



Improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict



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Ask the Experts

Ten Economic and Financial Forces Affecting Co-Parenting

Simone A. Haberstock and Kevin J. Chafin

As professionals interacting with families, we understand the obligation to address emotions, needs, and interests with parents who are struggling with co-parenting decisions. It is a relatively new idea to consider how money and financial factors affect conflict between co-parents. Frequently, both the professionals and the parents are unprepared to approach problem-solving from this prospective. Professionals may overlook financial factors in attempting to help parents confront their disagreements. There are some basic points related to money that practitioners should keep in mind when trying to help co-parents resolve conflict and disagreements.

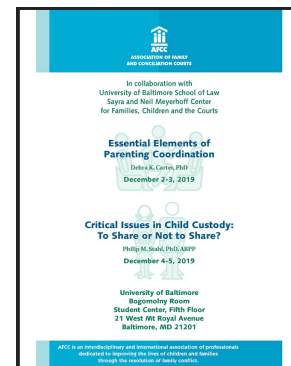
[Read More](#)

Training Programs on Parenting Coordination and Critical Issues in Child Custody

*University of Baltimore
Baltimore, Maryland*

AFCC Training Programs

*University of Baltimore
Baltimore, Maryland
December 2-3 & 4-5, 2019*



Essential Elements of Parenting Coordination

Debra K. Carter, PhD
December 2-3, 2019

Critical Issues in Child Custody

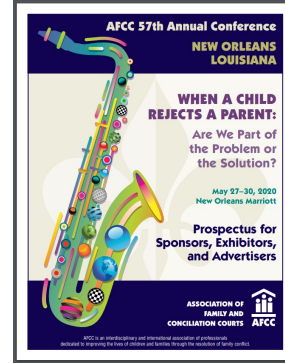
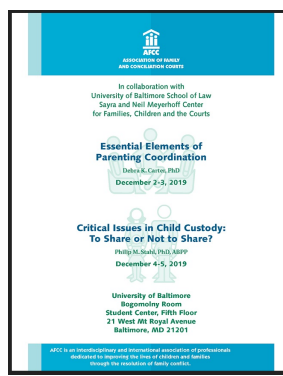
Philip M. Stahl, PhD, ABPP
December 4-5, 2019

AFCC 57th Annual Conference

Essential Elements of Parenting Coordination

Debra K. Carter, PhD
December 2-3, 2019

This training program presents a comprehensive overview of the definition, role, responsibilities, and function of the parenting coordinator. Parenting coordination is an out-of-court dispute resolution process designed to assist coparents in managing parenting disputes, minimize litigation, and shield the children from harmful interparental conflict.



Support AFCC as a sponsor, exhibitor, or advertiser in New Orleans!

Critical Issues in Child Custody: To Share or Not to Share?

Philip M. Stahl, PhD, ABPP
December 4-5, 2019

Developing parenting plans for separating and divorcing parents has become increasingly complex in recent years as new statutes, court rules, programs, practices, and research come to light. Is shared parenting always best for children? What about 50/50 presumptions? What is the impact of domestic violence or high conflict? What happens when one parent relocates or when special needs children are involved?

[Register now!](#)

AFCC 57th Annual Conference News

When a Child Rejects a Parent: Are We Part of the Problem or the Solution?

May 27-30, 2020
New Orleans Marriott

Sponsor, Exhibit, or Advertise with AFCC!

AFCC has several sponsors and exhibitors lined up for the conference already, but we'd love to have more! [Read the prospectus](#) and contact [Gina Wentling](#) to sign up.

Confirming early lets you take advantage of lower prices, better table location, and more! Don't miss out on your chance to promote your business to AFCC members.

Ads are due in early December, so act now!
Questions? Email [Gina Wentling](#), Communications Coordinator, or call 608-664-3750.



AFCC Chapter Conferences

Arizona Chapter Annual Conference

January 24-26, 2020
Sedona, Arizona

California Chapter Annual Conference

February 7-9, 2020
San Francisco, California

Alberta Chapter Annual Conference

March 5-6, 2020
Edmonton, Alberta

Missouri Chapter Spring Conference

April 2-3, 2020
Saint Louis, Missouri

Ohio Chapter Annual Conference

April 7, 2020
Columbus, Ohio

Washington Chapter Annual Conference

April 24, 2020
Seattle, Washington

Australian Chapter Annual Conference

July 16-18, 2020
Brisbane, Queensland

Florida Chapter Annual Conference

September 23-25, 2020
Orlando, Florida

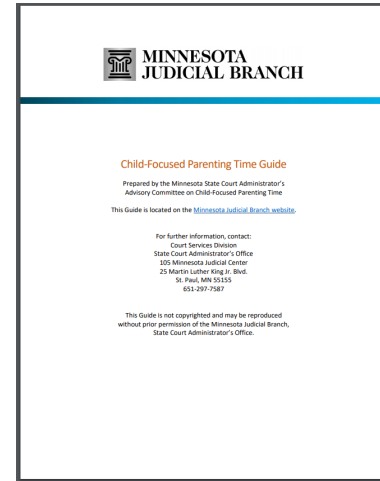
Resource of the Month

Save the Date!

Mark your calendars – we have a [save-the-date flyer](#) available to hang up at your office! See you in New Orleans!

Sponsor, Exhibit, or Advertise!

Child-Focused Parenting Time Guide



AFCC Scholarship Fund

Few events can have a positive impact on your career the way an AFCC conference can. The experience allows participants to recharge professional energies and return to work with renewed enthusiasm and commitment to the families we serve.

You have the opportunity to help us improve the family law community, one hard-working professional at a time! **Please contribute to the AFCC Scholarship Fund today.**

How much should you donate? No donation is too small, and we appreciate every dollar our members contribute. One suggestion is to **pledge one hour of your billable time.**

If we receive your gift by the end of the year, we can better plan how many scholarships to award in 2020. Gifts to the AFCC Scholarship Fund are tax-deductible for US residents. [Learn more about the Scholarship Fund](#) and make your donation today!

Donate now!

AFCC Webinar Corner

Helping Courts Untangle Trauma from Drama

Shawn Marsh, PhD, Univ. of Nevada, Reno

December 12, 2019

1:00-2:00pm Eastern Time US

Registration closes on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 9:00am Eastern Time.

As a critical point of contact for many who have experienced trauma or substantial adversity, courts are increasingly interested in trauma-informed approaches to working with both consumers and administrators of justice. This session will provide an overview of how trauma and chronic adversity impacts human development and functioning, outline the role of the court in addressing trauma, and present tips and tools to support trauma-informed practices in courts.



Registration

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$50

Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$20

Attendees may purchase a certificate of attendance along with their registration. No refunds or credits will be issued if you are unable to attend the webinar.

Webinars will be archived as a member benefit, for personal use only. These can be found in the Member Center on our website. If you are not currently a member, join when you register to get \$10 off your first annual membership as well as webinar registration at the member price.

[Register today!](#)

Peter Salem Celebrates 25 Years of AFCC Service

AFCC President Matt Sullivan surprised Executive Director Peter Salem with an award for 25 years of service to and leadership of the organization at the Pittsburgh conference luncheon. He also presented Salem a bound book containing many letters of gratitude from members and friends.

Peter's comment? "I think of this as a personal failing, because nothing is supposed to happen at an AFCC conference that I don't know about!" Congratulations and thank you to Peter!



In Memoriam

Nanette Raduenz, age 61, passed away on October 23, 2019. Nan graduated from Griffith High School class of 1976, Purdue University class of 1980, and John Marshall Law School class of 1984. Nan was a Magistrate in Lake County Superior Court Room 5. She was a member of numerous professional associations, including the Lake County Bar Association (serving on the Board of Directors, 2001-13); Women's Lawyers Association (serving as Treasurer, 1999-2000, and Vice President, 2001-02); Judicial Conference of Indiana, ADR Committee and Domestic Relations Committee; Indiana Chapter of Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC); Indiana State Bar Association; and the American Bar Association.



James Earl Stengel (LLB) passed away peacefully on October 14, 2019. James was a graduate of Western University, as a well-respected and loved lawyer in the practice of Houghton, Sloniowski and Stengel in Welland, Ontario for the past 28 years. James was an experienced litigator practicing family law. He was a member of Law Society of Upper Canada; Ontario Bar Association; Niagara Collaborative Family Law Association, Family Law Bench and Bar Committee and Legal Advisory Committee Member; Pathstone Mental Health Services, Representative; Welland County Law Association, Member; Association of Family and Conciliatory Courts, Member; and Child Protection Advisory Committee and Board of Directors of Hope Centre, Welland.



Chapter News

AFCC Chapter Leadership Institute

The AFCC Chapter Leadership Institute was held at the AFCC Fall Conference in Pittsburgh. Twenty-four chapter leaders attended and the program was facilitated by AFCC Associate Director Leslye Hunter. Chapter leaders worked together to develop solutions to some of the issues that arise while governing a nonprofit organization. Going forward, chapter leadership will continue AFCC's tradition of excellence by incorporating proven techniques, developing new member engagement strategies, and learning from each other's experience.

Pennsylvania Forms a Chapter Coordinating Committee

A group of Pennsylvania-based professionals held a meeting at the AFCC Fall Conference in Pittsburgh to explore forming a chapter. There was a sense of driving purpose and enthusiasm and it was decided that **Lise Fisher** (Philadelphia area) and **Cindy Stoltz** (Pittsburgh area) would head the effort in their areas and collaborate on creating a statewide chapter. If you practice in Pennsylvania and are interested in being part of an AFCC chapter, please click on their name above and send them an email.

Philip Clay, the new President of AFCC's Ontario chapter, has been a member of the Ontario Court of Justice since January 2013. He sits in Brampton and presides exclusively in family law cases. Justice Clay was appointed as the Local Administrative Justice (Family) for Brampton in 2019. Justice Clay was called to the Bar in 1983. He had a mixed litigation practice in Hamilton until 1992 when he restricted his practice to family law and family mediation. He was a member of the Office of the Children's Lawyer panel from 1988 until his appointment. He taught mediation at McMaster University. In 2002, he was appointed as a member of Ontario's Consent and Capacity Board and heard civil committal and capacity issues throughout the province. Justice Clay became an Accredited Family Mediator in 1994. In addition to family law mediation, he began a child protection mediation practice and he obtained his CPMed certificate. Justice Clay has spoken at various legal and judicial education programs throughout his career. Congratulations, Philip!



Laurie Mactavish, the new President of AFCC's Colorado chapter, is a family court facilitator and has held the position for the past 18 years in the Colorado 5th Judicial District. She facilitates cases in seven court rooms with six judges, maintaining an average of 150 cases at a time in a geographic region as diverse as her caseload. She holds a Master of Science in Management degree from Regis University, Denver and received her BA at the University of California, Berkeley. She has been an ombudsman in the equestrian disciplines of dressage and eventing with the US Equestrian Federation working in both national and international competitions throughout the US. A Colorado chapter member of AFCC since its inception, she has been on the board of directors for five years. Ms. Mactavish implemented the Rural Resources for Couples and Families in the Courts, providing no-cost services to pro se litigants in Domestic Relation cases. She co-chairs the local Access to Justice committee and redrafts domestic case forms into plain language. She continually seeks new ways to bring families closer to healthier paths during the challenge of separation and divorce. Congratulations, Laurie!



Kevin Chafin, the new President of AFCC's Missouri chapter, is a Licensed Professional Counselor, practicing in Kansas City, Missouri. He has a master's degree in counseling from Webster University. His association with AFCC began in 2012 when he rode a bus overnight to attend the AFCC convention in Chicago. He is now the board president for the Missouri AFCC Chapter. Kevin has a solo practice where the focus is now on work with

high conflict families. He has been a mediator, primarily custody and permanency, for 17 years. While his initial counseling practice was concentrated in work with children who had been adopted or were in foster care, he began working in the growing specialty of co-parenting counseling about twelve years ago. Before becoming a counselor, he worked as a child abuse/neglect investigator for the Missouri Children's Division, legal assistant to the attorneys at Family Court in Kansas City, Missouri, and non-profit program director. Congratulations, Kevin!



Member News

Forrest "Woody" Mosten, AFCC member from LaJolla, California, was the recipient of the 2019 APFM Family Mediation Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifetime of major substantive contributions that have shaped the family mediation field. An author of five books, Woody has been in private mediation practice since 1979. He is a popular presenter at conferences throughout the world. Congratulations, Woody!



Susan Myres, AFCC member from Houston, Texas, has been named President of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML). She has been practicing law in the Houston area for over 35 years. After 29 years of practicing law, she formed her firm, Myres & Associates, in 2011. She has been certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization as a Family Law Specialist since 1988. She obtained her BS from the University of Kansas and her law degree from the University of Houston Law Center. In addition to her work with the Academy, Susan enjoys a vibrant practice in the most diverse community in the country. In 2016, she received the David A. Gibson Award for Professionalism and Excellence in the Practice of Family Law awarded by the Gulf Coast Family Law Specialists. As AAML president, Susan is committed to supporting the Academy in providing information and education on all the subjects mentioned above, as well as the many other social and legal changes impacting the practice of family law in the US today. Congratulations, Susan!



Dr. Donald Saposnek, AFCC member from Aptos, California, accepted APFM's 2019 Outstanding Family Mediator Award. He is a clinical-child psychologist and family therapist in practice since 1971, and a child custody and family mediator and national and international trainer and consultant in mediation and child psychology since 1977. He has published extensively in the professional literature on divorce, child custody, and child psychology. Dr. Saposnek is the author of the 1983 classic text, *Mediating Child Custody Disputes, A Systematic Guide for Family Therapists, Court Counselors, Attorneys, and Judges* and co-authored two other books. He has taught on the Psychology Faculty at the University of California, Santa Cruz, for 41 years, and is an Adjunct Professor at Pepperdine University School of Law, Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution since 2009. Congratulations, Don!



Katrina Volker, AFCC member from Minneapolis, Minnesota, is the proud mother of Nico Paul Hanus, born October 3, 2019. Welcome, Nico, and congratulations, Katrina!



Do you have a notable achievement to share? Email [Gina Wentling](#) with your story and a professional head shot (JPEG or PNG preferred), if you have one, to be featured in next month's Member News!

AFCC eNEWS

The *AFCC eNEWS* is the monthly e-newsletter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The *eNEWS* provides up-to-date information for professionals including practice tips, case law and research updates, international news, and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The *AFCC eNEWS* is free and you do not need to be a member of AFCC to subscribe. [Subscribe here](#).

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ASSOCIATION OF
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eNEWS

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1. Talking about money is really difficult.

Both parents and the professionals who are trying to help them have a difficult time talking about money. About 44% of us see money as the most challenging topic to talk about with other people; 40% of couples don't discuss money before marriage.

2. Decisions made by parents concerning their children are influenced by a parent's perception of risks and benefits for their children.

Economics is essentially the study of how people make decisions. When people make decisions, they should consider outcomes and the potential costs, risks, and benefits of the decision. Most parents are unaware of many of the factors that affect their decisions related to money. Recent studies indicate that parents are influenced by how they sense the world will likely affect their child in the future, what others expect from their parenting efforts, and the values and routines they learned from their parents.

3. As the difference between the wealthiest and the least wealthy grows, many parents perceive that their children are in a competition where the stakes are high.

In the United States, people who earn in the top 10% income bracket, earn 38 times what those in the lowest 10% income bracket earn. This is otherwise known as the wage gap or wealth gap. This gap between high- and low-income earners has doubled in the last 40 years. Parents sense this gap, and many believe that the stakes are high for their child's future. They believe that their child will either be a "winner" or a "loser." Therefore, many parents have adopted very competitive strategies for child rearing.

4. In response to this perceived competition, parents have shifted to more intensive parenting styles.

Parents of the 1960s and 1970s often adopted a passive parenting style, allowing the child's personality and interests to guide academic and career choices. As a result of the growing wealth gap and perceived competition for education and success, parents have shifted to more intensive parenting styles where they interfere more frequently in the child's choices and behavior. Authoritarian and, particularly, authoritative styles have become more common for parents who think that their direction and structuring of the child's future will ensure socio-economic success. In countries like the US, where the wealth gap is one of the greatest in the world, research indicates that parents tend to value hard work over independence and imagination. In countries where the wealth gap is small, parents are more inclined to value independence and imagination.

5. This growing perception of competition has occurred concurrently with increases in spending on education and enrichment activities.

Between the 1970s and late 2000s, as wages remained relatively flat, parents increased their spending on child-related expenses more rapidly than other household expenses. Spending on children has increasingly focused on education, enrichment activities, and sports. Parents in the lowest income brackets have increased child-focused spending as a percentage of their income even more than middle- and upper-class parents.

6. Increased child-focused spending has corresponded with the acceptance of household debt.

Since the 1970s, people in the US have less in savings and the amount of debt, as a percentage of the US Gross National Product, has nearly tripled. The average household credit debt in the US is \$16,000 and the average student loan debt is \$48,000. Acceptance of debt over the last 30 years means parents frequently fill the gap between flat wages and increased child-related expenses by increasing their debt.

7. Changes in the economy and significant economic events, like the Great Recession, have affected the generations of parents raising children differently.

Late baby boomer parents ("Jones generation") statistically have underfunded their retirement savings and are often conflicted in the need to save for retirement and their expectation of paying for higher education for their children. Gen X and Millennials, who statistically have high debt, including substantial levels of student debt, often feel hopeless about their economic future. Many believe that they will never be financially stable. In addition, millennials do not trust financial institutions and statistically earn less than their parents did at the same age. All three generations face difficult choices between their own current and future needs and the pursuit of strategies that address the perceived socio-economic survival of their children. Such choices may cause conflict between parents over decisions for their children and feelings of shame, blame, and fear.

8. Never-married parents may face new challenges as they choose not to combine their household economies.

Post-World War II parents generally decided to start a family after the father obtained a good paying, steady job. Obtaining a job essentially established adulthood for men. Today, becoming a parent may establish adulthood for many never-married parents. In addition, because never-married parents have chosen not to marry, they also have not combined their incomes and finances, thereby saving certain otherwise duplicated expenses, like housing. As a result, many parents may be inadvertently choosing to live at or below the poverty line. In other words, if never-married parents were to marry, the poverty rate might be less.

9. Economic factors contribute to conflict between parents, as well as family stress, both of which negatively affect child adjustment and development.

Differences in parenting styles and each parent's perceived risks for a child's future can be a source of conflict between parents. A parent who perceives that the child's future is at risk due to financial and economic factors, and therefore, has adopted a more intensive parenting style, such as authoritarian or authoritative parenting styles, may have difficulty accepting or reaching agreement with a parent who does not perceive the same risk and has adopted a passive parenting style. Such parents may experience increased conflict as well as an inability to make decisions about education and activities. Parenting conflict and family stress, including stress that results from financial and economic stressor like unmanageable debt or poverty, affects child adjustment and development negatively.

10. Parents frequently fail to recognize that they are motivated by economic and financial factors and lack the skills and information to overcome the consequences.

Many parents do not have a basic understanding of their own finances and do not possess budgeting and planning skills. This makes it very hard for parents to appreciate the consequences of their decisions to spend money and assume additional debt. When parents have positive and practical financial behavior, such as paying bills on time and avoiding unnecessary debt, family economic stress can be reduced. Additionally, children who observe such behavior from their parents, gain knowledge and skills that enable them to avoid unnecessary debt, limit their spending, and stick to a budget in adulthood.

We can help parents confront the financial and economic sources of conflict and stress by helping them recognize how their decisions are affected by economic and financial factors, normalizing these challenges, and helping them to incorporate budgeting and planning in the process of problem-solving and making decisions.

Simone A. Haberstock, who has been a CPA since 1985, graduated from Saint Louis University School of Law in 1991 and completed her Master of Law in Dispute Resolution at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law in 2013. She is currently a mediator, attorney and parenting coordinator in Saint Louis, Missouri. Ms. Haberstock has worked in public interest law and private practice, and has taught as an adjunct professor at Saint Louis University School of Law. She completed Missouri's first academically approved research on the state's model for parenting coordination in 2013 and currently serves on Saint Louis County Circuit Court's Parenting Coordination and Mediation Oversight Committee. She is the immediate past-president of the Missouri Chapter of AFCC and continues to serve on the chapter's board. Ms. Haberstock also served on the Board of Governors for the Bar Association of Metropolitan Saint Louis for nearly ten years. She also provides civil and family mediation training for law school students and professionals and has contributed to the development and design of court-connected mediation for indigent litigants. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her daughter and friends, and she dabbles in drawing, photography, and, all too frequently, home repair and improvement projects.



Kevin Chafin is a Licensed Professional Counselor, practicing in Kansas City, Missouri. He has a master's degree in counseling from Webster University. His association with AFCC began in 2012 when he rode a bus overnight to attend the AFCC convention in Chicago. He is now the board president for the Missouri AFCC Chapter. Kevin has a solo practice where the focus is now on work with high conflict families. He has been a mediator, primarily custody and permanency, for 17 years. While his initial counseling practice was concentrated in work with children who had been adopted or were in foster care, he began working in the growing specialty of co-parenting counseling about twelve years ago. Before becoming a counselor, he worked as a child abuse/neglect investigator for the Missouri Children's Division, legal assistant to the attorneys at Family Court in Kansas City, Missouri, and non-profit program director.

