

AFCC NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 19, NUMBER 3

An association of family, court and community professionals

SUMMER 2000

Model Standards for Family and Divorce Mediation Completed

by Andrew Schepard, J.D., Reporter for the Symposium on Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation, Hofstra Law School, Hempstead, NY

The final Symposium on *Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation* was held in Chicago August 5, 2000. This was the third meeting convened by AFCC, the ABA Section of Family Law and the member organizations of the National Council on Dispute Resolution Organizations (NCDRO). Participants participated in lively discussion while reviewing the Draft *Model Standards* line by line, facilitated by Tom Fee of Freehold, NJ.

The *Model Standards* are the result of extensive and thoughtful deliberation by the family mediation community with wide input from a variety of voices. The thirteen overall *Standards* set forth general principles to guide the practice of family mediation.

The *Model Standards*, along with the narrative, will be published in the January 2001 issue of AFCC's *Family Court Review*. It will also be published on the AFCC web site and the web sites of a number of the organizations whose representatives participated in the Symposium.

The *Standards* should not be thought of as a final product but more like a panoramic snapshot of what is important to the family mediation community at the beginning of the new Millennium. The Symposium hopes the *Model Standards* will provide a framework for a continuous dialogue to define and refine our emerging profession. The Symposium organizers hope that the family mediation organizations, the bench, bar and the public will use the *Model Standards* as a starting point for future discussion and debate. This will result in the identification of new areas of concern that future *Standards* can address.

AFCC would like to thank the following participants who made the Symposium a continuing seminar in the underlying values of family mediation and how to reach consensus among thoughtful professionals. They demonstrated a cooperative, inquisitive spirit that made the Reporter's work a pleasure.

Tom Fee, Facilitator, Freehold, NJ

Steven Abel, New York State Council on Divorce Mediation

Richard Altman, Mediation Association of Northwest Ohio

Winnie Backlund, Pennsylvania Council of Mediators/Montgomery County Mediation Center

Ann Barker, American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence/Tennessee Superior Court, ADR Commission

Nancy Blanton, Florida Association of Professional Family Mediators

S.Y. Bowland, National Conference on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution

Patrick K. Brown, Indiana Association of Mediators

Phil Bushard, AFCC

Grace S. Byler, Pennsylvania Council of Mediators

Frances Z. Calafiore, Connecticut Council of Mediators

Jolly Clarkson-Shorter, Delaware Federation for Dispute Resolution

Christine A. Coates, AFCC

Meredith Cohen, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers

Susan Costello Lowe, Academy of Family Mediators

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Custody Evaluation Symposium Addresses Complex Issues

Addressing Complex Issues: When the Exceptions Become the Rule is the theme of AFCC's Fourth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations, November 9-11, 2000 at the Kiawah Island resort in Kiawah, South Carolina.

The three symposium plenary sessions will follow a complex custody evaluation as it progresses from beginning to end. An interdisciplinary team of leading practitioners will examine innovative strategies and cutting edge techniques. The first plenary session will take place opening night on Thursday, November 11 and will address early interventions in cases presenting possible immediate risk to family members. Friday morning's plenary session looks at the challenge in assessing and managing issues such as domestic abuse, child abuse and drug and alcohol

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Gender, Parenting and New Research Highlight Parent Education Congress

A FCC welcomes back one of its most popular and entertaining speakers at the Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs, November 12-14, 2000 at the Kiawah Island Resort in Kiawah, South Carolina.

Dr. David Sadker, who presented plenary sessions to rave reviews at the 1995 Annual Conference in Montreal and at the Second Congress on Parent Education Programs in 1996 in Clearwater Beach, FL, will return with his wife Phyllis Lerner to present an interactive, entertaining and informative opening session on **Gender and Parenting**, Sunday, November 12, 2000.

Dr. Sadker is a professor at The American University. His work with his late wife Myra has been reported in hundreds of newspapers

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.), Boston, MA

"The important thing is this: To be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become."—Charles du Bois

As I write this I am enjoying my first week of retirement from the bench. Although I am excited about this change, I am aware that it is not possible for me to imagine what my post-judging life will be like. I do know, however, that it is important for individuals and organizations as well to recognize the point in time when change is the only way to continue to move forward. The challenge of change, however, is to move rapidly enough not to be left behind, but not so rapidly that we fail to take the time to process, evaluate and think about where we want to go and who we want to be.

When AFCC was first organized thirty-seven years ago, it was a court-based organization. Mediation was not used as a means of resolving marital disputes, the number of families experiencing divorce were far fewer, family courts did not handle paternity cases, no-fault divorce was a radical concept, joint custody was unheard of, most litigants were represented by lawyers, adoption was a secret family relationship and domestic violence was not a phrase found in any statute relating to marital or custody disputes.

As the legal landscape has changed, so has our knowledge about the effects of separation and divorce on children. AFCC grew from a California organization working to improve family and conciliation court practices to an international organization that recognizes the need to integrate and coordinate many facets of the community in order to improve the lives of families experiencing dissolution and restructuring.

This change is embodied in the modification of our name: AFCC, an association of family, court and community professionals. While we may appear to be the same "AFCC," we know that we have reached a crossroads and must grow and change to

extend our reach to the broadest segment of the professional community. This is the point in time when change is the only way to move forward.

This summer a By-laws Committee chaired by AFCC Vice President Hon. George Czutrin has been working diligently to codify the recommendations of the Governance Task Force into new by-laws for consideration by the membership at our annual conference in Chicago. Given the geographic and interdisciplinary breadth of our membership, changing our governance to a relatively small board of directors involves a leap of faith but one that we all know we need to take.

At the same time, former AFCC President Christie Coates and Leslye Hunter are co-chairing a membership committee with a goal of doubling our membership. This will be no easy task and we will be calling on all of you for help. Each of us know people who should be AFCC members, who tell us they intend to join, but never do. We have to learn to ask with membership application in hand.

In our last newsletter I spoke to you about interest groups and the technological changes that will allow us to join the "connected" generation.

A Chapter Task Force headed by Jan Shaw will be meeting in our brand new offices in Madison to brainstorm new ways to strengthen our present chapter structure and for AFCC members and other professionals interested in the work we do to coalesce in ways other than formal chapters.

Recognizing that change and growth always cost money, the Development Committee chaired by John Harper is meeting just prior to the Kiawah conference to develop a campaign to raise the funds needed to allow us the growth and outreach that we all want. We will be asking all of you to demonstrate your belief in our mission with financial support. It is a fundamental tenet of fund raising that members of an organization need to make a personal financial commitment before an effective case for community, corporate and foundation support can be made.

This is an exhilarating time for AFCC. A lot is happening pointing toward a dynamic future for us. As we make these changes, we should heed the following:

It is not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear....It's like being between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to.

—Marilyn Ferguson.

Changes on Tap at AFCC

AFCC Gets Branded

The notion of branding has been the hot topic in the advertising and marketing world. Branding is not limited to only commercial products such as cereals, athletic shoes and beer. While AFCC has perhaps not attained the level of recognizability as Kleenex, Quantas, Nike or the Budweiser Frogs, we are commonly referred to as AFCC rather than our full name of Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. Not only is that a mouthful, the term conciliation courts often evokes quizzical expressions from many people who hear our name for the first time and are not familiar with that term.

After surveying AFCC's membership regarding their views about modifying our name, the Board of Directors approved the standardized use of our "brand" AFCC with a tag line descriptor of "an association of family, court and community professionals." At this time, AFCC will be doing business as (DBA) AFCC while we continue to be incorporated as the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. The tag line descriptor, "an association of family, court and community professionals" is not AFCC's new name but is used to further educate people about who we are.

All of our products, publications and other materials are being shifted over to our brand of AFCC as supplies are depleted and we reprint. In addition, AFCC's Journal will be re-named the *Family Court Review*.



an association of family, court and community professionals

AFCC Makes the Move

AFCC is pleased to announce that we have moved our administrative office. Our new contact information is:

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Suite 210
Madison, WI 53719-1048
Phone: (608) 664-3750
Fax: (608) 664-3751
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Review to Unveil New Name and New Look in 2001

AFCC is pleased to announce that as of January 1, 2001, AFCC's quarterly journal, *Family and Conciliation Courts Review*, will have a new name and a new look. The journal will be re-named: *Family Court Review: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. It will also be larger in size and easier to read.

The upcoming year will be an exciting one for *Review* editor Andrew Schepard and the student editorial staff at Hofstra Law School. In January 2001 there will be a special issue on Adoption and Foster Care, guest edited by Glenda Rothberg, J.D., of New York, NY. In addition, the January 2001 issue will publish the recently completed *Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation*.

The July 2001 *Review* will be a special issue on The Alienated Child in Divorce featuring the work of the Northern California Task Force. Guest co-editors are Janet Johnston, Ph.D. and Joan Kelly, Ph.D.

AFCC would like to welcome the Hofstra Law School 2000-2001 editorial staff.

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MEMBER PROFILE

Kathy Clark, Marion, Ohio



Kathy Clark's work begins and ends with children, so being an administrator would probably be the last job she'd ever want. But Kathy's career has been one of continually pushing the boundaries and creating a greater impact in her community of Marion, OH. Now, in her role as Executive Director of the Ohio Task Force on Family Law and Children, Kathy is once again expanding her boundaries and looking to help influence services for children and families throughout Ohio.

Kathy grew up in Columbus, Ohio. She enrolled at The Ohio State University to study forestry but experienced a minor setback. "I flunked freshman chemistry and dropped out of school," Kathy said. "I took a semester off and did some volunteer work with juvenile offenders. Spending a few hours with the kids in the evening really provided the opportunity to build rapport, much more so than in an office setting. I guess that's when I began to understand the importance of context for working with children."

Kathy returned to Ohio State to pursue a degree in Therapeutic Recreation. It was then she met Lance, an education major from Marion, a small town about sixty miles north of Columbus. They were married after Kathy's junior year and Lance took a teaching job in Marion while Kathy finished her degree.

Kathy accepted a job as a Caseworker at Children's Services. "It was a high burnout job and I lasted less than a year," she said. "But at night I volunteered to work with kids doing everything from recreational activities to support groups to hair and makeup classes."

Kathy then became a Child Support Investigator with the Department of Human Services. "That's when I sold my soul and decided that a good paycheck and job security were more important. I was very unhappy in the job and really felt like I lost my spirit. At that point one of my coworkers gave me some very important advice. She said that the only way I would be happy is if my job fit with my ethics and values."

That advice led Kathy to a job as a Caseworker with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Marion County, an affiliation she maintained

until one year ago. "Most of the children I worked with were from divorced families and I learned something important almost immediately," she remembers. "When I would interview the parents most of them would say that their children were doing just fine with the divorce. The kids would tell me that their worlds were coming apart. I then realized that where I lived the children were a silent voice and there wasn't anywhere they could go to be heard."

Kathy contacted a school guidance counselor and together they started a support group for children of divorce in Marion. Word spread and their program expanded throughout the county. The children in her groups let Kathy know that there was more to be done. "What I learned from the children is that they were struggling because of the behavior of their parents," she said. "I never wanted to do anything more than work with children, but I started to realize that we needed more. Then one night I was watching a television show about a Georgia program that required attendance at a parenting seminar. I went to our judge and said that we should be doing this. He agreed, so in 1989 the Marion County P.E.A.C.E. (Parent Education About Children's Emotions) program was born."

The program has been in existence for more than a decade and in 1997 Kathy and the P.E.A.C.E. Program were honored by the Ohio Bar Foundation with the Ritter Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Administration of Justice. But that isn't what makes Kathy most proud. "I am proud of the program because we learned about the need for it from the children themselves. When we asked them why they weren't talking with their parents they told us that they didn't want to hurt their parents' feelings or get someone mad at them. So they asked us to talk to their parents for them and we did, making sure that the parents saw the situation through their children's eyes."

Kathy decided that she wanted to add to her repertoire of skills and enrolled at Ohio State to get her Master's in Social Work. She juggled the stress of work, family and school and looked forward to finishing her degree. "I never planned to go beyond my master's degree, but one day my advisor introduced me to the department chair and we had a brief conversation in the hallway. By the end of it he had encouraged me to continue on for a doctorate. It was a tough decision to make. I had been away from my family a lot, but when I talked to my husband about it he really encouraged me to go ahead and do it."

Kathy continued to juggle a hectic schedule. In addition to graduate studies, she taught at Ohio State, facilitated the P.E.A.C.E. Program and worked as Family Service Coordinator, Court Investigator and Mediator at the Marion County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division. After completing her doctorate,

Kathy looked for new challenges, spearheading the development of a court mandated support group for children of separation and divorce in Marion County.

Kathy was then appointed to a statewide Task Force on Family Law and Children, a group looking to develop new family law initiatives for the state of Ohio. "There was a lot of talk, but we weren't getting much work done," she said. "Then the Task Force received funding and was looking to hire a part-time Executive Director. A couple of people suggested to me that I apply, so I did and I got the job. I wanted to bring the Task Force the best research and model programs so that it could make informed decisions that would benefit the children of Ohio." Indeed, Kathy has brought many AFCC members to Ohio to address the Task Force and has sent members of the Task Force to AFCC conferences.

An AFCC member since 1997, Kathy has presented at annual conferences in Montreal, Vancouver and New Orleans and at the Parent Education Congress in Breckenridge. "My first conference was in Montreal and it felt like AFCC was a rope thrown to a drowning person. When you work in a small district and are the only mediator, evaluator, parent educator, etc., sometimes you feel like the only person in the world who walks to the beat of a different drummer. When I came to AFCC I realized that I wasn't alone and I was validated. I also realized that I had so much to learn from others and I think that's what I love the most about AFCC. It's not territorial. Everyone is willing to share."

Although her work life seems all encompassing, Kathy is quite clear that her family is the top priority in her life. She and Lance, now an elementary school principal, have now been married for 22 years and they have two daughters, Lindsey, 16, and Katie, 14. Both children are active athletes and Kathy spends a lot of time attending sporting events.

Kathy is also deeply enamored with wild life and nature and is part of a small group of people who rescue and take care of orphaned baby raccoons. "We nurture them, bottle feed them and teach them how to hunt and fish, and then gradually release them into the woods," she said. Kathy notes the parallels between her work with raccoons and her work with children. "When I get a raccoon to crawl up in my arms and let me give it a bottle, the raccoon is saying 'I can trust you' and that is the ultimate compliment. I think it is really an honor when children allow a stranger into the most private part of their world. For me it is the ultimate compliment when a child opens up to me and says 'I trust you.'"

Kathy Clark will be a plenary presenter at AFCC's Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs, November 12-14, 2000 in Kiawah, South Carolina.



an association of family, court and community professionals

Call for Presenters

38th Annual Conference

See you in Chicago for:

Conflict Resolution, Children and the Courts

May 9-12, 2001

Chicago

Westin Hotel, Michigan Avenue

Preliminary Topics

Special Programs for Children

Child Focused Dispute Resolution Models

The Role of the Court: A New Paradigm or Same Song, Different Verse?

Interviewing Children: Techniques for Judges, Lawyers and Guardians ad Litem

Arbitration of Family Law Disputes

Working with Difficult Children

Collaborative Law

The Judge as Mediator

Settlement Conferencing

Community/Court Collaborations

AFCC is accepting proposals for ninety minute workshop sessions including, but not limited to, the topics listed above. If you are interested in presenting a workshop, please send a one paragraph abstract, a one page outline, the goals and learning objectives of the workshop and a resume and contact information for all proposed presenters to AFCC, 6515 Grand Teton Plaza, Ste. 210, Madison, WI 53719, Phone: (608) 664-3750 Fax: (608) 664-3751 E-mail: afcc@afccnet.org (Word or Wordperfect only, please) **The deadline for accepting proposals is November 17, 2000.** AFCC offers a reduced registration fee for conference presenters. We are unable to reimburse travel and related expenses.



Teens Talk A

"Getting used to your parents' divorce and getting over your parents' divorce are two different things. Getting used to your parents divorce is like wearing an old pair of shoes that hurt your feet but you have to wear them because that's all you have. Getting over your parents' divorce is like getting a new pair of shoes."—Molly, age 14

"It [the divorce] affected parents are better even imagine what stayed together. T was so much m actually than

"I think it's unfortunate that kids would just have to get used to divorce instead of getting over it... 'cause getting over it can lead to so many new things and would probably really improve the quality of their lives if they would just somehow learn to get over it instead of getting used to it."—Ann age 17

"People who are willing to create to take care of it and support it ceramics class, there were step pottery complete. First, you have are no bubbles in the clay or else kiln and then you have to make bubbles in the glaze, wait for the the kiln just right. I think that par put it in for the long run and take and they should be willing to go assist that pottery so that it c possible piece of art."—

"As a child I do not remember my parents being together, but I do remember my dad from when I got to visit him on weekends. Those memories of him are etched in stone in my mind, and if I had to give a divorced father any advice I would tell him to make the best of the time you get to spend with your children."—Ramon, age 17

"I never got over it. I'll try t the back of your mind. It's accept what I can but it's can never get over."

*Quotes are excerpted from "Adolescents Talk About Divorce"

About Divorce

ed my life positively. I know my
ff without each other. I can't
y life would be like if they had
e separation and the divorce
re good than bad, so I am
ful for it."—Ann, age 17

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aze to dry and set it in
ts should be willing to
time with their pottery
through every step to
nes out as the best
Joseph, age 17

let go, but it's always in
always haunting you. I'll
ne of those things you
Amanda, age 17

"I remember one time I crept downstairs and saw
[my parents] arguing and you could see the emotion in
their faces and somehow I understood they're just people.
They were frustrated. They were angry. And they were
afraid in some respects. So I found a way to roll with it—
just treat them like people."—Joseph, age 17

"The most important thing is time. I think it is something
the kid just has to do on their own and I think it may be
more just a matter of time. I mean counseling and stuff
helps 'cause it gives children an outlet. But I think it is
something they have to accept on their own, when they
are ready to deal with it. Sometimes you just need a
period to just be mad at everyone."—Molly, age 14

"I'm not sure when [getting over the divorce] happens.
I would think it takes a while. I don't think there's any way to
say you know it happened at 'this time.' I don't that you wake
up one day and realize that it's time to move on. I think it
happens and then you look back on it and say, wow!, I'm
kinda over this and it doesn't hurt as much anymore. I can't
really tell you when it happened but I do see that it did...
it is not easy to explain."—Mimi, age 18

"I don't know if I'll ever forgive them for breaking
up. I know they are happier. I keep telling myself
that if they're happy, then I can learn to be happy
off their happiness."—Brandon, age 17

Post-Separation Conflict and Family Violence: Preliminary Data from a Multi-Site Comparative Study

by Brenda Bacon, Ph.D. and Brad McKenzie, Ph.D., Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB

Family Mediation Canada, with funding from Health Canada's Population Health Fund, is conducting a national comparative study of best practices in educational programs for separating and divorcing parents at selected sites across Canada. The study is designed to compare and assess the efficacy of selected parent education programs and develop recommendations for the future development of best practices in parent education programs in Canada.

Programs will be assessed based on five key parenting elements:

- helping parents communicate effectively;
- improving conflict management and conflict resolution skills;
- developing parenting approaches which enable the ongoing involvement of both parents in the lives of their children;
- responding appropriately to the needs and reactions of children to enable their positive adjustment to divorce or separation; and
- developing parenting approaches which keep children out of the middle of conflicts.

Parents at eight sites across Canada completed an initial survey immediately prior to participating in a parent education program. In addition to demographic and case characteristics, the survey addressed issues related to co-parenting, children's adjustment, parenting behaviors, satisfaction with custody, access and child support, knowledge about the effects of separation and divorce and family violence. Preliminary data analysis indicates some interesting trends related to post-separation conflict and family violence.

Post-Separation Conflict

Approximately 30% of respondents indicated the general level of post-separation conflict as "a great deal." Major areas of conflict occur around three main areas: (1) when the children will see the other parent

(26% reported "a great deal of conflict"), (2) how to make decisions about the children (27.8%), and (3) child support (28.4%). The issue about where children would live created a great deal of conflict for 26% of respondents; however, these arrangements were more likely to be resolved without major differences (51% of respondents) compared to the other three areas of major conflict. Parents reported lower levels of conflict around financial issues, including spousal support, use and ownership of the family home and other assets.

The preliminary survey also examined co-parental communication and found that 44% of respondents reported that they "often" or "always" argued when discussing parenting issues and a similar rate of respondents said there was "often" or "always" basic differences in opinion about raising the children. Nearly half of the respondents reported underlying feelings of hostility or anger "often" or "always" in communication exchanges with the other parent and 58% said conversations were "often" or "always" stressful or tense.

Family Violence

To assess the level of family violence, respondents were asked about the frequency of violent incidents during the six months prior to their separation. Women were more likely than men to report such incidents and they reported that such incidents occurred more often. Almost 11% of mothers reported that a person had been hit four or more times in the six months prior to separation; the comparable figure for men was 3.2%. Women were more likely to report that things had been thrown more than four times (11% as compared to about 3% of men), and that pushing, grabbing or shoving had occurred more than four times (21% of women compared to about 8% for men). While 28% of the men said that verbal or emotional abuse had occurred more than 12 times in the six months prior to separation, 54% of women said this was the case.

Respondents were also asked whether their children had witnessed any abuse during the same time period. While 43% of the men and 31% of the women claimed this

had never occurred, 25.4% of the men and 45.8% of the women reported that their children had witnessed abuse more than four times in the months leading up to the separation. An alarming 11.1% of men and 27.5% of women reported that their children had witnessed such incidents more than 12 times in the six months prior to the separation. Respondents were then asked whether they felt physically at risk when alone with the other parent at the present time. About 16% of women and 7% of men felt such risk "often" or "always".

Outcomes Following Parent Education

The evaluation questionnaire completed at the end of the program elicited feedback on satisfaction with program elements and asked participants to identify and rate which program elements were most useful to them. A follow-up questionnaire completed approximately 3-4 months after attending the parent education program obtained information on changes in legal/relationship status that may have occurred since the parent education program, including custody and visitation arrangements. Questions on co-parenting relationships, children's adjustment, parenting behaviors and satisfaction with custody, access and child support were re-administered for comparative purposes. Parents were also asked about their perceptions of changes in their parenting behaviors since the parent education program, whether these changes were related to information received during the program and whether changes in parenting had any effect on their children.

The final results of this study will be presented at AFCC's Fourth Congress on Parent Education Programs, November 12-14, 2000 in Kiawah Island, SC. All of the data will be compared across sites and evaluated in its aggregate form in an attempt to address best practices in parent education in regard to program content and delivery structure.

Brenda Bacon will be a presenter at AFCC's Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs, November 12-14, 2000 in Kiawah Island, SC.



AFCC CHAPTER UPDATE

AFCC Chapter Task Force Meets in Madison

AFCC's Chapter Task Force will meet in AFCC's new administrative offices in Madison, WI the weekend of October 13-15, 2000. The Task Force will examine new ways to strengthen the present chapter structure and look for opportunities for AFCC members and others to coalesce in ways other than formal chapters.

Jan Shaw, AFCC Secretary, is chair of the AFCC Chapter Task Force and members include Hon. Arline Rotman (ret.), AFCC President, Boston, MA; Leslye Hunter, Co-chair, AFCC Membership Committee, New Orleans, LA; Fred Mitchell, AFCC Arizona Chapter President, Tucson, AZ; Ron Nelson, J.D., Overland Park, KS; Ruth Whitney, AFCC Massachusetts Chapter President, Arlington, MA; and Maureen Robinson, Consultant, Washington, D.C.

Florida Looks to Establish AFCC Chapter

Nearly thirty Florida judges, mental health professionals, mediators and lawyers met on August 24, 2000 at the University of South Florida in Tampa and unanimously voted to pursue approval as a state chapter of AFCC.

The meeting had the support of the Florida Family Law Steering Committee and numerous professionals from around the state. In consultation with Jan Shaw, AFCC Chapter Committee Coordinator, the group has begun this endeavor by establishing four committees to organize this effort: goals, tasks, structure and membership.

If you are an AFCC member in Florida and would like more information or wish to join the Florida effort, please contact the Hon. Hugh Starnes at HES2257@CA.CJIS20.ORG or Dr. Gregory Firestone at firestoneg@aol.com

California Chapter Conference

Do Great Work — See Great Works! is the theme of the AFCC California Chapter Conference, which will take place February 2-4, 2001 at the Doubletree Hotel in Pasadena, CA. For additional information please contact Irene Espinosa at (714) 680-6456 or legalirene@aol.com

Arizona Chapter Returns to Sedona

The Arizona Chapter will hold its conference February 9-11, 2001 at the Sedona Doubletree Resort in Sedona, AZ. The conference theme is *Picking Up the Pieces: A Team Approach to Strengthening Families*. For further information, contact Fred Mitchell, Arizona Chapter President, at 520-740-5590.

Kansas Chapter is Back in Action

The AFCC Kansas Chapter is re-energized, reorganizing and planning a one-day program on High Conflict Case Management combined with a chapter meeting and election of new officers. The meeting will take place in mid to late November of 2000 with the final dates to be determined shortly. Announcements will be mailed to all Kansas AFCC members and others who might be interested. If you would like additional information, please contact Ronald Nelson at (913) 469-5300 or ronels@bigfoot.com

Massachusetts Chapter Hosts Domestic Abuse Expert

AFCC's Massachusetts Chapter hosted Desmond Ellis, Ph.D., of the LaMarsh Research Center on Violence and Conflict Resolution at York University, Toronto for a seminar on screening for domestic abuse. The program took place July 27, 2000 at the Wellesley College Club in Wellesley, MA, which was also the site for the Massachusetts Chapter Annual Dinner on September 19, 2000. The dinner featured interdisciplinary round table discussion on the topic "What is the 'Good Enough' Parent?"

AFCC Membership Committee Wants YOU!

A FCC's Membership Committee is gearing up for this year's membership campaign and needs the help of dedicated AFCC members in every state, province and country! The committee is looking for volunteer state and provincial membership coordinators who are willing to help their colleagues learn more about AFCC and what we have to offer professionals who work with children and families in conflict.

This is an ideal opportunity to get more involved in AFCC and help develop interdisciplinary dialogue in your own community. For further information please contact:

Leslye Hunter
Co-chair, AFCC Membership Committee
Phone: (504) 455-3574
Fax: (504) 887-7715
E-mail: LHNO@aol.com

or

Christine Coates
Co-chair, AFCC Membership Committee
Phone: (303) 443-8524
Fax: (303) 545-9901
E-mail: coatesc@aol.com

Upcoming Events

October 18-21, 2000-Hull, Quebec
Family Mediation Canada Annual Conference
Contact: FMC
(519) 585-3118

November 1-3, 2000-Madison, WI
Wisconsin Association of Mediators
Ninth Annual Conference on Emerging Issues in Mediation
Contact: James Campbell
(608) 262-2352

November 9-11, 2000-Kiawah Island, SC
AFCC Fourth International Symposium on Child Custody Evaluations
Contact: AFCC
(608) 664-3750

November 12-14, 2000-Kiawah Island, SC
AFCC Fourth International Congress on Parent Education Programs
Contact: AFCC
(608) 664-3750

February 2-4, 2001-Pasadena, CA
AFCC California Chapter Conference
Contact: Irene Espinosa
(714) 608-6456

February 9-11, 2001-Sedona, AZ
AFCC Arizona Chapter Conference
Contact: Fred Mitchell
(520) 740-5590

May 9-12, 2001-Chicago, IL
AFCC 38th Annual Conference
Contact: AFCC
(608) 664-3750

September 13-15, 2001-New York, NY
AFCC Northeast Regional Conference
Contact: AFCC
(608) 664-3750

September 20-22, 2001-Bath, England
2001 World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth
Contact: Congress Secretariat:
capcon@ozemail.com.au

Custody Evaluation Symposium

Continued from page 1

addiction. Saturday's closing session will examine options for resolution and take a look at the tensions that must be addressed when a case moves from the custody evaluator's domain to the legal arena.

Featured plenary presenters will represent the legal, court, judicial and private mental health arena and include Robert Barasso, J.D., Tucson, AZ; Robin Deutsch, Ph.D., Program on Children and the Law, Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital; Hon. Arline Rotman, AFCC President; Philip Stahl, Ph.D., Author, *Complex Issues in Child Custody Evaluations*; and Robert Tompkins, M.A., Deputy Director for Regional Services, Court Support Services Division, Connecticut Superior Court.

The Symposium will also feature four Pre-Symposium Institutes and three workshop tracks in Advanced Applications, Professional Practice and a special Core Skills track for newer practitioners or those looking to refresh their skills.

Core skills workshops and presenters will include:

- **Interviewing Children** Kathleen Clark, Ph.D., Executive Director, Ohio Task Force on Family Law and Children, Galion, OH
- **Interviewing Adults** Rachael Birnbaum, M.S.W., Ph.D. Candidate, Coordinator of Research, Office of the Children's Lawyer, Toronto, ON
Lorraine Martin, M.S.W., Coordinator of Social Work, Office of the Children's Lawyer, Toronto, ON
- **Assessing the Data: Pulling it All Together** Cris Hodson, Ph.D., Custody Evaluation Training Coordinator, Alameda County Family Court Services, Oakland, CA
- **The Role of Collaterals In Custody Evaluations** Sara Bonkowski, Ph.D., Professor of Social Work, Aurora University, Aurora, IL
- **Report Writing** Jonathan Gould, Ph.D., Author, *Conducting Scientifically Crafted Child Custody Evaluations*, Charlotte, NC

Parent Education Congress

Continued from page 1

and magazines including *USA Today*, *USA Weekend*, *Parade Magazine*, *Business Week*, *The Washington Post*, *The London Times*, *The New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek*. Their book, *Failing at Fairness: How Our Schools Cheat Girls* was published in 1995.

Congress participants will also have the opportunity to learn about the latest research at Monday morning's plenary session, **The Impact of Separation and Divorce on Parents and Children: Myths, Realities and the Latest Research**. This session features Dr. Joan Kelly, co-author of the recent article "Using Child Development Research to Make Appropriate Custody and Access

High Conflict Conference

Lawyers, child advocates, judges, researchers and mental health professionals met September 8-10, 2000 at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, WI, for a special conference on High Conflict Custody Cases: Reforming the System for Children.

Forty leading experts in the field were invited to discuss the challenges of addressing high conflict cases. The meeting was convened by the American Bar Association Section on Family Law and the Johnson Foundation. Among the forty invited guests were the following AFCC members: Robin Deutsch, Geri Fuhrmann, William J. Howe, III, Janet J. Johnston, Ann L. Milne, Ronald W. Nelson, Jessica Peason, Isolina Ricci, M. Dee Samuels, Andrew Schepard, Jan A. Shaw, Phillip M. Stahl and Hon. Hugh E. Starnes.

AFCC Thanks PD&TA Trainers

AFCC would like to thank members Doneldon Dennis, Jonathan Gould and Margaret Lee for conducting training for AFCC's Professional Development and Technical Assistance Programs in August 2000.

Doneldon Dennis provided a two-day on site custody evaluation training for the St. Joseph County Indiana Domestic Relations Counseling Bureau. Jonathan Gould and Margaret Lee served as the faculty for the AFCC-University of Wisconsin Family Court and Services Summer Institute. Dr. Gould offered a two-day program on Conducting Child Custody Evaluations and Dr. Lee addressed Advanced Strategies for Working with High Conflict Families.

Thanks again to all of the AFCC members who contribute their time and effort to these training programs.

International Society of Family Law: Call for Papers

The International Society of Family Law will hold its North American Conference June 14-16, 2001 at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. The theme of the conference is **Defining the Family: Familial Rights and Obligations in the New Century**. Topics may include defining the family, family support and custody issues, extended definition of the parent-child relationship, human rights issues, grandparents rights and reproductive technology. One-page proposals should be sent to Professor Marygold Melli, Univ. of Wisconsin School of Law, 975 Bascom Mall, Madison, WI 53706. Fax: (608) 262-1231; E-mail: msmelli@facstaff.wisc.edu

Decisions for Young Children." Also featured will be Dr. Sanford Braver, author, *Divorced Dads: Shattering the Myths* and Dr. Kathleen Clark, Executive Director of the Ohio Task Force on Family Law and Children.

Congress workshops will address a wide variety of topics ranging from high conflict families, research and evaluation, program standards, never-married parents and mandatory children's programs. Half-day institutes on Sunday, November 12 will examine Domestic Abuse and Parent Education, High Conflict Families, New Programs for Children and Managing the Emotional Climate.

Model Standards Completed

Continued from page 1

Richard Doelker, Florida Association of Professional Family Mediators
Glenn E. Dornfeld, New York State Council on Divorce Mediation
Silke Hansen, Colorado Council of Mediators and Mediator Organizations
Robert Horwitz, Connecticut Council for Divorce Mediation
Larry Kahn, Wisconsin Association of Mediators/State Bar of Wisconsin ADR Section
Jerald A. Kessler, Mediation Council of Illinois
Elizabeth Kerns, Indiana Association of Mediators
Mimi Lyster, California Administrative Office of the Court
Rosalyn Magidson, New York State Dispute Resolution Association
Benjamin Mackoff, American Bar Association Section of Family Law
Ann Milne, AFCC
Susan C. Norwood, Family Mediation Council of Louisiana
Joan Patsy Ostroy, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
Nancy Palmer, American Bar Association Section on Dispute Resolution
Sally Ganong Pope, Academy of Family Mediators
Sharon Press, Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution/Florida Dispute Resolution Center
C. Eileen Pruett, AFCC/Supreme Court of Ohio
Carolee Robertson, National Association For Community Mediation
Jan Shaw, AFCC
Andrew Schepard, Hofstra University School of Law
Arnold Shienfold, Academy of Family Mediators
Barbara K. Stark, American Bar Association Section of Family Law
Hon. William Thomas, Academy of Family Mediators
Eli Uncyk, Family and Divorce Mediation Council of New York
Rosemary Vasquez, AFCC
Jan Walden, Mediation Association of Tennessee
Timothy Walker, American Bar Association Section on Family Law



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Model Standards of Practice for Family and Divorce Mediation*

STANDARD I

A family mediator shall recognize that mediation is based on the principle of self-determination by the participants.

STANDARD II

A family mediator shall be qualified by education and training to undertake the mediation.

STANDARD III

A family mediator shall facilitate the participants' understanding of what mediation is and assess their capacity to mediate before the participants reach an agreement to mediate.

STANDARD IV

A family mediator shall conduct the mediation process in an impartial manner. A family mediator shall disclose all actual and potential grounds of bias and conflicts of interest reasonably known to the mediator. The participants shall be free to retain the mediator by an informed, written waiver of the conflict of interest. However, if a bias or conflict of interest clearly impairs a mediator's impartiality, the mediator shall withdraw regardless of the express agreement of the participants.

STANDARD V

A family mediator shall fully disclose and explain the basis of any compensation, fees and charges to the participants.

STANDARD VI

A family mediator shall structure the mediation process so that the participants make decisions based on sufficient information and knowledge.

STANDARD VII

A family mediator shall maintain the confidentiality of all information acquired in the mediation process, unless the mediator is permitted or required to reveal the information by law or agreement of the participants

STANDARD VIII

A family mediator shall assist participants in determining how to promote the best interests of children.

STANDARD IX

A family mediator shall recognize a family situation involving child abuse or neglect and take appropriate steps to shape the mediation process accordingly.

STANDARD X

A family mediator shall recognize a family situation involving domestic abuse and take appropriate steps to shape the mediation process accordingly

STANDARD XI

A family mediator shall suspend or terminate the mediation process when the mediator reasonably believes that a participant is unable to effectively participate or for other compelling reasons.

STANDARD XII

A family mediator shall be truthful in the advertisement and solicitation for mediation.

STANDARD XIII

A family mediator shall acquire and maintain professional competence in mediation.

** The Model Standards and accompanying narrative will be published in the January 2001 issue of AFCC's quarterly journal, the Family Court Review.*

AFCC

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