



# AFCC eNEWS

MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER  
VOL. 4 NO. 5  
MAY 2009

## AFCC is Now on Facebook!

On May 5, 2009 AFCC joined the world of social networking by launching its facebook fan page! AFCC will post events, announcements and photos, and AFCC "fans" can post comments on the wall. Facebook is a great way to stay in touch with folks you meet at AFCC conferences; AFCC fans can connect with colleagues and friends in an easy and fun venue. Facebook fan pages are visible to people who do not have facebook accounts, although those without accounts are not able to make posts or contact other fans.

Please take a moment to check out the fan page. To become a fan, if you're already a facebook member, just click the "Become a fan" link near the top of the page. If you're not on facebook, creating a profile is easy—all you need is an email address. After you've become a fan, spread the word! Use the link under the AFCC logo to invite your friends and colleagues on facebook to "become a fan" of AFCC.

[View the AFCC facebook fan page...](#)

## Free Things to do in New Orleans

When you, and 800 or so of your colleagues, are not attending the multitude of sessions and workshops that AFCC has to offer, you might wonder what else there is to do in New Orleans. New Orleans is like no other city in the world. With such an abundance of great music, great food and great attractions, a lifetime wouldn't be enough to see and do it all. And the best part of it all is that a lot of it is FREE! It's all out there just waiting to be taken in and enjoyed. Listed below are fifty of the best free attractions in New Orleans. Pick out the free things you'd like to do, then click on the links for more information.

[View the fifty free things to do...](#)

## Common Ground Relief

AFCC volunteers will be working with a New Orleans nonprofit agency named Common Ground Relief on Saturday, May 30, 2009. Formed in the days following Hurricane Katrina, Common Ground Relief's (CGR) mission was to provide short term relief for victims of hurricane disasters in the gulf coast region. That mission has expanded to providing long term support in rebuilding the communities affected in the New Orleans area. CGR is a community-initiated volunteer organization offering assistance, mutual aid and support. The work gives hope to communities by working with them, providing for their immediate needs and



## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### AFCC Regional Training Conference

*Interventions for Family Conflict: Stacking the Odds in Favor of Children*  
November 5-7, 2009  
Peppermill Resort  
Reno, Nevada  
[Submit workshop proposal...](#)

### AFCC 47th Annual Conference

June 2-5, 2010  
Sheraton Denver  
Denver, Colorado

### AFCC Ninth Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations

October 28-30, 2010  
Hyatt Regency Cambridge  
Cambridge/Boston,  
Massachusetts

### AFCC 48th Annual Conference

June 1-4, 2011

emphasizes people working together to rebuild their lives in sustainable ways.

Places are limited, so if you are interested in volunteering on May 30, please contact Erin Sommerfeld at [esommerfeld@afccnet.org](mailto:esommerfeld@afccnet.org). If you are not able to join us for the volunteer activity, but would still like to contribute to Common Ground Relief, please visit their Web site to learn more and donate.

[Common Ground Relief Web site...](#)

## ASK THE EXPERTS

### Top Ten Tips for Managing Personality-Disordered People

*by Bill Eddy, LCSW, Esq., CFLS*

People with personality disorders are normal in many ways, yet they can be shockingly abnormal in intimate relationships and during crises. There are ways to help manage these people.

[Read more...](#)

## RESEARCH UPDATE

### Intimate Partner Violence Affects Children's Memory

*Courtesy of J.M. Craig Press, Inc.*

We have known for some time that children are adversely affected by intimate partner violence (IPV). This study goes further in two respects. It specifically looks at the effect of IPV on children's memory and the extent to which positive parenting by mothers reduced the severity of memory dysfunction.

[Read more...](#)

## 5th World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights

### Children Caught in Conflict

The 5th World Congress will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, August 23-26, 2009. This year celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the inauguration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Themes of the conference include Children's Rights and Family Conflict, Child Protection, Responding to Difference and Children of War. Several AFCC members will be presenting including incoming AFCC President Justice Emile Kruzick, former AFCC President Justice George Czutrin, and AFCC Board of Directors members Justice Peter Boshier and Judge Linda Fidnick.

[Conference Web site...](#)

## FEATURED ARTICLES

### The End of Mediation: An Unhurried Ramble on Why The Field Will Fail and Mediators Will Thrive Over The Next Two Decades!

*by Peter Adler, courtesy of mediate.com*

Brothers and sisters, mediators and facilitators, consensus-builders and collaboration gurus: let us gather down by the river. We have much to discuss, not the least of which is that the end of mediation is upon us.

[Read more...](#)

Hilton Orlando Bonnet  
Creek Resort  
Orlando, Florida

## AFCC Trainings

[Training schedule & brochure](#)

### Advanced Issues in Child Custody

*Nancy Williams Olesen, Ph.D.*

June 22-23, 2009

Chicago, Illinois

### Parenting Coordination: Advanced Practice and Skills

*Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.*

June 24-25, 2009

Chicago, Illinois

## AFCC Innovations Series Books



### Innovations in Interventions with High Conflict Families

[More information...](#)

[Purchase book...](#)

## Multiple Divorces Increase Dropout Rate

*Courtesy of Canwest News Service, by Keith Gerein*

Parents thinking about getting divorced, especially for the second or third time, should consider the impact of that decision on their children's schooling, new research from University of Alberta suggests.

[Read more...](#)

## National Clearinghouse for Mediator Ethics Opinions

*Courtesy of the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution*

Whether you are looking for mediation ethics opinions in a specific jurisdiction or analysis of an ethical standard, this online resource provides opinions from 43 states to help mediators make smart choices in their practices. The database contains a short summary of each opinion with a hyperlink to the original opinion or document issued by the state or national body.

[Read more...](#)

## Conference of Interest

*Convening "Whole of Community": Integrating Approaches and Practices to Address Conflicts in a Chaotic World* presented by Association for Conflict Resolution, October 7-10, 2009, Hilton Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia.

[ACR Web site...](#)

## AFCC Trainings in Chicago

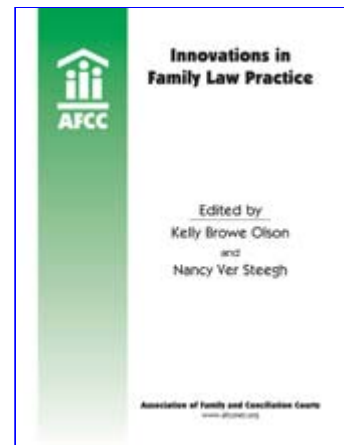
Don't miss AFCC's training programs in Chicago, IL, June 22-25, 2009. Nancy Williams Olesen, Ph.D., will present *Advanced Issues in Child Custody: Complex Family Violence, Alienation, Child Sexual Abuse and Attachment* June 22-23. This is a two-day training for judges, attorneys for children and evaluators who work with families with high-stakes allegations. On June 24-25, Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D. will present *Parenting Coordination: Advanced Practice and Skills*. Parenting coordinators with prior PC training and experienced custody evaluators and mediators working with high-conflict parents will find this program particularly useful.

[Training schedule and brochure...](#)

## Graduation Gift Giving

The graduation gift that gives all year! Do you have a relative, research assistant or intern who is graduating this year? What better way to help them begin their professional career than by giving them a gift membership to AFCC. Start their pursuit of professional excellence and their support of the mission and values of AFCC. Gift memberships are only \$130—that's a \$20 savings! The recipient will receive all of the great member benefits including reduced rates on AFCC conferences and trainings, access to the AFCC Member Center, which includes the searchable *Family Court Review* archives, membership directory for networking and much more!

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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.

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



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### **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Affects Children's Memory**

*Courtesy of J.M. Craig Press, Inc.*

*Jouriles, E. N., Brown, A. S., McDonald, R., Rosenfield, D., Leahy, M. M., and Silver, C. [2008]. Intimate Partner Violence and Preschoolers' Explicit Memory Functioning. Journal of Family Psychology, 22, 420-428.*

We have known for some time that children are adversely affected by intimate partner violence [IPV]. This study goes further in two respects. It specifically looks at the effect of IPV on children's memory and the extent to which positive parenting by mothers reduced the severity of memory dysfunction.

The authors studied 69 4 to 5-year-old children and their mothers. Forty-four percent were African-American, and 33% were Hispanic. Fifty-four percent of the mothers reported at least one incident of IPV in the last month. Each mother was interviewed and given questionnaires regarding IPV, positive parenting [i.e., their engagement with the child], and symptoms of hyper-arousal [i.e., being nervous, jumpy, or having difficulty with concentration]. The children were given two different tests of memory.

The authors found that:

- While some children who were not in abusive homes showed memory deficits due to hyper-arousal, those who lived in homes with IPV experienced a much greater negative affect on their memory, and more severe IPV was associated with even lower memory scores.

- When positive parenting was high, the adverse affects on children's memory was significantly reduced.

#### **Critical Analysis**

The studies we have reviewed on this subject in the past have generally looked at very broad measures of children's emotions and behavior [See Digests: 5, 2; 6, 6; 7, 5; & 8, 9]. This is the first one we have seen that examines more specific effects that IPV may have on children's functioning. In terms of limitations, only mothers were interviewed; therefore, there was no way to corroborate their reports. Second, this was an academic study and did not examine whether the deficits in children's memory had any practical effect on their school performance. Third, the number of participants was rather small, causing us to question its generalizability.

#### **Recommendations**

Forty-six percent of the mothers acknowledged that the violence was mutual; another 20% admitted that the violence was theirs alone. A major drawback of this research is that we do not know whether the type of violence, that is who initiated it or whether it was mutual, had a specific effect on the children's memory. Since we do not know whether the type of violence had some differential impact on children, we should be careful to

not assume that one type is more damaging than another.

Another aspect of this study that leaves us curious is whether or not positive parenting would have a similar effect if it had been by fathers. Theoretically, we have no reason to assume that it would be any different, but we will have to wait for the researchers to tell us.

We caution readers in one respect. The fact that the adverse impact of IVP was reduced due to positive parenting does not mean that the children were not adversely affected. Therefore, one should not assume that just because a child has one positive parent that the environment will be benign.

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

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### ASK THE EXPERTS

#### Top Ten Tips for Managing Personality-Disordered People

*By Bill Eddy, LCSW, Esq., CFLS  
President, High Conflict Institute*

##### 1. Don't be surprised

People with personality disorders are normal in many ways, yet they can be shockingly abnormal in intimate relationships and during crises. Don't be surprised that a seemingly reasonable, intelligent and successful person (in their work, etc.) may suddenly be extremely angry, self-centered, manipulative, and lacking in empathy in a close relationship.

##### 2. Don't try to talk logic

When a personality-disordered person is emotionally upset, they may be physiologically unable to access their logical, problem-solving skills. Research suggests that some people with personality disorder may have a smaller corpus callosum, which makes it harder for their brains to process highly upsetting emotions and problem-solving at the same time.

##### 3. Learn the dynamics of personality disorders

People with personality disorders have chronic internal distress and/or ongoing impairment of social functioning in many settings. They are characterized by an inability to reflect on their own behavior and an inability to adapt their behavior to changing circumstances. This is part of who they are. There are at least ten different types of personality disorders.

##### 4. There is treatment

While traditionally most mental health professionals have viewed personality disorders as unresponsive to treatment, some methods are having success these days – especially those that emphasize cognitive-behavioral skills rather than seeking deep insights about the past. Dialectical Behavior Therapy, developed by Marsha Linehan in Seattle, has become the foremost, research-based successful method for treating borderline personality disorder. Schema Therapy, developed by Jeffery Young in New York, is another method which is having researched-based success with borderline and narcissistic personalities.

##### 5. It's not about you!

People with personality disorders now represent approximately 20% of the general population, at least in the United States, according to a recent controlled study of over 35,000 people sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. They attack the people they are closest to or people in authority. They chronically blame others, as a defense mechanism against feeling the unbearable pain of being consciously responsible for their actions. Their constant blaming behavior is about them, not about you.

##### 6. Their problems go way back

One of the diagnostic mental health criteria for personality disorders is that the disorder is a long-standing problem dating prior to adulthood. In many, perhaps most, the troublesome behavior it dates back to very early childhood, when something went wrong in establishing a "secure attachment" between an infant and his/her parent(s). If the child develops an "insecure attachment," research shows that the child is at much higher

risk of developing a personality disorder as an adult. However, life events can help avoid this or increase this risk.

#### **7. Use Empathy, Attention and Respect**

While this is the opposite of what you feel like doing, E.A.R. works surprisingly well at calming down any upset person. It doesn't cost you anything and it doesn't mean that you agree – it just means you want to connect with them to help them. You will have to repeat this often with personality-disordered people.

#### **8. Their emotions are contagious**

Research shows that emotions are contagious, and that fear and anger are particularly contagious. Personality-disordered people generally have less control over their emotions, so that intense fear and intense anger are common occurrences – and professionals often get “emotionally hooked,” if they aren't aware of this

#### **9. Respond to hostility with BIFF**

Whether in emails, letters or in person, personality-disordered people attack and blame those closest to them and people in authority. Avoid the urge to retaliate or criticize them. Instead, make your response Brief, Informative, Friendly and Firm.

#### **10. You can't reach everybody**

Regardless of what you do, there will be some clients you cannot help. It's not about you. Avoid taking responsibility for their problems or decisions. You're just responsible for your part. Sometimes by letting go of the outcome, they become more responsible. Pay attention to any gut feelings that you may be in danger, and get help when necessary. Get support and consultation when working with personality-disordered clients. You're not alone!

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