

ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY



AND CONCILIATION COURTS

## 15TH SYMPOSIUM ON CHILD CUSTODY

# From a Full House to Parenting Apart



## LAS VEGAS

Planet Hollywood  
Resort and Casino

November 10-12, 2022



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

# ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

## 15th Symposium on Child Custody

### From a Full House to Parenting Apart

November 10-12, 2022

#### From a Full House to Parenting Apart

When a full house becomes parenting apart, changes in the family can become all consuming. While most families can successfully navigate these changes, some struggle due to a variety of issues, including substance misuse, parental alienating behaviors, intimate partner violence, and other challenges. How can family justice professionals help when children are dealt a bad hand? Is a successful future in the cards for high-conflict families? Join AFCC in Las Vegas as we examine the challenges of parenting apart.

#### Topics include:

- *AFCC Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations*
- The Dangers of Concept Creep in Family Law
- Psychological Testing
- Sorting Trauma from Stress in Family Court
- When Your Child Doesn't Want to Go
- Ethics of ODR
- Child Mental Health
- Mediation for Unrepresented Parents
- Research on Parent-Child Estrangement
- Factitious Disorder Imposed on Another
- Children with Special Needs and Resist-Refuse
- Unsticking the Stuck Client

#### Presenting Sponsor



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Earn up to 18.5 hours of continuing education for psychologists, mental health professionals, lawyers, mediators, counselors, social workers, parenting coordinators, and other family law professionals. Please see page 8 for more details.

#### About the Symposium

AFCC strives to offer a wide range of symposium sessions highlighting various 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 symposium is to enhance learning while encouraging respectful inquiries, discussions, and debates congruent with AFCC's organizational values. AFCC does not necessarily endorse or support the views of the symposium's presenters.

## Join AFCC Today

AFCC brings together members of multiple disciplines from around the world to promote greater understanding of the many perspectives in family law, mental health and dispute resolution. An AFCC membership is an investment in professional excellence, with immediate access to new information and ideas amongst a network of family law innovators.

**When you join AFCC along with your conference registration, you save \$10 on your first year's membership and up to \$130 on your registration.**

*Select "First-Time Member Special" when completing the registration form or at [afccnet.org](http://afccnet.org).*

#### AFCC Member Benefits Include:

- **Family Court Review**, AFCC's quarterly academic and research journal in print and electronic format, with full access to the online archives back to 1963
- **Online member directory** of nearly 6,000 colleagues worldwide
- **AFCC eNEWS**, the monthly electronic newsletter, provides up-to-date practice tips, research updates, and interviews with leading practitioners
- **Parenting Coordination Network Listserv** for AFCC members who are PCs or are interested in the role to share tips, advice, and referrals, and to network with others
- **Free webinars!** AFCC members have access to a library of previously recorded webinars with over 60 webinars on topics such as the interviewing children, DE&I issues, opioid misuse, and more. Members can also attend live webinars for only \$15
- **Substantial member discounts** on registration for AFCC conferences and trainings, new AFCC webinars, exhibit and advertising opportunities, and additional publications from Wiley-Blackwell

[afccnet.org](http://afccnet.org)

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## SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

### AFCC 15th Symposium on Child Custody

#### Wednesday, November 9, 2022

6:00pm-8:00pm Registration

#### Thursday, November 10, 2022

7:30am-5:15pm Registration  
7:30am-5:15pm Exhibit Forum  
7:45am-8:45am Coffee and Rolls for Institute Registrants  
8:45am-4:45pm Pre-Symposium Institutes 1-4  
10:15am-10:30am Break  
12:00pm-1:30pm Lunch (On your own)  
3:15pm-3:30pm Break  
5:15pm-6:45pm Opening Session  
6:45pm-7:45pm Welcome Reception

#### Friday, November 11, 2022

6:15am-7:15am Yoga and Meditation  
7:30am-5:00pm Registration  
7:30am-5:00pm Exhibit Forum  
7:45am-8:30am Coffee and Rolls  
8:30am-10:00am Plenary Session  
10:00am-10:30am Break  
10:30am-12:00pm Workshops 1-6  
12:00pm-1:30pm Luncheon (included)  
1:45pm-3:15pm Workshops 7-12  
3:15pm-3:30pm Break  
3:30pm-5:00pm Workshops 13-18  
Evening Taste of Las Vegas

#### Saturday, November 12, 2022

6:15am-7:15am Yoga and Meditation  
7:30am-3:00pm Registration  
7:30am-3:00pm Exhibit Forum  
7:45am-8:30am Coffee and Rolls  
8:30am-10:00am Workshops 19-24  
10:00am-10:30am Break  
10:30am-12:00pm Workshops 25-30  
12:00pm-1:30pm Lunch (on your own)  
1:30pm-3:00pm Workshops 31-36

# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2022

7:30am-5:15pm	Registration
7:30am-5:15pm	Exhibit Forum
7:45am-8:45am	Coffee and Rolls for Institutes
8:45am-4:45pm	Pre-Symposium Institutes*

### 1. When the Deck is Stacked: Sorting Stress from Trauma in Family Court

There can be a blurred line in distinguishing trauma from the extreme stress that can stem from intense, but normal human experience. Presenters in this institute will differentiate between trauma, toxic stress, and ordinary stress, and will examine interdisciplinary approaches toward assessing clients with extreme emotional presentations and experiences. Attendees will learn about developmental and cultural factors that are pertinent in building resilience in clients to help them develop coping skills to manage and process their court-involved experiences. The presenters will examine evidence-informed treatment approaches and offer strategies for when and how to refer a client for additional mental health support. Finally, presenters will demonstrate skills for conducting a trauma-informed interview with an interdisciplinary lens to best identify and meet the needs of the client.

**Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP**, Newton, MA

**Chioma Ajoku, JD, PhD, ABPP**, Brooklyn, NY

**Ruth Ouzts Moore, PhD**, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Savannah, GA

**Terence Singh, PhD, ABPP**, Lionheart Psychology Group, Calgary, AB, Canada

### 2. Playing Your Cards Right: Meaningful Integration of Test Data into a Parenting Plan Evaluation

Psychological testing is one of the major data collection methods in any custody evaluation. The integration of psychological test data remains one of the most challenging aspects of data analysis. This institute will focus on generating, analyzing, and integrating psychological test data into the final report, as well as how to use and integrate assessment data on children into the evaluation process and report. *This is an advanced institute and participants should have prior knowledge of psychological testing.*

**Kara G. Anast, PsyD**, Counseling Connections, Libertyville, IL

**James R. Flens, PsyD, ABPP**, Valrico, FL

**Sol R. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP**, Counseling Connections, Libertyville, IL

\*Pre-symposium institutes require a separate registration fee. Please see registration information on page 8.

### 3. Co-parent Coaching as Dispute Resolution

Co-parent coaching is a dispute resolution process that not only helps parents resolve their disputes, but improves the underlying dynamic that supports ongoing functional co-parenting. This institute will present an overview of the Co-Parent Coaching program in Delaware County, Ohio. The pilot program includes three phases of coaching, extensive support for high-conflict parents, and a data collection process for conducting research on the effectiveness of the program.

**Amy Armstrong, MSW**, Delaware County Domestic Relations Court, Delaware, OH

**Hon. Randall Fuller**, Delaware, OH

### 4. The ABC's and 123's of a Child Custody Evaluation

Learning to conduct scientifically sound child custody evaluations can be daunting for new evaluators. This institute will detail the process of a child custody evaluation from the court order through the report, emphasizing proper methodology, policies, and procedures in compliance with the AFCC *Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations*. The presenters will provide a roadmap for conducting evaluations, with and without psychological testing, for families in rural and urban communities on any budget.

**Tammi Axelson, LMSW-IPR**, Lufkin, TX

**Victoria Harvey, PhD, MSCJ**, Frisco, TX

**Christy Bradshaw Schmidt, MA, LPC**, Coppell, TX

### 5:15pm-6:45pm Opening Session

#### AFCC Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations: A Shakespearean Tragedy or Much Ado About Nothing?

AFCC's new *Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations* are designed to improve practice, protect consumers, and support children and families. Input from AFCC members was sought throughout the development of the document, and more than 500 comments and suggestions were submitted following the posting of the draft *Guidelines*. In this session, several Task Force members examine the new *Guidelines*; discuss how they serve to protect both evaluators and family members; address the role of the *Guidelines* in meeting the needs of a diverse population of practitioners; and attempt to allay fears of a tragic denouement for evaluators.

**Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD**, Riegler, Shienvold & Associates, Harrisburg, PA

**Kathleen McNamara, PhD**, Fort Collins, CO

**David A. Martindale, PhD, ABPP**, Saint Petersburg, FL

**Aaron Robb, PhD, LPC-S**, Forensic Counseling Services, Frisco, TX

**Andrea Jones, MSW, RSW**, Toronto, ON, Canada

**Hon. Herman Walker, Jr.**, Anchorage, AK

### 6:45pm-7:45pm Welcome Reception

# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2022**

6:15am-7:15am	Yoga and Meditation
7:30am-5:00pm	Registration
7:30am-5:00pm	Exhibit Forum
7:45am-8:30am	Coffee and Rolls
8:30am-10:00am	Plenary Session

## Is it Just a Word Game? The Dangers of Concept Creep in Family Law

Concept creep in the field of psychology refers to the semantic inflation of concepts related to the description of harm, such as violence, abuse, bullying and trauma. While the expansion of definitions of harm can identify new, previously unrecognized forms of harm (e.g., cyber bullying expanding from the concept of bullying), broadening these concepts can dilute the intent and measurement of harm concepts, conflate the etiology of harm, and trivialize more severe forms of harm. This panel will introduce concept creep from historical, psychological, and research perspectives to discuss the opportunities and challenges of mutating concepts of harm. The panel will then highlight examples of semantic inflations of harm in family law, specifically addressing trauma, domestic violence, parental alienation, gatekeeping, and attachment.

*Jennifer Hardesty, PhD, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana, IL*

*Michael A. Saini, PhD, Univ. of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada*

*Matthew J. Sullivan, PhD, Santa Cruz, CA*

*Peter Jaffe, PhD, Western Univ., London, ON, Canada*

10:00am-10:30am Break

10:30am-12:00pm Workshops 1-6

## 1. Cultural and Religious Factors in Custody Evaluations and Decisions

This workshop presents an interdisciplinary perspective for forensic evaluators, attorneys, and psychologists about the cultural and religious issues that impact custody determinations regarding access, decision making, and possible restrictions on one parent's conduct when having that access. The presenters will review current case law and explore fact patterns that will highlight the impact of cultural and religious factors on divorce and custody proceedings when a spouse changes the course of their beliefs during the marriage.

*Martin E. Friedlander, JD, Brooklyn, NY*

*Alberto A. Yohananoff, PhD, NYC Forensics, New York, NY*

*Hon. Jane Pearl (Ret.), New York, NY*

## 2. What to Do When Your Child Doesn't Want to Go to Their Other Parent's Home

One of the most complicated and risky situations post-separation occurs when a child resists or refuses contact with a parent. This workshop serves as a guide to parents (for clinicians, the legal profession, and the court) on how to differentiate between those families in which parent-child contact problems are a potential problem versus when resistance is within the normal range. In this hands-on session, the presenters will develop a tool to assist parents with the identification and management of potential consequences and create resources to work with parent-child contact problems.

*Leslie M. Drozd, PhD, Seattle, WA*

*Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, Newton, MA*

## 3. Supervised Visitation/Parenting Time: The Who, What, Why, and How

Supervised visitation supports safe relationships between parents and children in family court cases that typically involve allegations and findings of domestic violence and child abuse/neglect. This workshop will explore circumstances that warrant supervised visitation, options for who will supervise and where this will occur, appropriate requirements for parents and supervisors, and considerations for determining how and when supervision can be modified or eliminated. The presenters will offer the perspectives of a judicial officer, mediator, evaluator, and parenting coordinator.

*Jennifer E. Joseph, JD, Saint Paul, MN*

*Mindy F. Mitnick, EdM, MA, Edina, MN*

*Hon. James Street, Saint Paul, MN*

## 4. Ethics of Hybrid and Online Dispute Resolution with Self-Represented Litigants

Ethical considerations are the cornerstone of fair and effective dispute resolution processes. The switch to virtual, online, and hybrid dispute resolution models have added new ethical considerations and traps for the dispute resolution practitioner. Add in the twist of working with self-represented litigants and the ethical minefield becomes even more precarious. The presenters will explore common dilemmas and facilitate a lively discussion about potential resolutions.

*Hon. Michael Rust, Oshkosh, WI*

*Jean Sternlight, JD, Univ. of Nevada, William S. Boyd School of Law, Las Vegas, NV*

## 5. Preventing Serious Child Mental Health Crises in Divorcing Families

The incidence of serious mental health crises in children and teens has been declared a national emergency by the Surgeon General. The risk is greater for divorcing families. A new online program for parents and their children teaches evidence-based stress reduction methods. Children's attention is fostered by seven different child hosts who interact with a wise, kind, animated alien, Orby. Preliminary evidence shows reductions in children's stress, anxiety, depression and school behavior problems. Other treatments and preventive approaches for child depression and anxiety will be summarized.

*Donald A. Gordon, PhD, Family Works, Inc., Ashland, OR*

## 6. Preparation is Not a Gamble: Tips for Effective Testimony in Child Custody Cases

All too often mental health professionals do not fully understand the rules of evidence, and the advocacy roles of attorneys. Similarly, attorneys often do not understand the child custody evaluation process, how testing can be utilized, and the basis upon which mental health professionals formulate opinions and recommendations. In this session, a seasoned attorney and a seasoned mental health professional will offer a primer for what each role needs to know about the other, and will share best practices for greater efficacy when preparing for, and testifying in the courtroom.

*Lawrence Jay Braunstein, JD, Braunstein & Zuckerman, White Plains, NY*

*Sol R. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP, Counseling Connections, Libertyville, IL*

# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

## 12:00pm-1:30pm Luncheon

**Luncheon Speaker:** *Professor Jean Sternlight, Univ. of Nevada, William S. Boyd School of Law, Las Vegas, NV*

## Rapport, Emotion, and Credibility in the Zoom Room

Use of videoconferencing and other technology seems to have overtaken family law, potentially introducing more efficiency in to mediation, custody evaluations, court hearings, and other processes. But what is the impact of switching from in-person communication to videoconferencing or other technology in terms of emotions, rapport, credibility assessments, focus, fatigue, and other factors? How can professionals both select and design the most appropriate forum? Professor Sternlight will share insights from her research on the psychology of alternative communication technologies.

## 1:45pm-3:15pm Workshops 7-12

### 7. Diversity and the Revised AFCC Guidelines: Why One Size Does Not Fit All

The new AFCC *Guidelines for Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations* include multiple references to the importance of considering and understanding issues of diversity. Parenting plan evaluators must approach each new appointment with sensitivity to diversity and a willingness to learn what is important to the family from a cultural perspective. The information in this workshop will enhance the skill level and knowledge needed for evaluators to do so, and also benefit the families receiving parenting plan evaluations.

*April Harris-Britt, PhD, AHB Center for Behavioral Health, Durham, NC*  
*Andrea Jones, MSW, RSW, Toronto, ON, Canada*

### 8. Mediation for Unrepresented Parents

Is successful mediation dependent on legal representation? Does the fundamental nature of mediation, and the mediator's role and ethical responsibility change if parents are unrepresented? Is it expected that presentation, participation, and understanding of mediation may be different for unrepresented parents? Is mediation inclusion dependent on representation? This interactive, reflective, and cognitive skills-based session will use scenarios, examples, and discussion to explore these questions.

*Hon. Nancy Flatters, (Ret.), Calgary, AB, Canada*  
*Larry S. Fong, PhD, Fong & Associates, Calgary, AB, Canada*

### 9. Stop the Madness: Avoiding Adverse Childhood Experiences and Other Maladies

Must every separation result in ongoing parental conflict, as well as damage to children? Too often, family law professionals intervene too late and struggle to mitigate damage after the process has devolved into litigation. What can we as professionals do prophylactically to avoid or limit the damage to parents and children? This workshop explores how to support early intervention in the separation process, how to use resources such as therapists, mediators, and parenting plan coordinators before litigation ensues, and how to better educate parents and those who work with families in crisis about the multitude of adverse childhood consequences that result from ongoing conflict and litigation.

*Michael J. Kretzmer, JD, Summers, Levine, & Kretzmer, Los Angeles, CA*  
*Susan Rempel, PhD, El Segundo, CA*  
*Hon. Mark A. Juhas, Los Angeles, CA*

### 10. Integrated Responses to Complex Families

High-conflict cases use considerable court time and are stressful for all parties involved, including the professionals. These cases can take on a circular pattern, returning to court repeatedly, and there may be multiple assessments and various problems with the implementation of therapeutic interventions. This presentation will examine interdisciplinary issues within the court process through the lens of a judge, an assessor, and a therapist, and what each of these roles needs from one another to better serve these complex cases.

*Alyson G. Jones, MA, RCC, Alyson Jones & Associates, West Vancouver, BC, Canada*  
*Hon. Patricia M. Bond, Vancouver, BC, Canada*  
*Rebecca St. Clere England, PhD, RPsych, Vancouver, BC, Canada*

### 11. My Child Hates Me: Research and Recommendations on Parent-Child Estrangement

Resist/refuse dynamics in families are challenging to legal and mental health professionals while overwhelming the court system. The presenters conducted a qualitative research study on the experiences of parents who are estranged from their child(ren) to identify how to best help families with these dynamics. In this workshop, the research findings will be presented and the application of findings will be explored. The presenters will also discuss helpful factors for the relationship repair process, how to keep a systemic approach, and what professionals need to know when they have a client with a resist/refuse family system.

*Erin Guyette, MS, Univ. of Minnesota, Saint Paul, MN*  
*Steven M. Harris, MA, PhD, Univ. of Minnesota, Saint Paul, MN*

### 12. The Neuroscience Revolution and the Family Court

This cutting edge session will focus on the use of neuroscience in family court, including brain scans, the value of neuroscientific evidence, critical evaluation of science-related evidence, and limitations. Emerging neuroscience topics relevant to family court will also be discussed alongside Daubert considerations.

*Stephanie Tabashneck, PsyD, JD, Newton, MA*  
*Hon. Linda Fidnick, Northampton, MA*

## 3:15pm-3:30pm Break

## 3:30pm-5:00pm Workshops 13-18

### 13. The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Court-Involved Children

Children with court involvement have often encountered adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and are mistrustful of court professionals, as they are uncertain as to what information will be shared and with whom. This presentation will explore the effects of ACEs and court involvement on children's resistance and mistrust when interacting with court professionals. Emphasis will be given to cultural humility in the trust-building process and providing trauma informed care to ensure that children feel comfortable making disclosures that are necessary when making recommendations and decisions in their best interest.

*Ruth Ouzts Moore, PhD, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Savannah, GA*  
*Susan J. Foster, PhD, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Hammond, LA*  
*Jaymie VanMeter, PhD, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Chicago, IL*

# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

## 14. Crafting Parenting Plans that Address the Unique Cultural Dynamics of a Family

While education is the key to recognizing the implicit biases that may impact our view of families involved in the custody dispute resolution process, this workshop provides attendees with methods of recognizing and interrupting when our responses to a situation are based on stereotypes and limited exposure. In addition, the presenters will provide concrete interventions for use in parenting plans around racial, ethnic, religious and identity issues that arise with families.

*Dawn Smith, JD, Smith & Files, LLC, Tucker, GA*

*Daniel Bloom, JD, Bloom, Lines, & Alexander, LLC, Atlanta, GA*

## 15. Looking Inward: Recognizing and Overcoming Our Biases

Family court practitioners are not immune from biases related to age, gender, race, and other identities, though we may not always be aware of these biases or their influence on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. When hidden biases remain unrecognized and unaddressed, they have the potential to compromise the services we provide to children, youth, and families. This workshop will provide an overview of the psychological literature on explicit and implicit biases, empirically supported methods for minimizing their impact, and the limitations of these methods. Personal reflection will be encouraged.

*Lindsey Sank Davis, PhD, William James College, Brookline, MA*

## 16. Child Custody Assessment: New Professional Perspectives from Research

This session is based on insights from recent research on child custody assessment (CCA). The main pitfalls observed in CCA identified through the analysis of 45 complaint files to a psychology licensing board will be described. Individual and group interviews with law and mental health professionals highlight the role of CCA in giving a voice to children and supporting conflict resolution. Communication challenges for professionals, as well as the shortage of professionals are also discussed. All of these results will support reflections about the promotion of best professional practices.

*Karine Poitras, PhD, Univ. du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières, QC, Canada*

*Julie Maheux, PhD, Univ. du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières, QC, Canada*

*Arianne Marois, BA, Univ. du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières, QC, Canada*

## 17. Affairs and Their Impact on Co-Parenting and Parent-Child Relationships

This presentation will explore extramarital affairs and their impact on the divorce process. A focus upon the co-parenting relationship both during and after divorce will include issues of trust, ability to communicate and make child-focused decisions, and the development of custody and parenting plans. The possible impact on children and the parent-child relationships will also be explored, including any contributions to parent-child contact problems.

*Tamsen Thorpe, PhD, Directions - a Center for Life Strategies, Morristown, NJ*

*Sharon Ryan Montgomery, PsyD, Morristown, NJ*

*Marcy A. Pasternak, PhD, Watchung, NJ*

## 18. Conducting Homes Studies Virtually: Developments in Puerto Rico

This workshop will focus on how conducting home studies are reinvented virtually for relocation cases. A proposed model for conducting virtual home studies for evaluating the proposed jurisdiction by the moving parent will be presented using Puerto Rico as context. The model is based on social capital perspective, specifically the ecological comparison component under the Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystem Framework. Participants will be able to picture how the ecological comparison component can be operationalized through public governmental available apps.

*Paul-Jesús Fericelli, PhD, Inter American Univ. of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR*

Evening

Taste of Las Vegas

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2022

6:15am-7:15am

Yoga and Meditation

7:30am-3:00pm

Registration

7:30am-3:00pm

Exhibit Forum

7:45am-8:30am

Coffee and Rolls

8:30am-10:00am

Workshops 19-24

## 19. Detecting Children Exposed to Drug Using Environments (Including Fentanyl)

Caregivers in addiction can have impaired judgement, respond inappropriately, and may be inattentive, violent, and paranoid. Detecting exposure to such environments is paramount to protecting the lives of those under the care of such guardians, especially if they cannot speak for themselves. Infants and toddlers, for example, touch their surroundings and put everything in their mouths, and toddlers may be given illicit substances to make them, e.g., happy or drowsy. Learn how environmental drug exposure testing differs from standard hair drug testing (ingestion vs exposure), how hair compares to other specimens tested, how drugs are incorporated into hair, and why the lookback (window of detection) is up to approximately three months.

*Joseph Jones, PhD, United States Drug Testing Laboratories, Des Plaines, IL*

## 20. Implementing Evaluation Guidelines for Novice Evaluators and Their Supervisors

Some commenters have suggested that AFCC's *Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations* are complex and too difficult to implement. While detailed, the *Guidelines* reflect competencies and procedures that most novice evaluators learn in graduate school or their first years of practice as they are building towards working in the sub-specialty area of family law. Whether a novice yourself, or supervising up-and-coming evaluators, this session will help articulate experience, identify areas that need focused study, and utilize the *Guidelines* to benefit your practice.

*Aaron Robb, PhD, Forensic Counseling Services, Frisco, TX*

## 21. Deconstructing Supportive Parenting of Gender Expansive and Sexual Diverse Youth

High-conflict family court disputes involving transgender/gender expansive (TGE) and sexual diverse youth often include claims that an affirming parent is "too supportive" of a child's identity, leading to undue, negative influence on children. This session will cover psychological theories and gender stereotypes that underscore these cases, discuss empirical literature on supportive parenting behaviors and protective factors, examine longitudinal data from a study examining experiences of affirming parents of TGE youth in the family court system, and provide an empirical approach to examining affirming parenting in the context of best interest standards.

*Stef Sloan, PhD, Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, KS*

*Camellia Bellis, MEd, Univ. of Arizona College of Medicine, Phoenix, AZ*

*Katherine Kovalanka, PhD, Miami Univ., Oxford, OH*

## 22. The Art of Parallel Parenting Plans and Disengaging Too Engaged Parents

This session will offer model provisions for parallel parenting plans that are focused on disengaging high-conflict parents and that contemplate the use of parenting coordination and/or co-parenting counseling, post judgment, to create an overall structure, that allows parents to disengage. Further, the model provisions will also be used to discuss how they might be applied in parenting coordination and co-parenting counseling to make this structure more successful in reducing conflict between parents.

*Simone A. Haberstock, JD, LLM, Saint Louis, MO*

*Kevin J. Chafin, MA, LPC, Kansas City, MO*

# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

## 23. Factitious Disorder Imposed on Another (FDIA): What the Research Shows

In child custody cases, one parent may allege factitious disorder imposed on another (FDIA) (formerly called Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy), to gain an advantage. FDIA is a severe form of child abuse in which a caregiver misleads health care providers about a child's medical and/or psychological symptoms resulting in the child undergoing unnecessary procedures for a condition that may not exist. Challenges that FDIA presents to the legal and mental health systems will be discussed.

*Eileen A. Kohutis, PhD, Livingston, NJ*

## 24. Use of Psychological Tests in Custody Evaluations: Experiences from Puerto Rico

Child custody evaluations include a broad range of procedures, suggested protocols, as well as considerations of referrals to mental health specialists for deeper exploration of the persons involved in the process. Best practices for child custody evaluations suggest each psychological test, as well as interview procedure be selected and implemented considering cultural adaptations, and standardization practices. In this workshop, the presenters will share practical recommendations on do's and don'ts regarding the application of psychological tests and interview procedures with Latino (specifically Puerto Rican) population. Also, general recommendations regarding the process of incorporation of the results in a forensic report, as well as aspects related to testimony, will be given. These suggestions are based on practical experiences of the presenters as evaluators and expert consultants in child custody procedures in Puerto Rico.

*Yaritza M. Lopez, PhD, Ponce Health Sciences Univ., Juana Diaz, PR*

*Eunice Alvarado, PsyD, Ponce Health Sciences Univ., Guayama, PR*

*Bianca Perez, BA, Ponce Health Sciences Univ., Ponce, PR*

**10:00am-10:30am**    **Break**

**10:30am-12:00pm**    **Workshops 25-30**

## 25. Children with Special Needs and Resist-Refuse Dynamics: Unique Vulnerabilities

Children with special needs who suffer from moderate to severe conditions are frequently compromised in their adaptive skills relative to their neurotypical peers. These neurodiverse children are especially prone to being brought into skewed parent-child alignments post-separation, given their less flexible coping skills, and increased or prolonged dependence. This workshop will explore how the neurodiverse child's deficits in resilience and capacity to manage change, combined with common gatekeeping dynamics often seen in special need's families, may lead to a greater risk for the development of risk-refuse dynamics.

*Daniel B. Pickar, PhD, ABPP, Santa Rosa, CA*

*Robert L. Kaufman, PhD, ABPP, San Rafael, CA*

## 26. Understanding the Benefits of a Child's Attorney in Contentious Custody Cases

Children's attorneys from The Child's Advocate (TCA), Legal Aid of North Carolina, will present their model to provide direct representation to children in contentious custody cases. The presenters will describe the benefits of this model in cases involving domestic violence, child mistreatment or abuse, substance abuse, mental illness, chronic litigation, children with a disability, gender identity issues, estrangement of a child, or relocation of a parent. The presentation will include reflections and insights from a young adult man formerly represented by TCA at the age of 16, after having been embroiled in his parents' custody dispute for over ten years.

*Suzanne Chester, JD, PhD, The Child's Advocate, Raleigh, NC*

*Atiya Mosley, JD, The Child's Advocate, Raleigh, NC*

*David J., Raleigh, NC*

*Moderator: Peter Jaffe, PhD, Western Univ., London, ON, Canada*

## 27. Multi-Party Collaboration in High-Conflict Family Support: Can Technology Help?

Supporting high-conflict families in transition — divorce or other changes — requires recognition of practical constraints on the family and the collaboration of family members plus a range of external service providers: lawyers, financial advisors, social workers, psychologists, school officials, and others. This workshop will discuss the challenges and techniques for identifying constraints, like financial limitations, and managing this multi-faceted collaboration, including a discussion of current and future technology tools that could help the practitioner facilitate reaching family decisions that work for all participants.

*Gary R. Doernhoefer, JD, ADR Notable, Columbus, OH*

*Tracy Ann Moore-Grant, JD, Patterson, Moore, Butler, LLC, Cumming, GA*

## 28. Anti-Social and Psychopathic Parents: Implications for Family Court

Parental antisocial behavior as well as the presence of psychopathic traits in parents are both of significant concern to child protection agencies and family courts. Research has shown the potential negative impact anti-social parents have on the development of children. This session will examine the potential impact of parental antisocial behavior and psychopathic traits on child protection and custody cases in family court and suggest best practice interventions.

*Robert C. Rowe, PhD, Kingston General Hospital, Kingston, ON, Canada*

## 29. Fatherhood Involvement and Child Custody: Tips and Best Practices from the NRFC

When it comes to child custody, fathers can sometimes get the "short end of the stick." Regardless of visitation rights of dads and their children, fatherhood involvement is essential to the growth and development of children. The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFHC), through fatherhood.gov, provides free tips, resources, and guides to co-parent with the child's mother and provide in-depth details on how fathers can stay involved in their child's life. The presenters will review existing resources and share ideas for supporting the critical relationships between children and their fathers.

*Eugene Schneeberg, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, Fairfax, VA*

*James R. Worthy, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, Fairfax, VA*

**Save the Date!**

**AFCC 60th Anniversary Conference**

**May 31-June 3, 2023**

**Westin Bonaventure • Los Angeles**

**See Call for Proposals**



# 15th Symposium on Child Custody

## 30. SAFeR, Your Winning Hand: Effects of Domestic Abuse in Child Welfare Mediation

Domestic violence pervasively influences all aspects of the family, and is often highlighted in child welfare cases. An analysis of the effects of domestic violence on a family is crucial to family wellbeing. This workshop will enable legal practitioners, focusing on mediators and those that work in child welfare, to understand the unique dynamics of intimate partner violence and how to offer a child protection mediation experience with safer outcomes for survivor parents and their children.

*Tracy E. M. Shoberg, JD, Battered Women's Justice Project, Saint Paul, MN*  
*Barbra A. Grimmer, Texas Council on Family Violence, Austin, TX*

**12:00pm-1:30pm** Lunch on your own

**1:30pm-3:00pm** Workshops 31-36

## 31. Unsticking the Stuck Client: A Process for Going from Resistance to Resilience

What are you supposed to do with the stuck client who can't seem to pull themselves from the conflict? The presenter will review a successful "unsticking" process that professionals can use to help clients learn appropriate information about personality disorders; shore up their five "vulnerable values;" self-regulate; employ a counter-intuitive communication plan; and learn to trust themselves differently and more effectively. The workshop includes exercises and strategies professionals can immediately use with clients.

*Jennifer L. McBride McNamara, MA, LMFT, Touching Trees, Eagan, MN*

## 32. Impacts of Intimate Partner Violence on Children and Protective Caregivers

This workshop will explore the impact of exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV) on children's mental health and social-emotional development. There will be detailed focus on how exposure to IPV can alter children's representations of their caregivers and change their ways of relating to them. Through clinical vignettes and case examples, the workshop will translate how these impacts, which primarily unfold outside of the courtroom, may manifest in family court proceedings.

*Neena McConnico, PhD, Boston Medical Center, MA*  
*Courtney Bailey, LICSW, Boston Medical Center, MA*

## 33. Getting Ready: Preparing for High-Conflict Cases

While many families successfully navigate the divorce and child custody systems, others struggle due to issues including substance misuse, parental alienating behaviors, and intimate partner violence. These challenges may be compounded by language, physical and mental health barriers, and other access to justice issues. The panelists, a mediator, a social worker, and a judge, will discuss their roles, how the process can be improved for families, how to manage these challenges in the moment, and how to avoid secondary trauma.

*Ann E. Webb, JD, PhD, Univ. of Houston, Houston, TX*  
*Hon. Janet B Heppard, Richmond, TX*  
*Tasha L. Willis, JD, LLM, Univ. of Houston Law Center, Houston, TX*

## 34. Parental Supervision or Parental Engagement? Therapeutic Access: A New Model

This workshop will review the use of therapeutic access as an intervention for use in the context of separation and divorce and with parents whose parenting time requires supervision. Participants will obtain a clear understanding of how therapeutic access differs from other interventions. Case examples will be utilized to examine how therapeutic access generates valuable information about the target parent's knowledge, ability and receptivity to feedback, as well as increased understanding of the child's feelings and responses to parental contact.

*Jane A. Gillespie, BSW, MSW, Calgary, AB, Canada*  
*Evelyn Wotherspoon, BSW, MSW, Calgary, AB, Canada*

## 35. Growth Mindset: Application in Dispute Resolution

This workshop explores the growth mindset theory. Individuals with a growth mindset believe their intelligence and talents can be developed over time through hard work. We will examine the benefits of a growth mindset and how it can be used as a positive tool to help parties work toward a resolution when faced with challenging family law issues. Discussion includes examples and a simulation. Attendees will learn skills to enhance their practice as a neutral or participant.

*Julie Mitrovich-King, Magistrate, Painesville, OH*  
*Wendy J. Smither, Mediation Magistrate, Painesville, OH*

## 36. Saying "Gay": Talking Knowledgeably and Inclusively About LGBTQ+ Issues

As backlash against LGBTQ+ people grows, professionals must proactively embrace a supportive family law community. In this session, the presenters review the seminal cases and current legal developments shaping the conversation around LGBTQ+ people in the US. They will share actionable, practical ways law practitioners can be forward-thinking, affirming and inclusive as they welcome LGBTQ+ clients, children or families into their offices (virtually or in-person) and courtrooms.

*Heather R. McCabe, JD, McCabe Russell, PA, Fulton, MD*  
*Emily L. Russell, JD, McCabe Russell, Fulton, MD*

**Coming Soon!**

**AFCC Virtual Training Programs**

**The Fundamentals of Parenting Coordination**

**December 5-8, 2022**

**Advanced Issues in Child Custody**

**January 17-19, 2023**

**The Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations**

**March 13-16 and 20-22, 2023**

# Important Conference Information

## Continuing Education Credits

A certificate of attendance is included in the registration fee. The certificate will verify attendance at conference sessions and may be used to apply for continuing education credits with registrants' accrediting institution. **Attendees are responsible for signing in and out of each session attended and certificates of attendance will reflect those sessions only.** A list of conference sessions eligible for continuing education credits will be posted on the conference portal. Attendees will receive their certificate approximately two weeks after the conference.

**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 18.5 hours of continuing education for psychologists. AFCC is also approved to sponsor continuing education for New York psychologists.

**Mental Health Professionals.** An application for continuing education approval from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) will be submitted for up to 18.5 credits; however, individuals must verify approval with their credentialing or licensing boards. LMFTs, LPCs, and other mental health professionals, may use the certificate of attendance to verify attendance and apply for CE credits with their accrediting institution.

**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.

**US Lawyers.** AFCC will apply for continuing legal education in the following states: Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Minnesota, Vermont, and Pennsylvania. AFCC reserves the right to expand the list of states to which applications will be made. Attorneys from other states may use the certificate of attendance to verify attendance and apply for CLE in their state. The California Bar Association will accept continuing education credits earned by California attorneys at a program held outside of California that has been accredited by an approved state.

**Ontario Lawyers.** An application will be submitted to the Law Society of Ontario to accredit the educational program content for Continuing Professional Development, or CPD, for lawyers.

**Massachusetts Parenting Coordinators.** An application will be made to the state of Massachusetts for continuing education credits for parenting coordinators practicing in that state.

## Conference Scholarships

AFCC will offer conference scholarships that include registration for one pre-symposium institute, the symposium, meal functions, and a certificate of attendance. The scholarship application is available on the [15th Symposium page](#) on the AFCC website. **The scholarship application deadline is September 16, 2022.** Recipients will be notified by October 3, 2022. If you have questions, please contact AFCC Communications Coordinator, Patrick Sommer, at [psommer@afccnet.org](mailto:psommer@afccnet.org) or 608-664-3750.

## Exhibit Forum

The Exhibit Forum will be open during conference hours and provide attendees an opportunity to meet with representatives of AFCC partners and vendors. If you are interested in an exhibit table or other advertising opportunities, please contact AFCC Communications Coordinator, Patrick Sommer, at [psommer@afccnet.org](mailto:psommer@afccnet.org) or 608-664-3750.

## Taste of Las Vegas

Friday evening is your opportunity to enjoy the area with friends and colleagues. Sign up before 1:00pm on Friday to join a group of 8–12 for dinner at a local restaurant. Restaurant menus and sign-up sheets will be available onsite Friday 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 member and certified yoga instructor Sherry Cassidy. Meditation is from 6:15am–6:30am followed by yoga from 6:30am–7:15am, Friday and Saturday mornings. Please bring a yoga mat if you have one.

## Health and Safety Protocols

AFCC reserves the right to implement health and safety protocols that are consistent with CDC guidelines. This may include requiring wearing masks except when eating and drinking, along with proof of vaccination or a negative covid test within 72 hours for all conference participants. Social gatherings planned for smaller spaces will be assessed for risk and a final decision will be made closer to the conference dates.

# Registration Information

**Please read before completing your conference registration form!**

**AFCC Members Save up to \$130 on Registration Rates:** Register and pay by October 12, 2022, to receive the lowest rates for the symposium! **Not a member yet?** Join today and take advantage of the New Membership Special.

**First-Time Member Special:** Join AFCC when you register for the conference and receive a twelve-month membership for \$150 — a \$10 discount — and save up to \$130 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 only available to first-time AFCC members.*

**Pre-Symposium Institute Registration:** Includes attendance at one full-day pre-symposium institute, refreshments, and printed institute materials. *Institute registration is a separate fee from registration for the full conference.*

**Symposium Registration:** Includes all symposium sessions, access to symposium materials, refreshment breaks, opening reception, luncheon, and a certificate of attendance. *Pre-symposium institutes require a separate registration fee.*

**Spouse/Guest Registration:** Available only to a spouse or significant other accompanying a symposium registrant, *not* a business associate or staff colleague. This registration includes plenary sessions, opening reception, and luncheon.

**Symposium Presenter Registration:** Available only to symposium presenters. Includes all symposium sessions, access to symposium materials, refreshment breaks, opening reception, luncheon, and a certificate of attendance. *A separate registration fee is required for presenters who wish to attend a pre-symposium institute.*

**Full-Time Student Registration:** Includes all symposium sessions and electronic access to symposium materials. Meal functions are not included; however, meal tickets may be purchased separately. Registration must include proof of full-time student status — attendees who register online should send a copy of their student identification card to [afcc@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org). *A separate registration fee is required for pre-symposium institutes.*

## Session or Presenter Changes

AFCC reserves the right to make changes to the conference program, including (but not limited to) changes to the content and speakers in the published event schedule, or canceling sessions, should unforeseen circumstances arise.

## Audio/Video Recording

No personal audio or video recording or photographing of sessions is permitted.

# Travel and Lodging Information

## Hotel Information

### Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino

3667 S Las Vegas Blvd  
Las Vegas, NV 89109  
Phone: (866) 919-7472

**Make your reservations today!** The Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino is offering a special rate to AFCC attendees of \$179 per night for single/double occupancy, which includes the \$30 resort fee. On October 8, 2022, any unreserved rooms in the AFCC block will be released and the special rate will no longer be guaranteed. **Rooms frequently sell out before the room block is released. We encourage you to make your reservation early!** Make your reservation by calling 866-919-7472 and request the AFCC special rate or reserve [online](#). All conference attendees are responsible for making their own hotel arrangements.

## Ground Transportation

Taxi fare is approximately \$25 one-way from the **Harry Reid International Airport** (LAS) to the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino and takes about ten minutes, depending on traffic. Uber and Lyft also offer transportation from the airport. Follow the signs at the airport to locate the appropriate ground transportation.

## Parking

Valet and self-parking are available on-site. When coming from Las Vegas Boulevard (The Strip) if heading north, turn right onto Harmon Avenue, on the left is the garage and valet entrance. For use of the parking garage, it is suggested driving through to valet to drop off luggage at the bell desk and then parking in the garage. This way luggage will not have to be lugged through the mall on the way to the registration desk. Self-parking is \$18 a day and \$23 a day on weekends. Garage clearance is 6'8".

## Climate

Temperatures in Las Vegas during November range from the mid-70s to the mid-50s. Meeting rooms and hotel facilities can be cool, so bring a light jacket or sweater.

# Registration Form

AFCC 15th Symposium on Child Custody • November 10-12, 2022

Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino • Las Vegas, Nevada

Register online at [afccnet.org](http://afccnet.org)

Please type or 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any dietary restrictions or other special accommodations?  Meals  Access  Other

Please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle appropriate amount(s) below and total at the bottom

	Paid by Oct. 12	Paid After Oct. 12
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### First-Time Member Special

Join AFCC for 12 months and register at AFCC member rates!  
For first-time members only

\$150	\$150
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### Pre-Symposium Institutes Registration Rates

Full Day Institute - AFCC Member	\$155	\$175
Full Day Institute - Non-member	\$185	\$215

### Symposium Registration Rates

Symposium Registration - AFCC Member	\$365	\$390
Symposium Registration - Non-member	\$435	\$480
Symposium Presenter - AFCC Member	\$250	\$275
Symposium Presenter - Non-member	\$275	\$300
Full-Time Student - AFCC Member (ID required. No meals included.)	\$135	\$160
Full-time Student, AFCC Non-member (ID required. No meals included.)	\$160	\$185

All registrations include a certificate of attendance.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Card Holder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Pre-Symposium Institute Selections (Separate registration fee required) Thursday, November 10, 2022, 8:45am-4:45pm

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

- 1. When the Deck is Stacked: Sorting Stress from Trauma in Family Court
- 2. Playing Your Cards Right: Meaningful Integration of Test Data into a Parenting Plan Evaluation
- 3. Co-parent Coaching as Dispute Resolution
- 4. The ABC's and 123's of a Child Custody Evaluation

### Symposium Workshop Selections (Please write in one workshop number per time slot)

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.

Thursday, November 10	5:15pm-6:45pm	Opening Session	(Yes/No )
Thursday, November 10	6:45pm-7:45pm	Welcome Reception	(Yes/No )
Friday, November 11	8:30am-10:00am	Plenary Session	(Yes/No )
Friday, November 11	10:30am-12:00pm	Workshops 1-6	_____
Friday, November 11	12:00pm-1:30pm	AFCC Luncheon	(Yes/No )
Friday, November 11	1:45pm-3:15pm	Workshops 7-12	_____
Friday, November 11	3:30pm-5:00pm	Workshops 13-18	_____
Saturday, November 12	8:30am-10:00am	Workshops 19-24	_____
Saturday, November 12	10:30am-12:00pm	Workshops 25-30	_____
Saturday, November 12	1:30pm-3:00pm	Workshops 31-36	_____

**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, emailed and confirmed by an email from AFCC, or postmarked by October 12, 2022, will be issued a full refund minus a \$75 service fee. Written notice received by fax, emailed and confirmed by an email from AFCC, or postmarked by October 28, 2022, will have the \$75 service fee deducted and the balance issued as a credit for future AFCC conferences, webinars, trainings or membership dues. **No refunds or credits will be issued for cancellations received after October 28, 2022.**

You may register online at [afccnet.org](http://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](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org)