



**ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY  
AND CONCILIATION COURTS**

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



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May 29-June 1, 2019

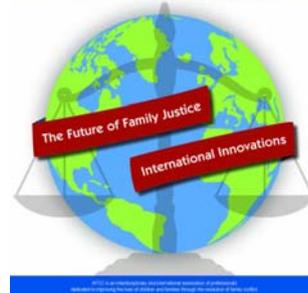
## AFCC 56th Annual Conference

*The Future of Family  
Justice: International  
Innovations*

## AFCC 56th Annual Conference



AFCC 56th ANNUAL CONFERENCE



*The Future of Family Justice:  
International Innovations*  
May 29-June 1, 2019  
Westin Harbour Castle Hotel  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Westin Harbour Castle Hotel

Interested in a quick summary of the program? See the word cloud above! Have you registered for the AFCC 56th Annual Conference? Don't miss out on early bird savings, [register by March 4, 2019](#).

#### Apply for a scholarship

AFCC is offering 40 full conference scholarships and a limited number of \$500 and \$1,000 travel stipends. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is **March 1, 2019**. Recipients will be notified mid-to-late March. [Apply today!](#)

#### Hotel Reservations

Make your reservations today, as the discounted room block is already half full! The Westin Harbour Castle Hotel is offering a special rate to AFCC attendees of \$239/\$259 CAD single/double (approximately \$179/194 USD).

***Rooms frequently sell out before the room block is released, we encourage you to make your reservation early! Reserve online.***

#### Exhibit and Advertising Opportunities Available

Exhibiting and advertising at the Annual Conference are great ways to share your products and services with an interdisciplinary community of dedicated family law professionals. Only a few exhibit spots remain! For more information, [click here](#) or contact [Corinne Bennett](#).

#### Donate to the Silent Auction

The annual AFCC Silent Auction is a longstanding AFCC tradition. All proceeds support AFCC special projects and initiatives. Donate an item and then attend the auction to bid! You do not need to attend the conference to donate. Past auction items include tropical getaways, one-of-a-kind jewelry, sports memorabilia, the latest gadgets and electronics, books, and more. [Donate an item](#).

#### Continuing Education Credits

The program is eligible for up to 20.5 hours of continuing education for psychologists. Almost all sessions are eligible. [Click here for the list](#) of eligible sessions. Continuing education for lawyers, mediators, counselors, custody evaluators, and social workers is also available.

### The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Ryder: Assisting Access to Justice

AFCC is pleased to welcome The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Ryder as a plenary speaker at the AFCC 56<sup>th</sup> Annual

Thank you to our **Diamond and Platinum Sponsors**.

To see a complete list of sponsors, [click here](#).



#### AFCC Chapter Conferences

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##### California Chapter Annual Conference

February 22-24, 2019  
Westin South Coast Plaza  
Costa Mesa, California

##### Alberta Chapter Annual Conference

March 14, 2019  
Hilton Garden Inn - Calgary  
Downtown  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

##### Washington Chapter Annual Conference

March 23, 2019  
Washington Athletic Club  
Seattle, Washington

##### Missouri Chapter Annual Conference

Conference in Toronto, May 29-June 1, 2019. Justice Ryder will join Chief Justice Diana Bryant (Ret.), Senior Family Court Judge George Czutrin, and AFCC President Hon. Dianna Gould-Saltman addressing *The Future of Family Justice: An International Perspective*. Justice Ryder was called to the Bar in 1981, was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1997 and became a Deputy High Court Judge in 2001. Appointed a High Court judge in 2004, receiving the customary knighthood, and assigned to the Family Division, he was promoted to Lord Justice of Appeal in 2013 and then sworn of the Privy Council. Justice Ryder was appointed as a Trustee of the Nuffield foundation in 2014 and as Senior President of Tribunals, United Kingdom, in 2015, and Lord Justice of Appeal, England and Wales. [Watch Justice Ryder's speech on Assisting Access to Justice here.](#)

## ***Ask the Experts*** **What if Neither Parent is “Good Enough?” – A Judicial Perspective**

*Hon. Dianna Gould-Saltman*

The AFCC eNEWS is pleased to share this classic Ask the Experts column from current AFCC President, Hon. Dianna Gould-Saltman.

In family court we often hear mental health experts express parenting competency in terms of whether a parent is “good enough.” The concept of a “good enough” parent (initially a “good enough” mother) was theorized by psychologist D.W. Winnicott in 1953, addressing a mother attuned to her child and addressing developmental milestones along the way which both protect the child adequately but allow the child to explore her world appropriately. Psychologist Sandra Scarr defines it as, “the parent who cares for his or her children in any way that is adequate for proper **development**,” and this is the definition I think adequately and simply defines the term for my purposes.

[Read More](#)

March 28-29, 2019  
St. Louis Zoo  
St. Louis, Missouri

### [Massachusetts Chapter Annual Conference](#)

March 29, 2019  
Regis College  
Weston, Massachusetts

### [Texas Chapter Annual Conference](#)

March 29-30, 2019  
Hyatt Place  
The Woodlands, Texas

### [Ohio Chapter Annual Conference](#)

April 3, 2019  
Quest Conference Center  
Columbus, Ohio

### [Colorado Chapter Annual Conference](#)

April 26, 2019  
Craig Hall, University of Denver  
Denver, Colorado

### [Australia Chapter Annual Conference](#)

August 15-17, 2019  
International Convention Centre ICC Sydney  
Sydney, Australia

### [Florida Chapter Annual Conference](#)

September 26-27, 2019  
The Florida Hotel & Conference Center at the Florida Mall  
Orlando, Florida

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### **AFCC Resource of the Month**

Unbundling Legal Services:  
A Guide for Lawyers



## AFCC Fall Conference Call for Proposals

*Integrating Research into Practice and Policy: The Impact on Families and Children*  
October 31-November 2, 2019  
Omni William Penn Hotel  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The AFCC Conference Committee is seeking proposals for 90-minute workshop sessions. Share your work with the interdisciplinary community of family law professionals who attend AFCC conferences. Proposals must be received using the online form by May 13, 2019. The program brochure and online registration will be available August 2019.

[Call for Proposals](#)

## March Training Programs

Register for AFCC's March training programs, in collaboration with Loyola University Chicago School of Law Civitas ChildLaw Center. Each program is eligible for up to 12 hours of continuing education.

**Advanced Training in Personality Disorders in Legal Disputes: Understanding, Managing, Treating, and Setting Limits**  
William A. Eddy, LCSW, Esq.  
March 4-5, 2019

**Parenting Coordination: Fundamentals, Concepts, and Interventions in Parenting Coordination**  
Debra K. Carter, PhD  
March 6-7, 2019

[More Information and Registration](#)

## AFCC Annual Appeal and Scholarship Fund

AFCC is offering 40 scholarships for the 56th Annual Conference, May 29-June 1, 2019, in Toronto. Would you consider helping your colleagues attend AFCC conferences by



See more AFCC resources on the [Resources page](#) of the AFCC website

making a donation to the AFCC Scholarship Fund? AFCC scholarship recipients increase our diversity by bringing professionals from different backgrounds, representing the many disciplines encompassed by who we are as an organization. **Will you contribute to allow a hard-working professional attend an AFCC conference? Thank you to those who have already donated!**

Donate Today

## Where in the World is AFCC?

*#AFCCHats #whereintheworldisAFCC?*



Gerri Wong in Zihuatenejo, Mexico



Rebecca Stahl in Estes Park, Colorado

#AFCCHats are everywhere! Follow along on [Facebook](#) to see the submissions. Want to join in? Show your AFCC pride by taking a picture with your AFCC hat in your hometown, while you're out on vacation, or at work. Email the photo with the location to [Corinne Bennett](#) and we will feature it on the [AFCC Facebook page](#). To sweeten the deal, an award for the best picture will be presented at the annual conference in Toronto!



## AFCC Webinar Corner

Did you know AFCC members may access webinar recordings for free? Visit the [Member Center of the AFCC website](#) to start watching. Not a member? [Click here](#) to join today!

## Member News

**AFCC members Barbara A. Babb and Judith D. Moran** recently co-authored a new book titled *Caring for Families in Court: An Essential Approach to Family Justice*, and it is published by Routledge. The authors propose an approach that envisions the family court as a "care center," by blending existing theories surrounding court reform in family law with an ethic of care and narrative practice. If you are interested in learning more about the book, please [click here](#).

**AFCC member Jennifer McIntosh, PhD, Melbourne, Australia**, has become a Member of the Order of Australia. This prestigious honor acknowledges her significant contributions to translational research and the development of interventions, beginning in 1986 at the Children's Protection Society. Dr. McIntosh has designed interventions to support children subject to attachment trauma and loss, particularly examining the effects of parental deprivation, conflict, violence and family separation in early childhood.

**AFCC member Steven Wolhandler** just published a new book titled *Protecting Yourself from Emotional Predators: Neutralize the Users, Abusers and Manipulators Hidden Among Us*. It offers a new paradigm for understanding the difficult people so often involved with the family courts (aka personality disordered, narcissists, sociopaths, toxic personalities, malignant personalities, etc.) and practical steps and strategies for dealing with them. [Click here](#) for more information.

## Chapter News



**Meet Norma Izzo**, President of the Arizona Chapter

## Nominate a Colleague for an AFCC Award

AFCC awards acknowledge many important contributions made by individuals and organizations to enhance the lives of children and families involved in family courts. Your nominations help recognize these accomplishments.

Nominations for the following awards, to be presented at the AFCC Annual Conference in Toronto, will be accepted online through March 11, 2019:

- John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by AFCC members.

- Stanley Cohen Research Award, sponsored by the Oregon Family Institute, recognizes outstanding research and/or research achievements in the field of family.
- Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award recognizes innovation in court-connected or court-related programs created by AFCC members.

[Submit a nomination online, see past recipients, learn more about the awards and criteria.](#)

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### 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](#). AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

**EDITOR:**  
[Leslye Hunter](#)

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[Corinne Bennett](#)



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### **Ask the Experts:**

#### **What if Neither Parent is “Good Enough?” – A Judicial Perspective**

*Honorable Dianna Gould-Saltman*

In family court we often hear mental health experts express parenting competency in terms of whether a parent is “good enough.” The concept of a “good enough” parent (initially a “good enough” mother) was theorized by psychologist D.W. Winnicott in 1953, addressing a mother attuned to her child and addressing developmental milestones along the way which both protect the child adequately but allow the child to explore her world appropriately. Psychologist Sandra Scarr defines it as, “the parent who cares for his or her children in any way that is adequate for proper development,” and this is the definition I think adequately and simply defines the term for my purposes.

Adequate parents feed, clothe, and shelter their children in a way that allows the child to feel comfortable and secure. Adequate parents get children to and from school on time, appropriately care for children when they are ill, and inquire about things they need to know when confronted with parenting situations they don’t understand.

Family courts would like all parents to be exemplary: treating the other parent with respect, supporting the child’s relationship with the other parent, getting the child the best possible education and healthcare, encouraging and supporting the child’s unique talents. This, however, is not the standard by which family courts can determine whether parents may raise their children.

There are, of course, gray areas of parenting. Is a parent who provides food, clothing, and shelter to a child but no affection “adequate?” Is a parent who is loving to a child but won’t get the child to school on time “adequate?” Is an otherwise loving parent who regularly denigrates the other parent to the child “adequate?” In these gray areas the family court has some ability to affect change by ordering such things as parent education, co-parenting counseling, or modifying the amount of time a parent is exposed to the child.

There are cases in which each parent has such parenting deficits that neither parent is “good enough” to appropriately raise the child. There are certainly cases in which both parents have the same deficit; for example, both are addicted to drugs or alcohol. There are many cases in which each parent falls below the standard for “good enough” parent

in different ways. One may be drug addicted while the other parent is unwilling and unable to get the child to school most days. One parent may have minimum and sporadic contact with the child while the other parent has become physically abusive to the child. In these cases, alternatives to awarding physical custody to a parent might need to be explored.

In most jurisdictions, the court is compelled to award custody to one or both parents except upon a fairly strong showing that awarding custody to either parent would be detrimental to the child. The standard between good enough parents may be “best interest” but the standard is much greater to award custody to a third party. It is also the policy of the courts to try to find a way to award custody to one or both parents, which may mean expending resources to give those parents the tools to become “good enough.”

When there is sufficient evidence that one or both parents is not “good enough,” the court does well to use some guidelines to explore options:

### **1. Is the deficit one which affects parenting?**

Frequently, one side raises issues about the character of the other parent which may be problematic in a general sense but may not affect parenting, *per se*. Not uncommonly, a partner’s infidelity is raised as a reason to forbid parenting time. This may be a good example of being a bad spouse, but not necessarily a bad parent. Likewise, a parent who has a history of seeing a therapist or taking psychotropic medication may be raised to show that the parent doesn’t have the mental stability to adequately care for a child. In fact, recognition of the need for mental health treatment and consistent compliance with a doctor’s prescriptions and recommendations may be an example of why this parent is actually a good parent. Denial of mental health issues and non-compliance with prescriptions could be a much greater problem.

If the issue is drug or alcohol problems, untreated or unaddressed mental health issues, or issues which directly affect the child (failure to have illnesses treated, to get the child to school, oversee schoolwork, etc.), these are deficits which are likely to affect parenting.

### **2. Is the deficit remediable?**

When the deficit comes from a lack of knowledge, it may be remediable. If the issue is adequate treatment of a child’s chronic illness, a parent can learn how to treat that. If the issue is failure to adequately care for a child, parenting classes may address that. Drug and alcohol issues can be treated. There are some deficits which may not be remediable. If a parent is unwilling to acknowledge and address drug or alcohol issues (assuming sufficient evidence of the problem has been presented to the court), that’s not remediable for now. If a parent has been designated a mentally disordered sex offender, that may not ever be able to be adequately addressed. Although it does not

preclude supervised visitation, custody being awarded to that parent would be most unusual.

### **3. If the deficit is remediable, are there resources available?**

Notwithstanding assumptions to the contrary, the family court does not have a wide variety of resources available nor the broad ability to compel remedial action except in a coercive sense. By way of example, in California a family court may order outpatient counseling only upon certain findings and only for the purpose of improving communication between various members of the family. There is no law authorizing a family court to compel anyone to engage in individual counseling.

Upon a finding of domestic violence, the family court has the ability to order batterer's intervention or anger management, but limited power to order anything else.

The family court certainly has the ability to condition a parent's visitation to participation in something designed to better parenting (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, individual therapy) and the family court has the power to turn the parties' agreement to participate in such programs into a court order once there is a stipulation.

Sometimes, even when some resources exist, there is no ability to access them. If courts have certain programs for parents but there is a long waiting list to participate, the effect is the same as if the resource doesn't exist. Likewise, where there is an abundance of programs outside the court system to address certain deficits but there is neither insurance nor funds to pay for it, those resources are not available for that family at this time. In the case where both parents are found to have deficits so significant that neither parent is "good enough," allocation of limited funds may need to be directed to one resource before it is directed to another, based on what is most essential to safeguard the needs of the child.

### **4. What are the options if neither parent can adequately care for the child?**

Where there is not at least one "good enough" parent, and one or both parents cannot become "good enough" immediately, a family court must consider alternatives. The family court may have a limited ability to award custody to a non-parent. This is generally only when a third party non-parent has acted in place of the parents for a significant period of time and enjoys a parent-like relationship with the child or children.

More commonly, the case must be referred to another court. If there are other relatives who can care for the child either temporarily or permanently, the probate court may be the best place to refer the case for a guardianship. In cases where there is no immediate relative placement for the child and the child is in danger of abuse or neglect, it may be necessary to refer the case to dependency court through the Department of Children and Family Services (Child Protective Services). Once in dependency court, the State becomes a party to the action and resources not generally available to the

family court may be available for the family. When DCFS/CPS becomes involved, there may also be greater oversight for the family, something which is not available in family court.

There is a general concern that referral to dependency court creates a much greater intrusion into the life of a family than does family court. From the perspective of a family court judge, this is a determination for DCFS/CPS and the dependency court to make. If either feel that the situation does not rise to the level that dependency court should retain jurisdiction, it will not. If it does, then the intrusion in the family has been deemed necessary to protect the safety of the child and resources will be offered to parents, which are not otherwise available, to improve the life of that child. This is an intrusion which has been deemed worth its cost.

*Honorable Dianna Gould-Saltman is a California Superior Court Judge for Los Angeles County. Appointed in 2010, she sits in a family law department in Compton, California. Prior to her appointment Judge Gould-Saltman was a Certified Family Law Specialist (the State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization) and remains a Judicial Fellow of the American and International Academies of Matrimonial Lawyers. In 2013, she was selected Family Law Judge of the Year by the Pasadena Bar Association Family Law Section and in 2014, was selected Family Law Judge of the Year for Los Angeles County by the Southern California Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. She has presented on family law issues to a variety of attorney and mental health organizations as well as California Bernard Witkin Judge's College, Los Angeles Superior Court Family Court Judges, and California Judicial Council's Center for Judicial Education and Research.*



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### **Meet Norma Izzo, President of the Arizona Chapter**

Ms. Izzo is Chair of Jennings Strouss & Salmon's Family Law and Domestic Relations practice. She concentrates her practice in the area of family law and domestic relations matters, including complex litigation and asset division, business dissolution, collaborative divorce, mediation, arbitration, parent coordination, child custody and child support, and spousal maintenance. She perceives practicing in the area of family law as a three dimensional experience: legal, financial, and emotional.

Ms. Izzo serves as President of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts – Arizona Chapter and Past President of the Maricopa County Bar Association. Ms. Izzo has been recognized as one of the “Best Lawyers in Arizona” in the category of family law and mediation and was recently listed as one of the “Most Influential Women in Arizona” for 2018.