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Executive Director's Message

What's So Funny 'Bout Peace, Love, and Understanding: Lessons from *Ted Lasso*
Peter Salem

When I get exhausted by political divisiveness, violent crime, general disregard for humanity, not to mention Covid, I tune it all out and try to focus on the good in life. Enter the feel-good comedy, *Ted Lasso*, starring Jason Sudeikis as Ted. I'm a big fan. It is a show, in part, about divorce, as two main characters reconcile the endings of their respective marriages through the AFC (not to be confused with AFCC) Richmond Greyhounds, a middling United Kingdom football (soccer) club that Ted--an (American) football coach from Wichita, Kansas with absolutely no experience in football (soccer)--has been hired to coach. [Read more.](#)



AFCC 59th Annual Conference
Chicago, Illinois
May 11-14, 2022



Thank you to our annual conference sponsors!

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Attend the AFCC 59th Annual Conference, Live in Chicago!

The Use, Misuse, and Abuse of Technology in Family Law: Practical, Ethical, Safety, and

Procedural Challenges

May 11-14, 2022

Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile

After many months attending and producing online education, AFCC is ready to meet its members and other attendees in person again. Join us in Chicago as we explore technology in family law, among many other workshop topics you can count on AFCC to deliver, from mediation, parenting coordination, child custody evaluations, and intimate partner violence, to child development and high-conflict cases.

The conference program brochure is now available online! We are thrilled to be planning an in-person conference with all your favorite activities, including Dine Arouds, the Silent Auction, and (Covid-permitting) the return of the AFCC Hospitality Suite.

Read the brochure and get excited to register online, beginning in early January. See you in Chicago!

[View the brochure](#)

Scholarships Are Available!

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the AFCC Scholarship Fund, AFCC will offer several scholarships for the conference. Each scholarship includes conference registration, one pre-conference institute, a certificate of attendance, and meal functions, including the Welcome Reception, Luncheon, and Annual Banquet. A limited number of scholarships will include travel stipends. The application deadline is February 22, 2022. **Apply now!**

Exhibit 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 conference attendees.

Conversation Corner: Ginger C. Calloway and S. Margaret Lee

A Column Throwback to the AFCC Newsletter of the 90's

Longtime AFCC members Margaret Lee and Ginger Calloway recently published the Handbook of Children in the Legal System (Routledge Publishing), featuring contributions from leading experts who work with children in various contexts of the legal system. Dr. Lee is a licensed psychologist whose work focus is providing services to divorcing families and family law attorneys. She has performed custody evaluations, consults with attorneys, provides expert witness testimony, is a mediator and provides co-parent counseling. Her recent peer reviewed articles have involved issues of attachment in child custody work and providing consultation to family law



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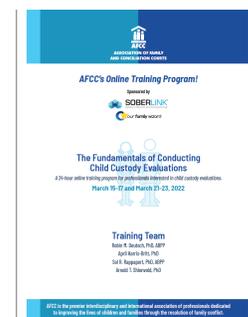
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Online Parenting Programs

AFCC Online Training Programs



The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations
Mar. 15-17, 2022 and
Mar. 21-23, 2022

AFCC Chapter Conferences

Arizona Chapter Annual Conference
January 21-23, 2022
Sedona, Arizona

California Chapter Annual Conference

attorneys. Dr. Calloway is a psychologist in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she provides evaluations in criminal and civil matters. She is a member of the American Psychological Association, the Society for Personality Assessment, AFCC, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, the Association of Juvenile Court Professionals and Judges, and the International Association of Mental Health.

AFCC: Congratulations on the publication of *Handbook of Children in the Legal System*! Editing such a large collection of information is a huge undertaking. What inspired you to begin this project? [Read more](#).

February 4-6, 2022
San Francisco,
California

**Colorado Chapter
Annual Conference**
February 4-5, 2022
Being held virtually

**Alberta Chapter
Annual Conference**
March 4, 2022
Calgary, Alberta and
online

**Louisiana Chapter
Annual Conference**
March 18, 2022
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Child Custody Evaluations Training Program Coming in March 2022

The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations

March 15-17 and March 21-23, 2022

AFCC is pleased to offer a comprehensive child custody evaluation (CCE) training, conducted online by a team of leading practitioners and trainers. The program takes place in two segments per day, two hours each.

Join us and earn up to 24 hours of continuing education training! Topics include the CCE process, research, parenting plans, cultural and diversity considerations, report writing, and psychological testing. Recordings of all sessions and all handouts will be available to registrants.

[Read the brochure](#) to learn more! Online registration will be available in early January.

The training team includes:

Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP

April Harris-Britt, PhD

Sol R. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP

Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD

Ready to learn even more? An in-person, interactive program will be offered as a supplement as a pre-conference institute at the 59th Annual Conference in Chicago. Look for **Advanced Training in Child Custody Evaluation** on page 4 of the [conference program brochure](#). This institute is designed for those who have attended the child custody evaluation online training program.

Now Accepting Nominations for AFCC Awards!

AFCC acknowledges the accomplishments of leaders in family law by presenting awards at the AFCC Annual Conference. We encourage you to recognize a colleague by submitting a nomination.

Nominations for the following awards, to be presented at the AFCC 59th Annual Conference, will be accepted online through **March 21, 2022**.

John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by AFCC members. [Nominate a colleague!](#)

Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award, sponsored by the Oregon Family Institute, recognizes outstanding research and/or research achievements in the field of family and divorce. [Submit your nomination now!](#)

Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award recognizes innovation in court-connected or court-related programs created by AFCC members. [Nominate a program.](#)

Support Your Colleagues with a Donation to the AFCC Scholarship Fund!

As 2021 winds down and you plan your year-end giving, please keep the AFCC Scholarship Fund in mind. If you are able to donate, in any amount, we truly appreciate your contribution. It means a lot to the professionals who could not attend AFCC conferences without your help. Thank you for your consideration.

AFCC plans to deliver a triumphant return to in-person events at the 59th Annual Conference, set for May 11-14, 2022, in Chicago, Illinois. With your help, the Scholarship Committee can send even more worthy professionals to the conference. [Learn more](#) or [donate now!](#)

AFCC Webinar Corner

Interviewing Children with Non-Normative Needs and Unique Considerations

Ann Ordway, JD, PhD

January 12, 2022 | 1:00-2:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

Registration closes on January 11, 2022 at 9:00am Eastern Time US/Canada.

Separation and divorce with children are often naturally more complex as experts and the courts seek to fashion resolutions that will meet the best interests of the children involved. Parenting is no easy task. While there are guidelines for best practices for parenting plans, cookie cutter approaches are rarely ideal. Children with unique circumstances and special needs will always add complexities and new dimensions to more routine expectations

A professional working with a special needs child must find creative ways to hear the child's voice and then accurately include it in the process, while also discerning the level of each parent's knowledge and ability to meet the child's unique needs. Moreover, the expert must be particularly alert to non-verbal nuances that can reveal potential disconnects between what a parent reports and the actual relationship between the child and that parent.

Ann Ordway, JD, PhD, is AFCC's Program Director. Prior to joining the AFCC staff, she was a counselor educator with the University of Phoenix in Phoenix, Arizona, where she taught graduate-level students in the counseling department. She has been a family law attorney for more than 25 years, retired from private practice, and is a nationally certified counselor (NCC), continuing to work in the fields of parenting coordination and child advocacy. In 1991, she co-founded the Battered Women's Legal Advocacy Project in Morris County, New Jersey, which provides pro bono legal representation for victims of domestic violence. Dr. Ordway served as a member of the AFCC Board of Directors, 2015-2021. She is a former president of the New Jersey Chapter of AFCC.



Registration

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$50

Certificate of Attendance

Members: \$15

Non-Members: \$20

Continuing education credit may be available for lawyers, judges, psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other professionals. [Learn more.](#)

[Register today!](#)

Affirming Family Courts for Transgender and Gender-Expansive Youth and Their Families: Discussion and Best Practices for Family Court Practitioners

AFCC DE&I Webinar

Kate Kuvalanka, PhD; Camellia Bellis, MEd; and Asaf Orr, JD, Esq.

January 18, 2022

4:00pm-6:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

This webinar will include a one-hour presentation, followed by one hour of discussion.

Custody cases involving transgender/gender-expansive (TGE) children have garnered media attention in recent years. How do family court professionals work with TGE children and families when one parent affirms a child's gender identity/expression, and another is unsupportive? Due to lack of familiarity within family courts, misinformation and bias have resulted in affirming parents losing physical custody and/or legal decision-making authority of their TGE children often with detrimental effects on the children. This webinar is designed for family court professionals engaging with transgender/gender-expansive children involved in divorce and child custody cases. Through presentations by experts in the field, case studies, and breakout room discussions, participants will learn about the experiences of affirming parents and their transgender/gender-expansive children involved in custody disputes, consider what affirming family courts look like, gain an understanding of the importance of affirmation of transgender/gender-expansive children, and consider implications for the "best interest" standard.

This webinar is free and includes a certificate of attendance, but you must register to attend.

[Register now!](#)

In Memoriam: Constance Ahrons

Constance Ahrons, AFCC member in La Jolla, California, passed away on November 29, 2021, at age 84. Connie conducted groundbreaking longitudinal research that encompassed interviews with parents, children, and stepparents of divorced families across decades, which was included in her best-selling book, *The Good Divorce*. She also wrote *We're Still Family*, another seminal book among family law practitioners.

She was a former professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and University of Southern California, where she was Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy doctoral training program. Connie was a former visiting scholar at the University of Michigan and former Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. She received countless



awards and professional accolades, including AFCC's Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award (2010).

AFCC is grateful to be included in the list of suggested charitable donations, compiled by Connie's family. The list also included the Academy of Collaborative Professionals, the San Diego Humane Society, and the Hemlock Society of San Diego.

Chapter News

Judge Randall Fuller, AFCC member from Delaware, Ohio, has been reelected to serve a second term as president of the Ohio chapter of AFCC. Randall also serves on the Executive Committee of the Association of Ohio Domestic Relations Judges, currently serving as president-elect. He maintained a successful law practice in Delaware for 21 years, focusing on the areas of domestic relations, juvenile, estate planning, probate, and trusts. A graduate of Buckeye Valley High School, Randall received his undergraduate degree in Agricultural Economics from The Ohio State University and his law degree from the University of Toledo, College of Law. Congratulations, Randall!



Member News

Nicholas Bala, JD, LLM, AFCC member from Kingston, Ontario and Queen's University law professor, will lead a team in revising the Parenting Plan Guide and Parenting Plan Template to align with the Divorce Act and the Children's Law Reform Act, which took effect in Canada earlier this year. The **Parenting Plan Guide** and **Parenting Plan Template** were developed by the Ontario Chapter of AFCC in 2020. Nick has law degrees from Queen's University (JD 1977) and Harvard (LLM 1980). He has been on the Faculty of Queen's since 1980, and he has been a visiting professor at Osgood Hall Law School, McGill and Duke Law School. Nick has written or co-authored 24 books and over 200 book chapters and articles in journals of law, psychology, social work, and medicine. Congratulations, Nick!



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

Board of Directors Nominations

The AFCC Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for individuals to serve on the AFCC Board of Directors, in the event of a vacancy. Recommended individuals must be AFCC members and have an interest in and knowledge of AFCC and its work. Nominations must be received by **January 31, 2022**, in order to be considered by the committee prior to the election at the AFCC 59th Annual Conference. The term is three years, beginning July 1, 2022, and concluding June 30, 2025.

If you or a member you know is interested, please send the first and last name, contact information, resume, and a letter of interest to the AFCC Nominating Committee via email to afcc@afccnet.org.

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, international news, and the latest initiatives in family law and conflict resolution. The *AFCC eNEWS* is provided at no charge to you; anyone can subscribe. [Subscribe here.](#)

AFCC members are free to share eNEWS content.

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR:

[Gina Wentling](#)





Executive Director's Message: What's So Funny 'Bout Peace, Love, and Understanding: Lessons from *Ted Lasso*

Peter Salem, AFCC Executive Director

When I get exhausted by political divisiveness, violent crime, general disregard for humanity, not to mention Covid, I tune it all out and try to focus on the good in life. Enter the feel-good comedy, *Ted Lasso*, starring Jason Sudeikis as Ted. I'm a big fan. It is a show, in part, about divorce, as two main characters reconcile the endings of their respective marriages through the AFC (not to be confused with AFCC) Richmond Greyhounds, a middling United Kingdom football (soccer) club that Ted--an (American) football coach from Wichita, Kansas with absolutely no experience in football (soccer)--has been hired to coach.



Upon receiving his Emmy, Sudeikis said the show is about family, mentors, teachers, and teammates, which resonated with me because for the last 21 months (and despite the wonders of Zoom), I have very much missed being with my AFCC family, mentors, teachers, and teammates. Being in Cincinnati for the in-person AFCC Fall Conference in November was incredibly restorative for me, and by all accounts for many others. It also reminded me that larger group interactions have a different dynamic--not unlike the Richmond locker room--especially when there are difficult decisions to make, conflicting communication styles, and just everyday human interactions.

For many years, challenges have arisen at AFCC because we are open to a wide range of ideas and insist on asking the tough questions, often in search of answers that do not yet exist. Indeed, sometimes my meetings, inbox, and listservs are as divisive as cable news.

It has been AFCC's (and my personal) mission to facilitate productive, collaborative conversations about the many difficult issues we face, whether through conferences, task forces, collaborative projects, or AFCC committees. Sometimes it's really hard, so as the holidays approach, I want to send a message with the appropriate sentiments: peace, love, and understanding, to name but a few.

Over the years I have read enough books on peacemaking, group dynamics, conflict resolution, and family dynamics to last a lifetime. Many have been written by our AFCC colleagues. But with all due respect, I am turning to the great Ted Lasso for the wisdom and guidance that will help as we reintegrate with one another.

“It’s the hope that kills you.” A common refrain from the AFC Richmond fan base as the team repeatedly snatches defeat from the jaws of victory. Ted disagrees with this saying, as do I. We need to continue to hope, believe in, and work toward resolution, whether it is with families, policies, providing access to services, or creating better systems to serve children and families.

“There is something worse out there than being sad, and that is being alone and being sad.” Ted’s locker room talk after [*spoiler alert for those who haven’t watched yet!*] Richmond is relegated (dropped to a less competitive league for the following season). Simply put, become a part of a supportive community. Here, I am confident that Ted is making a pitch for everyone to become a member of AFCC and an AFCC Chapter.

“You know what you do with tough cookies don’t you? Dip ‘em in milk.” Sage advice from Ted on dealing with difficult people. The applications for AFCC members are endless.

“Doing the right thing is never the wrong thing.” Obvious, I hope.

“Don’t you dare settle for fine.” Surly, aging star-turned-coach Roy Kent’s advice to Richmond’s owner Rebecca on her love life. For AFCC, this means that we should not settle for providing services, conferences, or publications that are just fine. Our work needs to create change and inspire others.

“The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off.” Team psychologist Sharon shared this advice with Ted, who is struggling with anxiety, also encouraging us to work through our own challenges, and it’s okay if we get a bit angry along the way.

“Be curious, not judgmental.” Ted, quoting Walt Whitman to Rebecca’s evil ex-husband Ruppert, explaining that people who underestimated him never got to know who he was or what he was about. I believe this is the quintessential message as we work through conflict, across boundaries, with people from all walks of life.

“Divorce is hard. It doesn’t matter if you’re the one leaving, or if you’re the one who got left, it makes folks do crazy things.” We know, but it never hurts to be reminded.

“You live, you die, you’re done. End of story. Good night.” Who else but Roy Kent? But let’s leave a legacy, shall we?

Wishing all of you peace, love, and understanding, and at least one more season of *Ted Lasso*, in the year to come.

Peter

P.S. [Click here](#) for a little more peace, love and understanding.



Conversation Corner: Ginger C. Calloway and S. Margaret Lee

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AFCC: Congratulations on the publication of *Handbook of Children in the Legal System!* Editing such a large collection of information is a huge undertaking. What inspired you to begin this project?

Margaret: Ironically, I had been approached about writing a book several years earlier, but the timing wasn't right. Ginger and I started working together on various projects and found that we had a lot in common. I brought her into AFCC, and we got to know each other even better at a conference we both attended. We were both trained as clinical psychologists and to work with children. We both also recognized that there are so many layers to the involvement of children with and in the legal system. No matter why they are there – there are just things people should know about how they think; how they speak; and what they know. We both have always been committed to not just highlighting the importance of listening to children's voices, but also understanding all that goes into their voices.

Ginger: After a presentation I did on children and the court for the family law section of the ABA, I was asked to do an article for the *Journal of Family Law* and I asked Margaret to co-author with me. The article was seminal, and several presentations followed. We were

approached by Rutledge to write a book. We decided instead to create an edited collection of chapters authored by invited experts about different aspects of how and where kids show up in the legal system – from the legal and psychological perspectives – and what it looks like. Each author and co-author have a message to share about how to work effectively with children and what those doing this work need to know. This book is not just about the how and the what, though. It is also about *why* children’s voices are so important.

AFCC: *Handbook of Children in the Legal System* has a unique format. Why is the material presented the way it is? Who is your intended reader?

Ginger: It is a hybrid, really. It is a collection of information from experts for professionals who want to become experts and to specialize in working with children in the legal system. It is a text for graduate students, lawyers, and mental health professionals, who are working with children; and for law enforcement and child protective services workers also – to help them better understand.

Margaret: One section of the book is more academically oriented. There is a conceptual framework, a review of the information needed to be able to work with children, and some focus on assessment. The case studies are really the “meat and potatoes.” Experts in a particular area reflect on the facts and circumstances of a case in context, and with a real application.

AFCC: How have aspects of your individual backgrounds and expertise contributed to your work together on this project? Are your own professional passions reflected in the book?

Ginger: My background includes a focus on developmental and intellectual disabilities, which is relevant to topics in the *Handbook*. I started doing child custody evaluations due to a forensic psychologist in North Carolina, which gave me insight from a different angle. I got involved with criminal work with *Atkins v. VA*, which prohibited the execution of the intellectually disabled.

Part of my passion is making a difference for those who don’t always have their own voice – or might have one that isn’t fully heard. I performed capital case evaluations and work in juvenile justice. My skill set comes from my background with various domains of functioning. There are so many aspects to children, what brought them to the legal system, and how they are within it once they are there. My message in this book is that we need to listen.

Margaret: I always wanted to be a psychologist and to work with children. I have done research on attachment theory with the hearing impaired – and I really love assessment. I also really enjoy Hague work and international issues impacting children. In private practice, as a therapist for kids, I was doing assessment, and parental capacity evaluations, which led me to family law. There are age-old questions: “How do you collect data – and is it accurate or not?” “How do you solve problems of dysfunctional families?” I think I was in the right place at the right time because I was able to work with and interact with some of the greats – like Joan Kelly, Janet Johnston, and Matt Sullivan, just to name a few. I was instrumental in developing parenting

coordination in California in the early stages. People were also not really using attachment theory in family law work back then. I have had the opportunity to play a role in the development of this field – and I am proud of that. My message in this book is that it is not ever just about one piece, but rather about how the pieces fit together.

AFCC: Is there anything in the book that you think is particularly important? What is the best thing that has come from the publication of this book so far?

Margaret: For as much as we have in common, we each also have contributed our own unique lens and experience to this book. Each component is important – which is why we asked so many experts to contribute to the project! We have endeavored to cover development, assessment, language, trauma, and so much more. The *Handbook* can be beneficial for professionals touching so many aspects of the experiences children have in the legal system. We both authored and co-authored chapters in parts of the book – and we are both able to share our message in the introduction to the book.

Ginger: The *Handbook of Children in the Legal System* is timely and has the potential to influence some necessary change for the benefit of children interfacing with the courts. Some changes in legislation designed to protect children are already underway – including efforts to raise the age at which a child can be criminally charged and then processed through criminal court in the state of North Carolina. Some of the content provided came from a former juvenile public defender, for example.

We have included extensive bibliographies for people who want to continue to explore sources beyond those provided in the *Handbook*. This project has been about increasing understanding of systemic, ideographic, and personal aspects of children in the courts. We hope our work and the work of the amazing contributors to this book will help improve the experiences of children in the legal system.

S. Margaret Lee, PhD is a licensed psychologist whose work focus is providing services to divorcing families and family law attorneys. Dr. Lee has performed custody evaluations, consults with attorneys, provides expert witness testimony, is a mediator and provides co-parent counseling. Dr. Lee is a frequent presenter at national conferences in the area of psychology/family law. Her recent peer reviewed articles have involved issues of attachment in child custody work and providing consultation to family law attorneys.

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