved hundreds of AFCC volunteers and culminated with more than 1,500 delegates from more than 50 countries participating in the five-day extravaganza. The lengthy list of luminaries included First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who served as honorary chairperson; renowned pediatrician Dr. T. Barry Brazelton; San Francisco Mayor Hon. Willie Brown; Nobel Peace Prize Recipient Dr. Jose Ramos-Horta; and former U.S. Congresswoman Hon. Patricia Schroeder.

By 1998, mediation had established itself as a professional field of practice. Concerns about training, certification and regulation were apparent, and AFCC reconvened the Symposium on Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation, which last met in 1984. Representatives of more than twenty organizations worked over the course of three years to create a revised set of model standards. The Model Standards were subsequently adopted by AFCC, the American Bar Association, the Association for Conflict Resolution, and numerous state and local mediation organizations.

On a sad note, the 1990s saw the passing of several noteworthy AFCC leaders. Meyer Elkin, a founding AFCC member and long-standing editor of

the *Review*, passed away in 1994, and in 1995 former executive director Stanley Cohen died in a tractor accident on his Oregon farm.

The last decade of the 20th century featured continued growth for AFCC. The number of AFCC members increased to nearly 1,700 by during the 1990s and conference attendance also grew. AFCC's quarterly journal, now named, *Family Court Review* and edited by Professor Andrew Schepard, found a home and cosponsor at Hofstra Law School, accompanied by a student editorial staff.

The Turn of the Century

The twenty-first century would see unprecedented growth for AFCC, beginning with one of the largest conferences in AFCC history. Nearly 750 delegates joined AFCC for its 37th Annual Conference in New Orleans in May 2000 as U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone and his wife, Sheila Wellstone, a well-known advocate against domestic violence, provided the keynote address. AFCC members were saddened to learn later of the Wellstones' tragic death in an airplane crash in 2002.

The New Orleans conference theme, "Alienation, Access, and Attachment," provided the opportunity for members of the Northern California Task Force on the Alienated Child, led by Dr. Janet Johnston and Dr. Joan Kelly, to share their reformulation of Richard Gardner's controversial Parental Alienation Syndrome. The work of the task force was then published in what would become a landmark special issue of the *Family Court Review*.

AFCC received a second organizational development grant from the Hewlett Foundation in the late 1990s and used it to focus on the future, survey its members regarding their needs, develop a Web site, and take stock of AFCC's organizational structure and its capacity to move forward. AFCC initiated a revision of its bylaws and governance procedures, and the AFCC Board of Directors was downsized from 50 members to 19.

With AFCC staff and many members en route to New York for the 2001 Regional Conference, terrorists struck the World Trade Center on September 11. The conference was cancelled, but the AFCC spirit was not to be daunted by these events. With the support of AFCC New York members and Hofstra Law School, the conference was held five months later, and AFCC members worldwide contributed money and support to help the organization weather this challenge.

In 2002, Ann Milne retired and Peter Salem became the eighth executive director in the history of AFCC. In 2003, AFCC celebrated its 40th Anniversary in Ottawa, Ontario, twenty years after AFCC's first Canadian President, Hon. John VanDuzer organized the AFCC conference in Toronto. Twenty years later, Justice VanDuzer was honored for his contribution at the Ottawa conference.

In 2004, the AFCC Board of Directors passed a strategic plan calling for the association on initiatives to influence the field of practice. A series of special projects resulted, among them:

- AFCC was awarded a contract to develop and evaluate a researched -based screening instrument for the Connecticut Court Support Services Division. The project was a finalist for the Kennedy School of Government Innovations in American Government Award.
- AFCC President Hon. George Czutrín appointed a Parenting Coordination Task Force in 2003 to take the lead in the development of this emerging new field. The task force produced the first national set of Guidelines for Parenting Coordinators, adopted by the AFCC Board of Directors in May 2005.
- AFCC President Leslye Hunter appointed a task force in 2004 to revise the AFCC Model Standards for Child Custody Evaluation. The Model Standards were adopted by the AFCC Board of Directors in May 2006.
- AFCC partnered with Hofstra Law School Center for Children, Families and the Law on the Family Law Education Reform Project (FLER), an effort to close the gap between the teaching and practice of family law. FLER systematically included hundreds of interdisciplinary family court professionals in the project. The FLER Project hosted the first AFCC-sponsored conference at the Johnson Foundation's prestigious Wingspread Conference Center. The FLER Report was endorsed by numerous national organizations and the

October 2006 issue of *Family Court Review* is dedicated to the FLER project. The project is ongoing and is currently developing a Web site to support skills based, interdisciplinary teaching of family law classes.

- AFCC partnered with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to co-sponsor a think tank on Domestic Violence and Family Courts, AFCC's second Wingspread Conference. The think tank focused on issues of differentiation in domestic violence and participants included leading judges, legal and social science scholars, domestic violence advocates and interdisciplinary family court and family law practitioners. Following the conference, participants from different professional backgrounds wrote and presented together to encourage greater collaboration between family court professional and domestic violence advocates. The July 2008 issue of *Family Court Review* is dedicated to this project.

AFCC conferences remain a springboard for new initiatives, however they have faced some challenges in the first decade of this century, beginning with the cancellation of the New York Regional conference in September 2001. The 2003 Annual Conference in Ottawa contended with the SARS outbreak in Ontario. And the 2006 Annual Conference had to be relocated from New Orleans to Tampa, Florida following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. However, AFCC and its members have been resilient. Attendance records were shattered with more than 900 attending the 44th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. in 2007, and more than 1,000 participating in the 45th Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia in 2008, including record-setting numbers of participants from Canada and overseas.

AFCC continued to grow in the 21st century. By mid-2008 AFCC's membership had increased to more than 3,600 members from 19 countries. The number of AFCC Chapters continued to expand, including AFCC's first Canadian Chapter in Ontario. AFCC signed on with Wiley-Blackwell to publish *Family Court Review* and Dr. Janet Johnston came aboard as Associate Editor. Online capability exploded *Family Court Review* readership. AFCC's e-newsletter (the *AFCC eNEWS*) and parenting coordination listserv (the AFCC Parenting Coordination Network) further expanded the association's reach.

The AFCC Legacy

AFCC members all share in an impressive legacy passed down from its founding members and the many others who have served AFCC with such fierce dedication. From a small group of court counselors and judges, AFCC has grown to a robust association representing more than a dozen disciplines with members in 19 countries.

In the future, AFCC members will continue to lead the field. The agenda has changed from reconciliation in the 1960s, to divorce with dignity in the 1970s, to mediation in the 1980s, to working with high-conflict and violent families in the 1990s, reflecting the diversity and complexity of contemporary families. Unrepresented litigants, same-sex partnerships, never-married parents, dependency mediation, domestic abuse, parenting coordination, custody evaluations, non-residential parenting, relocation, alienated children and family preservation are among the present and future challenges for AFCC members.

Looking back over nearly half a century, it is clear that the complexity and severity of issues facing families has changed dramatically. Although the issues may change, one thing remains constant: AFCC members continue to share an impressive commitment to families and children cultivated by the founders of the association and instilled in its members and leadership since 1963. The vision has endured, and generations of families have benefited.



MEMBER CENTER

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Study Examines Teens' Adjustment in Blended Families

Courtesy of J.M. Craig Press, Inc.

Gosselin, J. and David, H. [2007]. Risk and Resilience Factors Linked with the Psychosocial Adjustment of Adolescents, Stepparents, and Biological Parents. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 48, 29 - 53.

We have published articles that emphasize the importance of interpersonal relations in the divorce process [See Digests: 5, 3; 7, 1; 8, 1, 2, 5, & 9]. This article goes further and discusses the effect of a wider circle of relationships on the adjustment process of teens.

When parents remarry, they create far more complex relational systems for themselves and their children than had existed previously. Furthermore, at the time of remarriage, many parents make extra efforts to establish and solidify these new relationships. This article addresses the effect such attempts may have when parents have adolescent children.

The authors studied 80, French-speaking Canadian stepfamilies who had at least one adolescent living with them an average of 20 days per month. The participant families were approximately equally divided between stepmothers and stepfathers; they had been together for an average of five years. The sample was overwhelmingly Caucasian and well-educated. The parents and teens all completed questionnaires.

The author found that:

- Adolescents were better adjusted when their parents also were.
- When children lived with their mother and stepfather, problems in the teen-stepfather relationship increased based on the amount of time the teen spent in their household.
- "Stepmother households have more boundary and relationship issues than stepfather households, and the adolescents face greater challenges in trying to adjust to stepfamily life [p. 41]."
- Teens had more conflict with their parent when the stepparent was not involved in discipline, but at the same time, the teens did not want the stepparent involved with them in that way.
- Stepfamilies had lower levels of adjustment based on the amount of time the teen lived in their home.
- When teens spent less time in the home of a parent, all three were better adjusted.
- When parents had stronger relationships with their teens, the teen and stepparent had more positive relations with each other.

Critical Analysis

This is the first article we have seen that examines teen adjustment on both sides of the divorce equation. Another strength is that the authors included the views of stepfathers, stepmothers and the adolescents. In terms of limitations, the result may not apply to the U.S. due to cultural/language differences. Also, participants completed questionnaires only and were not interviewed. Finally, only one of the teens' biological parents was involved in the study.

Recommendations

This study validates what many readers may consider to be common sense. At the same time, it provides us with interesting and useful findings.

Teens had more problems with boundaries when living with fathers and stepmothers as compared to those who lived with mothers and stepfathers [See Digests: 5, 3; 7, 1; 8, 1, 2, 5, & 9]. In our experience, this is not unusual as fathers are somewhat more inclined to off-load parenting responsibilities to stepmothers. Doing so is not in a teen's best interest, and fathers are well-advised to take the role of an authoritative parent instead [See Digests: 5, 3; 7, 1; 8, 1, 2, 5, & 9].

Teens did not want stepparents involved in discipline even if it meant more conflict with their biological parent. This places stepparents in the difficult position of managing new relations with their stepchildren and at the same time trying to be authoritative figures in their lives. To make this transition more effective, biological and future stepparents should carefully consider these matters early in their relationships in order to allow relations between the teen and stepparent to evolve and grow.

For this as well as other valuable research visit J.M. Craig Press online at www.jmcraig.com or call (877) 960-1474. AFCC members receive a 25% discount on all J.M. Craig Products.

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Jobs in Dispute Resolution Email Blast

Courtesy of the New York State Dispute Resolution Association

If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please send an email to [Emily Menn, Esq.](#), Director of Education & Professional Development at the New York State Dispute Resolution Association, with the subject "ADD TO DISPUTE RESOLUTION JOBS LIST" in the email. These opportunities will be permanently posted on the New York State Dispute Resolution Association website (www.nysdra.org) and are free to access.

Bioethicist, Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences, Kansas City, MO

Application Deadline: 2008-10-01 Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences (KCUMB) announces a unique and exciting opportunity in Bioethics. The University recently received stipulation to establish a new Masters of Arts degree in Bioethics. Having successfully launched the new program this year, KCUMB seeks a Bioethicist who will partner with existing faculty to further shape and develop this new Masters degree. The successful candidate must have a PhD degree in ethics (philosophical or religious) or other fields related to Bioethics, or a Masters in Bioethics, combined with an advanced clinician's degree (e.g., D.O., M.D., MA or Ph.D. in nursing, etc.), and some teaching experience in bioethics, preferably at the graduate level. Responsibilities: provide academic leadership and contribute to the education of students, including course offerings in the Bioethics degree program and some lectures for COM students; plan and execute research and scholarly endeavors; assist with the growth and expansion of the Bioethics program and the formation of partnership opportunities; assist in ensuring achievement of strategic goals and objectives; and contribute to the advancement of the university. For additional information contact Richard Randolph, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Chair of Bioethics, rrandolph@kcumb.edu.

Salary and rank will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest for job #07-36, curriculum vitae, salary range requirements, a statement of each of the following: teaching philosophy, research interests, and strengths for the position, and letters of recommendation from three references to: Dawn Rohrs, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, 1750 Independence Ave., Kansas City, MO 64106-1453, 1-800-234-4847, ext. 2371 or 816-283-2371; E-mail: employment@kcumb.edu, (MS Word or PDF only, please); Fax: 816-283-2285. www.kcumb.edu. Pre-employment drug screen and background checks required. Tobacco Free environment. EOE Contact: Donna Hinderaker 816-283-2372 dhinderaker@kcumb.edu

Program Director, Community Conferencing Center, Baltimore, MD

The Community Conferencing Center is currently seeking applicants for PROGRAM DIRECTOR. The PROGRAM DIRECTOR oversees the coordination and administration of all aspects of the organization's service delivery including, maintaining the database, collecting information for reporting to funders, planning, organizing, staffing conferences, providing support and feedback to staff and volunteers. The Program Director manages case intake, case assignment, case facilitation, and case follow up. The Program

Director coordinates resources to assist in the delivery of the organization's programs and services. The Program Director is a visible advocate in the community and is comfortable communicating the organization's mission to any audience. Performs other related duties incidental to the work described herein.

Additional Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited university
- 3-5 years direct service experience
- Proficiency in the use of the computer and other office equipment
- Ability to delegate responsibilities
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to set priorities, develop a work schedule, monitor progress towards goals, and track details, data, information and activities
- Ability to proactively strategize to maximize services
- Ability to anticipate, understand, and respond to the needs of internal and external sources to meet or exceed their expectations within the organizational parameters
- Ability to represent the organizations to various audiences with a high level of confidence

This position requires a great deal of multi-tasking and flexibility as you may be required to work evenings and weekends. Personal & reliable transportation required. The position is a full-time position and includes a competitive salary and benefits package. All interested applicants should send their resume and cover letter to info@communityconferencing.org or mail to Community Conferencing Center, Attn: Deputy Director, 2300 N. Charles Street, Second Floor, Baltimore, MD 21218. **No calls please**

Associate Professor or Professor, Center for Bioethics at New York University, New York, NY

The Center for Bioethics at New York University invites applications for a full-time position at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor to start either September 1, 2009, or January 1, 2010, pending budgetary and administrative approval. The appointment is for a five-year renewable term and without tenure implications. Teaching duties will include two graduate courses per year in the Masters in Bioethics program, one of which may on occasion be held at the NYU School of Medicine, and/or co-taught with other faculty members in the Program. One undergraduate course per year, in Medical Ethics or selected topics in Ethics. AOS: Medical Ethics, preferably with some Medical Center experience. AOC: Environmental Ethics, preferably with interest in public or global health issues.

Applications with a C.V. and three recent essays, published or unpublished, may be sent to: Professor William Ruddick, Director, Center for Bioethics, New York University, 285 Mercer Street, 9th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003. Deadline for receipt of application is November 20, 2008. For additional information contact: bioethics@nyu.edu or 212-992-7958. Professor William Ruddick, Director bioethics@nyu.edu

Program Director, New York City Family Court Mediation Program, Jamaica, NY

The New York City Family Court Mediation Program is a court-based program administered by the Family Court in collaboration with Community Mediation Services to provide mediation services to Family Court litigants with pending custody, visitation or parent-child cases in the five boroughs of the City of New York. Community Mediation Services, Inc. (CMS), a not-for-profit agency based in Jamaica, Queens, is currently searching for a Program Director for this project. This hands-on position requires a mature, poised individual who will work closely with the ADR Coordinator of the NYC Family Court in administering this program. He or she should possess the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to manage all aspects of cases referred by the Court at a high level of professionalism, competency, and efficiency. All applicants must possess a demonstrated commitment to mediation and a willingness to engage in all phases of case management and programmatic development. This position will require extensive travel between the five boroughs.

Responsibilities will include:

- Implementing and following policies and protocols developed in collaboration with the Family Court.
- Working closely and collaboratively with all stakeholders in NYC Family Court.

- Managing case progress, tracking upcoming court dates, and maintaining all case documentation.
- Communicating with Family Court personnel and CMS agency supervisors, both verbally and in writing, to maintain timely reporting of case status and final disposition.
- Mediating complex custody/visitation and other family disputes, as well as coordinating a panel of paid consultant mediators.
- Working collegially with other staff to implement development, monitoring, and quality assurance initiatives.
- Working to establish relationships with other community-based programs and government agencies to ensure proper referral services for clients in need

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree required. A demonstrated commitment to conflict resolution and mediation is necessary. Excellent interpersonal skills and organizational skills are required. Experience in mediating family-oriented disputes is required. Bi-lingual ability is a plus. The candidate should be an independent worker and be flexible to meet the needs of a non-profit environment. CMS is an Equal Opportunity Employer and offers an excellent compensation and benefits package.

To apply, send all applications (including a cover letter with a description of how the candidate meets the desired qualifications, salary history, resume, and references) to:

Salary: Commensurate upon experience. Location: Queens, Staten Island and Brooklyn

How to Apply: Michelle M. Leonard, Esq. Director of Mediation Services
Community Mediation Services, Inc. 89-64 163rd Street

Jamaica, New York 11432 e-mail: mediatenyc@yahoo.com fax:
718.658.4077 website: www.mediatenyc.org

Last day to apply: September 23, 2008; Language(s): Spanish

Env. Facilitation/Mediation/Policy Intern, CONCUR, Berkeley, CA

CONCUR, Inc. is currently seeking a Fall 2008 intern (August 15 - December 31). The ideal candidate would be an individual who recently completed a graduate degree or is now a graduate student looking for real-world work experience. We will also consider outstanding students who have completed a BA and are preparing for graduate school.

Intern Duties and Opportunities: The intern we recruit will be asked to work alongside CONCUR Principals and Associates in all aspects of our work to resolve disputes over a wide range of natural resource and environmental issues. Duties include research, preparation for and debriefing of mediated negotiations, support for our training courses, and teaming with colleagues in firm-wide administrative support. The intern will have several opportunities to observe facilitated and mediated sessions and to participate in our upcoming course, "Facilitating and Mediating Effective Environmental Agreements." A full description of the role and duties as well as application instructions can be found at:

<http://www.concurinc.com/employment.html#intern>

About CONCUR, Inc: CONCUR is a leading provider of services in environmental dispute resolution. We work to resolve disputes over complex natural resources issues. Our work focus ranges across land use, water, marine resources, air quality, and climate change. We use the tools of strategic planning, policy analysis, and agreement-focused facilitation and mediation.

Midlevel Spanish Speaking International Arbitrator, Undisclosed Law Firm, New York, NY

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www.AmericanLegalSearch.com

Sr Customer Resolutions Specialist (# 58703), The Home Depot,

Orange CA

Supports GL Department through resolution of claims identified for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a means to avoid litigation, including preparation of files for ADR, attendance and active negotiation of claims through mediations and settlement conferences, continued negotiation and advocacy on files to facilitate earliest cost-effective resolution or preparation for litigation, and documentation and tracking of results. Position also includes management of web-based mediations for pre-suit ADR team and on site supervision of/ leadership for the third party administrator supporting the claims program.

MAJOR TASKS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES -

25% Attends in-person mediations and settlement conferences for designated claims to include responsibility for negotiating directly with settlement authority.

25% Manages web- based mediations for the ADR program

40% Preparation of all assigned claim files for upcoming ADR sessions including but not limited to investigations, evidence collection, liability evaluations, review and analysis of medical records, continued negotiations with claimants and attorneys post-ADR to accomplish litigation avoidance objectives, and documentation of files that transition into litigation

10% Manages all metric reports for financial results of the ADR Program.

NATURE AND SCOPE - Reports to Counsel-General Liability

Responsible for helping others and providing on-the-job training or guidance

EDUCATION REQUIRED -The knowledge, skills and abilities typically acquired through the completion of a bachelor's degree program or equivalent degree in a field of study related to the job.

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PHYSICAL JOB REQUIREMENTS -Most of the time is spent sitting in a comfortable position and there is frequent opportunity to move about. On rare occasions there may be a need to move or lift light articles.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS -Adjuster certification, paralegal certification or other legal training.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS -5-10 years claims management experience
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ASK THE EXPERTS

Top Ten Tips for Mediators to Move through Emotions

by Sue Bronson, Milwaukee, WI

1. Make Emotions a Standard Part of the Discussion

When you paraphrase, include the feeling being expressed. It may be a feeling word, an image, or a metaphor.

2. Separate Emotions from Thoughts

Emotions are energy in the body. Thoughts are how we make sense of events in our head. If you can change the word "I/You feel..." to "I/You think..." it is probably a thought. Without attention to emotions in mediation, we run the risk of missing something central to a dispute and its resolution.

3. Feelings are Simple and Universal

We all share common human emotions. The rhyming basics are mad, sad, glad and afraid. Our common experience of emotion is the foundation of empathy. Look for emotions in mediation and how they affect decisions.

4. Feelings are Complex and Individual

Each emotion has an intensity—annoyed, angry and rageful are increasing intensities of mad—and can blend with other emotions to create a unique array for each of us. We may also have contradictory emotions in rapid succession. When acknowledging an emotion in mediation, slightly overstate the intensity of emotions more difficult for the individual to express, allowing them to correct down if necessary.

5. Recognize your own Feelings

Mediators need to be comfortable with our own emotions so we don't usurp the process. Knowing your own emotions can help you better understand what is happening to others and see the early cues in mediation.

6. Watch Carefully

Emotions are expressed through facial expressions, breath, voice tone and volume, and body movements, among other ways. Notice changes to unmask emotion as it presents itself. Provide your observations without judgment or interpretation.

7. Venting is NOT Useful

Venting is generally a repetition of old statements and reinforces negative patterns. True emotional expression happens in the present moment. We can see/feel the actual physical sensations in the body. The body is a source of information, strength and a resource for solutions.

8. Label it and Move on

Sometimes it is enough to acknowledge an emotion simply by naming it and moving on. Name the feeling and connect it to needs and interests, pair it with a question for clarification, provide another way to express the need, or follow with silence.

9. Slow Down to Experience the Emotion

At times it may be important to capture a brief moment when a new spontaneous response occurs. Was it seen and understood? This could be an opening of new doors for resolution.

10. Be Genuine

It is not enough to learn stock phrases and use them liberally. We must be authentic.

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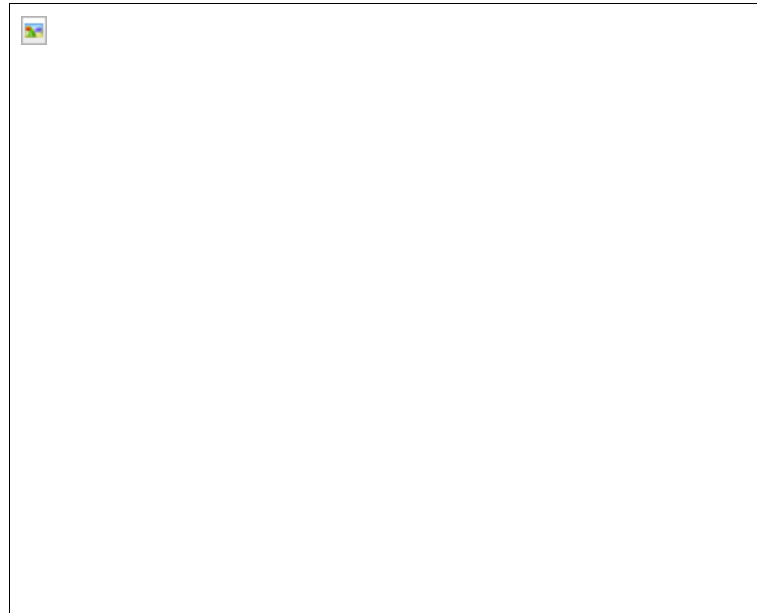
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Top Ten Reasons to Join AFCC in Albuquerque

AFCC's *Eighth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations*, September 25-27, 2008 and *Eighth International Congress on Parent Education and Access Programs*, September 26-27, 2008 in Albuquerque, New Mexico are fast approaching. Here are our top ten reasons why you should join us in Albuquerque.

1. Location, Location, Location



2. Learn new techniques

The skills of a highly trained professional can make a critical difference when families are in conflict. AFCC's *Symposium* and *Congress* offers the latest skills and techniques that you can put to immediate use.

3. Get Energized!

There's nothing more infectious than gathering with hundreds of passionate professionals with similar interests. Here's your chance to recharge your batteries for the upcoming year!

4. Presentations from the Wingspread Conference on Domestic Violence and Family Courts

Both conferences feature the latest updates from the AFCC and NCJFCJ Domestic Violence and Family Courts Project.

5. Meet like-minded professionals

Where else can you meet evaluators, parent educators, judges, lawyers,

mediators, parenting coordinators, researchers, academics and others from around the globe?

6. New Consultation Track

The *Symposium* offers a new consultation track that features coaching, reviews and ethical considerations.

7. Show and Tell

The *Congress* features "Show and Tell," which invites attendees to share their parent education program materials and stories in a casual networking environment.

8. Networking and Collaboration

For the first time, AFCC will hold both conferences simultaneously, maximizing networking opportunities for both audiences. Attendees will meet together for the Friday Luncheon and share access to refreshment breaks, Exhibitor Forum and AFCC's Hospitality Suite.

9. Continuing Education Credits

The *Symposium* features up to 16.5 hours of continuing education and the *Congress* offers up to 9 hours of continuing education.

10. Only Offered in Alternate Years

These exciting conferences are only offered in alternate years. Don't miss your chance to join us in Albuquerque.

Register Today at the Early Bird Rate and Save

Registration rates will increase after August 31, 2008. Register now and take advantage of the lowest rates offered for these conferences. Click the link below for information on registration and hotel reservations.

[More information...](#)

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