

Fall News

President's Message

Laurie Mactavish



As summer turns to fall, and fall to winter, we are naturally reminded that our worlds are constantly in transition! The Fall Conference in Breckenridge October 11-13 marked the beginning of fall leaves, crisp cool air and the opportunity to delve together into topics long standing with fresh perspectives. Look no further than Katie Hays' article in this issue on Understanding and Intervening when Children Refuse Contact with a Parent presented by Matthew Sullivan, current AFCC president, and Robin Deutsch. The theme of transitions abound with the topic of parents, children and the challenges they have in navigating the new paths that define their actions in uncharted terrain in a new family system.

As professionals helping families, COAFCC strives to work together from a multi-disciplined lens. To accomplish these efforts, the program committee searches far and wide for those professionals eager to share their learnings with us. Then it is for us to return home with new insights, research, and expertise to broaden our 'tool kit'. COAFCC is about giving back in education. We provide evening dinners in Northern Colorado (NOCO in Fort Collins) and Southern Colorado (SOCO in Colorado Springs) eight times yearly. In addition to our Fall Conference in Breckenridge and our Spring Conference in Denver, we are hoping to add Pop Up educational gatherings in more rural outlying districts on topics that the individual region has of interest. Our conferences are costly to put on, but funds over and above our expenses go right back into bringing speakers and presenters to enrich our thoughts and boost our energy!

Give a look at Matthew Sullivan's message in the Fall AFCC newsletter online. Each year the president is tasked with a theme and he shared his with us for the year. As you explore the AFCC website, articles from the Family Court Review are tremendous resources to address topics that can help us with our clients. They are only a keystroke away when we find ourselves wondering how best to approach a new scenario or deepen perspective on a repetitive conundrum.

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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in the articles published or referred to in the COAFCC newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts or the Colorado Chapter of AFCC. Additionally, the products and services advertised in this publication are not endorsed by either the AFCC or the COAFCC.



Fall 2019
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
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Whether transitioning from beginner to journey person or from journey person to expert, there are riches to be found and 'ah ha moments' always there to surprise and support us. Not forgetting of course that reaching out to our fellow members is also a resource rich in solutions! As I attended the annual conference in Toronto in June, I found the sessions and 'snap shot' chats during breaks and dinners a breath of fresh air to enhance my practice upon my return. It felt as if there were a team behind my desk with me having a shared sense of purpose and collaboration. I was far from alone. I highly recommend attending the next annual AFCC conference in New Orleans in late May 2020!

Our board of directors meet for a one-day brainstorming each July where we have more time to enjoy each other's perspectives and light-hearted moments amid serious topics. We meet three other times per year to help create resources in education for our chapter membership. We are a volunteer board and are grateful for the grounding, historical memory bank, and guidance in administrative support from our Administrative Assistant, April Freier. Our committees work hard in programing, outreach/membership, scholarships, communication and public relations, and nominations to bring resources to you that we hope gives you the sense of collaboration and support in a field not chosen by many because of its' ease! But as past presidents have said before me, the reward is far greater and richer than the challenges present. As we transition into the still of winter, we invite you to read, reach out to one another, and gather at our Spring conference on April 24 and share a cup of hot beverage or lunch to collaborate once again.

Upcoming AFCC Events

AFCC 57th Annual Conference:

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

May 27-30, 2020

**New Orleans Marriott
New Orleans, Louisiana**



AFCC Training Programs:

Essential Elements of Parenting Coordination

December 2-3, 2019
Baltimore, Maryland

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

December 4-5, 2019
Baltimore, Maryland

For more information go to www.afccnet.org



Dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict

Benefits of Membership:

- Be part of a vibrant network of Colorado family law professionals
- The COAFCC semi-annual newsletter is packed with local news, articles, links to resources, and more
- Discounts for COAFCC conferences & training programs
- All the benefits of AFCC membership: Subscription to Family Court Review; discounts for malpractice insurance & publications; access to the Parenting Coordination Listserv
- Support & advocacy for local community networking
- Representation on COAFCC Board of Directors
- Participation on committees, task forces & projects
- Mentoring and consultation from experts around the state



SAVE THESE DATES!



SOCO DINNER MEETINGS

COLORADO SPRINGS

JANUARY 28, 2020

APRIL 7, 2020

NOCO DINNER MEETINGS

FORT COLLINS

FEBRUARY 11, 2020

APRIL 21, 2020

COAFCC SPRING CONFERENCE

&

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING & ELECTIONS

April 24, 2020

DENVER, COLORADO

More information and registration details coming soon!



COAFCC 5TH ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 9-11, 2020

BRECKENRIDGE, COLORADO



2019 FALL CONFERENCE RECAP

Katie Hays, JD



White snow contrasted the golden trees of fall as the Colorado Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts kicked off their Fall Conference in Breckenridge on October 11, 2019. The COAFCC Planning Committee did an excellent job bringing together high-caliber experts from opposite coasts in the field of parent-child contact problems, presenting a weekend-long conference on “Understanding and Intervening When Children Refuse Contact with a Parent.”

Matthew Sullivan, PhD, who happens to be the current president of the international AFCC organization, and hails from California, launched the conference on Friday afternoon, noting that Parental Alienation has become the “complaint du jour” in family court cases. Polarization of gender roles and socio-cultural-legal movements have contributed to the proliferation of the parental alienation dialogue. The Parental Alienation concept stemmed somewhat as a backlash to the increase in domestic violence advocacy. Framing abuse and alienation as two mutually exclusive concepts ignores the reality that the two concepts, in many cases, overlap. Dr. Sullivan presented the intervention-focused model predicting children’s resistance/refusal of contact, which includes 4 main factors: traumatic stories/negative scripts; parental alienating and restrictive gatekeeping; inadequate or pathogenic parenting; and child characteristics.

Robin Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, who hails from the east coast, took the lead in the second part of the discussion, focusing on assessment. In assessing parental conflict and resistance/refusal, it is important to start with the concept that alienation exists in high-conflict divorce, and is usually exacerbated by parenting deficits or attachment issues and child vulnerabilities. One key to understanding alienation is that the child shares a parent’s negative behaviors and attitudes and that the child’s aversion is unreasonable. Another key is that there is a continuum of alienation and associated behaviors.

Dr. Deutsch noted assessment is vital to having evidence-informed interventions. Assessment should include identifying any trauma, and whether a child is justified in rejecting a parent. The thoughts/behaviors/feelings triad must also be considered.

Parent Alienating Behaviors were defined for the attendees, which includes several observable behaviors and issues. It is very important to speak about the behaviors, not labeling parents as alienators, etc. Hybrid cases are common, perhaps even typical. Dr. Deutsch also analyzed encapsulated delusion and trauma in parents, noting multiple factors that need to be considered in recommending interventions. Assessment of the child must also be conducted, and Dr. Deutsch has conveniently identified factors present in an alienated child into the 10 R’s, including things like reactions, rehearsed, and relatives. The role of anxiety was also analyzed, noting anxiety is maintained by avoidance. In parent-child contact difficulties, there is a cycle, and in fact, escalation, of fear and anxiety.



Dr. Deutsch pointed out the negative effects on a child who has been alienated, including long-term effects as to that child’s emotional and behavioral well-being and future parent/child relationships. Early intervention is critical, but forcing contact can also be harmful to a child.

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FALL CONFERENCE RECAP
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COAFCC President Laurie Mactavish kicked off the second day of the Fall Conference with a touching reminder that we should talk with, not at our clients, as we can help them remember that at some point there was love between the parents, a very small portion of which may still exist.

Dr. Sullivan shared his Parent-Child Contract Treatment Program Agreement. He also shared sample language for a collaborative team agreement, which included particularly helpful language for a Parent Coordinator’s role.

Dr. Deutsch presented a checklist for resist/refuse dynamics. A list of emotional, behavioral and cognitive indices as to both parents and the child. This could be a useful tool for judges.

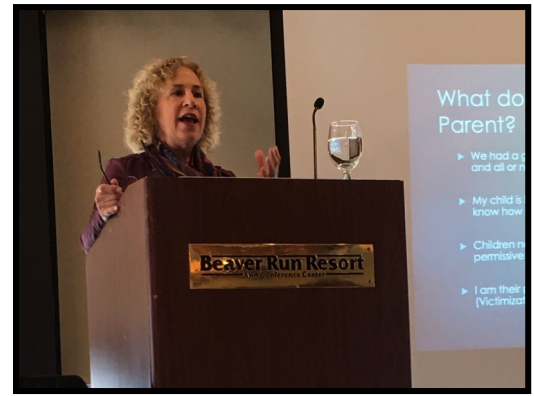
After a sunny break where conference attendees had a chance to enjoy the beautiful Colorado weather, small groups discussed a case scenario involving a family where the children were resisting/refusing contact with a parent.

The afternoon concluded with a panel including judicial officers, a practicing attorney, and Drs. Sullivan and Deutsch. The panel discussed the *Dean-Cook Case*, a Colorado Court of Appeals case found at 413 P.3d 246 (2017). The case stands for the proposition that a parent has an affirmative duty to facilitate parenting time.

It is hard to believe the weather could actually be better than prior days, but it in fact was, as the COAFCC fall conference Sunday session began. Andrew Nickel, an attorney at Hall & Evans, LLC, who represents medical and mental health professionals, presented on the ethical and legal considerations in parenting time resistance and high conflict parental responsibility cases. Much discussion focused on the new House Bill 19-1120 and the new statute for child consent, C.R.S. 12-245-203.5, which allows a child aged 12 to consent to therapy without parental consent. The question was raised as to whether this means a child aged 12 years or older can refuse to consent to therapy. Mr. Nickel also presented on the requirements for informed consent, including the requirements for a mandatory disclosure statement, confidentiality and access to records.

Sunday ended with the last, but not least, presentation by experienced practitioners Jamie Darr, PhD, Jane Irvine, LPC, NCC, and Barbara Shindell, LCSW. This panel provided attendees with a view from the trenches of reunification therapy. Their model is relational—a multidisciplinary intervention for family repair, with thorough assessment, focusing on the child.

Overall, the COAFCC fall conference fit the bill of providing in-depth analysis as well as basic issue identification for participants to go forth and apply to their practices. Resist/refuse dynamics are a family problem that took a long time to form, and efforts to try to collaborate toward a solution are worthwhile.



NOCO COAFCC 2019-20 DINNER SERIES BEGINS

Robert Smith, Esq.

The third year of the very successful NoCo dinner series began on September 17th with a highly informative presentation by Metro Denver family law attorneys Courtney McConomy and Megan Sherr, and mediator/therapist Jane Irvine on “Resistant Teens and Parenting Time Orders.” These dinner educational sessions are held four times a year on a Tuesday early evening at a clubhouse in Windsor, serving the domestic relations practitioner communities of both Fort Collins and Greeley, with regular attendees also coming from all over Northern Colorado and the Denver Metro area.

After an initial mingling and networking period, the packed room of Judicial officers, Court personnel, family law attorneys, mental health professionals, mediators and CFIs enjoyed a served dinner while viewing a PowerPoint presentation with detailed comments and examples. The presenters discussed frustrations over parenting time orders with the anger and insecurities of teenagers, which problems were often compounded by parents’ feelings of powerlessness, as well as poor communication and inadequate co-parenting commitments. As for the feelings of teens, statistics point out that those from divorced families are seven times more likely to suffer from depression, as well as seven times more likely to use alcohol or drugs to cope with their feelings. Parents encountering resistant teens are likely to fall back into blame and disparagement, and often tribal warfare.

Of the four avenues parents can take in expressions of teen parenting time resistance, the first to be considered needs to involve therapeutic intervention; with the three escalating legal paths of motions to enforce, restrict or contempt to be pursued only when therapy has not resolved the detente. The differences between family therapy and reunification therapy with the parents and teen were outlined, with the goal of the therapy to heal, not to punish. It is highly important to make therapy available to the teen as quickly as possible. The presenters also provided some creative solutions with motions to enforce parenting time. They further pointed out the expectation in the appellate case, *Dean v. Cook*, 2017 COA 51, that parents are “expected to do more than refrain from discouraging visitation; a parent is expected to take affirmative action to encourage visitation.” And from the teen’s point of view, the presenters discussed the advantages of asking the Court to appoint a CFI or Child Legal Representative, or even the judicial officer interviewing the teen in chambers. This very informative presenta-



tion concluded at 7:45 pm after a helpful audience question-and-answer period.

For much more information concerning this important area of family law, please note that the major theme of AFCC’s 57th Annual Conference next May 27th through 30th in New Orleans is “When a Child Rejects a Parent: Are We Part of the Problem or the solution?”

The next NoCo dinner presentation will be on November 19th, with the wildly popular judicial panel of both Larimer and Weld judicial officers discussing their “favorite” pet peeves. Two more NoCo dinners are scheduled for the new year, including Judge Julie Kunce Field and lawyer Vicki Lutz examining litigation abuse on February 11th; and an experiment in a fifteen-minute Ted Talk format of “Ideas Worth Spreading” by attorneys, mental health professionals and mediators on April 21st. And please note that COAFCC has begun a scholarship program for family law and mental health professionals, as well as Court staff, that allows the dinner registration fee to be waived, with the details available on each dinner’s emailed announcement (contact COAFCC administrator, April Freier, at aprilfreier@hotmail.com if you want to begin receiving emailed dinner announcements).

All program sessions begin on a Tuesday at 5:45 pm with mingling, networking and a cash bar; and the dinner is served and the program begins at 6:15 pm, with a conclusion not later than 7:45 pm. These NoCo dinner sessions fill up very quickly, and we have had to cut off registrations each time over the past two years before the announced deadline, since we have reached the fire code limit earlier and earlier each program. We are still looking for another suitable venue that is midway between the Larimer and Weld Courthouses, and will try to maintain the high quality food choices that we presently have at the golf clubhouse. We hope to see you at a future program!

SOCO COAFCC 2019-20 PROGRAMMING KICK-OFF

Stacy Mesias, LMFT

Southern Colorado's new season of education and networking started off with a fantastic event held at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. The program, which was held on September 17, 2019, was a judicial panel on Best Practices in Domestic Relations. The event offered a cash bar and included a fabulous Italian buffet. In a continued effort to broaden the COAFCC's outreach, the panel included judges and magistrates from the 4th, 10th and 16th Judicial Districts. The panel included: the Honorable Judges Jill Brady, Robert Lowrey, and Erin Sokol; and Magistrates Frances Johnson and Catherine Mitchell Helton, from the 4th Judicial District; the Honorable Judge Jill Mattoon from the 10th Judicial District and Magistrate Sarah Zane from the 16th Judicial District. The panel offered expertise and creative solutions in response to questions regarding parenting time and decision-making submitted by attendees prior to the meeting. The judges and magistrates had a wealth of important and relevant information to share with the participants. David Johnson, Attorney at Law, moderated the event with wisdom and humor that added to the depth of the information presented. The event was very well-attended and included special guests Laurie MacTavish, current COAFCC President, and the Honorable Judge Chad Miller.



SECOND SOCO DINNER NOVEMBER 2019

Marlene Bizub, Psy.D.

The second event in the Southern Colorado AFCC series of events was held on Tuesday, November 5th at the Fine Arts Center in Colorado Springs. The evening commenced with networking and a cash bar from 5:30-6:00 p.m., followed by a delectable Italian buffet dinner and announcements from Laurie Mactavish, Colorado AFCC President for 2019-20. The program consisted of a presentation by Gene Gross, Psy.D., entitled, "Making Sense of Parents' Extreme Reactions and Erratic Behaviors." The subtitle of Dr. Gross' presentation "Is It PTSD, a Personality Disorder, or Simply Bad Behavior?" characterized the content of the message as he distinguished between "Little t" and "Big T" traumatic events. Dr. Gross asserted that the common thread between these two types of traumatic events is a profound and lasting sense of emotional insecurity, where parents never feel safe and are constantly in a "fight or flight" state. Dr. Gross went on to explain that PTSD is characterized by a permanent physiological, neurological or cognitive state of fight or flight.

According to Dr. Gross, further complicating the assessment of symptoms is that victims of domestic violence do not always have consistent memories of the event, so they may appear to be non-credible in their account of what has happened to them. They are also often in a permanent state of hypervigilance. They may enter into a fight, flight or freeze scenario in their response to such events. Dr. Gross explained that the consequence of long-term fight or flight may be a diminished interest and participation in significant activities, or feelings of detachment and estrangement from others. The person often feels a lack of safety, trust, power and control, esteem, and tenderness and intimacy in relationships.

Dr. Gross concluded with an explanation of the difference between psychosis and neurosis, identifying the hallmark characteristics of each. He also explained differences between PTSD and personality disorders, and what the prognosis can be for those with personality disorders that develop over a lifetime, rather than those who have PTSD due to a traumatic life event. The presentation was captivating and left participants craving more information, which was evident in the question and answer period that followed the conclusion of the presentation. It was an excellent and information-packed program, capping off a great night of food, education, and connecting with others!

Welcome New COAFCC Members!

JUDGE LINDA BILLINGS-VELA
KATHERINE BURKE
SUZANNE CHAMBERS-YATES
JOANNE CREBASSA
SHERYL FOLAND
RENEAU KENNEDY
NATALIE KNOWLTON
COLLEEN MCCOY
JOAN NASH
TERRI NEEDELS
CHERYL PAGE

JP PRENTISS
SAHAR SAFI
BONNIE SHIELDS
HANNA STOREY
KERRY STUTZMAN
KRISTINE TURNER
STEPHEN VERTUCCI
CECILIA WALL
ERIN WILSON
SABRINA ZUNKER

IN MEMORIAM

Longtime COAFCC member, **CRAIG EADES**, passed away on November 5, 2019. Craig was one of the founding members of the Colorado Chapter. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

COAFCC members--we want to know when you publish a peer-reviewed paper or a book of relevance to family law practitioners so we can highlight your work in our newsletter! Let us know about awards, promotions and other honors as well.

Send an email to April Freier, our administrative assistant: aprilfreier@hotmail.com.



OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE

COAFCC continues to grow our membership with professionals who are actively engaged in learning to better their practices and the process of families in the court system. Members are encouraged to bring guests to our NOCO and SOCO dinners. If you invite a guest, that individual may register to attend their first COAFCC event at the member's only price! The Outreach Committee is looking for more ways to reach out to professionals. If you have ideas, or would like assistance with reaching out to people in your community, please contact: Deb Anderson at da@andersonbaker.com or Rebecca Pepin at rpepin@jbplegal.com.

CELEBRATIONS

Many thanks to **Rebecca Pepin** and crew for organizing and orchestrating yet another successful silent auction and welcome reception at our Fall Conference in Breckenridge.

Together we raised more than \$4100!

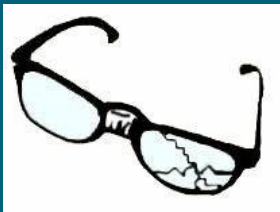
Proceeds from the evening allow COAFCC the ability to offer scholarships to those colleagues in need, offer discounted conference fees to new practitioners, design and conduct regional training sessions around Colorado, as well as help the Chapter attract nationally-known speakers for our annual statewide conferences.

And a special thank you to our 2019 Silent Auction Sponsors:

OurFamilyWizard®
Griffiths Law, PC
Feingold Horton, PLLC

Gene Gross, PsyD
Fontana & Associates, PC
Kathleen McNamara, PhD, PLLC





THE LORD OF THE FLIES: MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN WITHOUT PARENTAL PERMISSION

Chad K. Gillam, Esq., Andy Nickel, Esq., and Ariana S. Busby, Esq. of Hall & Evans, LLC

On May 16, 2019, Governor Polis signed into law Colorado House Bill 19-1120, which enables minor clients to obtain mental health services without parental permission starting at 12 years old. The law took effect upon signature.

The stated legislative intent behind House Bill 19-1120 was to reduce the rising rate of youth suicides by allowing mental health practitioners to work with youth to teach them functional coping skills, increase communication and strengthen the bond with their parent(s), and build ongoing nonclinical support for youth to use to manage their mental health concerns. The new law does not apply to registered psychotherapists.

Prior to the passage of HB 19-1120, the Colorado Behavioral Health statute provided that minors 15 years and older could seek mental health services without parental permission.

House Bill 19-1120 added to the Mental Health Practice Act a provision allowing minors age 12 and older to obtain psychotherapy services “with or without the consent of the minor’s parent or legal guardian.” Under the statute, before a minor 12 years or older can engage in treatment without parental consent, the practitioner must first determine that the minor is knowingly and voluntarily seeking the psychotherapy services and that the services provided are clinically indicated and necessary to the minor client’s well-being. These must be documented in the minor client’s clinical chart.

The new law has far reaching practical consequences on the provision of psychotherapy to court involved families. Minors ages 12 and up now hold the authority to consent (or refuse to consent) to receiving psychotherapy services. Practically speaking, practitioners should

now obtain written consent from each of their minor clients ages 12 and up prior to providing psychotherapy services. Informed consent should also include mandatory disclosure requirements. Practitioners should take care to include all necessary explanations and disclosures required under statute in a way that is appropriate and understandable for the age of the client. Informed consent and mandatory disclosure forms should be reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with the additional requirements of the new statute.

“Minors ages 12 and up now hold the authority to consent (or refuse consent) to receiving psychotherapy services.”

The new law also effects the disclosure of a minor client’s clinical information to their parent(s)/guardian. Minors over the age of 12 now hold the psychotherapist-client privilege and parents are no longer able to obtain copies of their children’s mental health records by signing an authorization on their behalf so long as their children are 12 years old or older. Further, the new law requires that practitioners obtain the minor’s permission before letting the parent(s)/guardian know that psychotherapy services are being provided to the child. The law allows for disclosure of the fact of psychotherapy services only with the permission of the client or if the practitioner determines that the minor is unable to manage his or her own treatment or care.

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THE LORD OF THE FLIES
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This new law requires that practitioners engage their minor clients in a discussion about the importance of involving and notifying their parent(s)/guardian and to document all attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian. Documentation in this regard must include the time the attempt was made, whether the attempt was successful, and/or the reason the practitioner deemed it inappropriate to contact the minor's parent/guardian, for example if the practitioner deems it detrimental to child's therapeutic progress. The new law requires that practitioners report to the minor's parents/guardian any communication made by the child of a clear and imminent threat to commit suicide. In addition, practitioners remain subject to the duty to warn statute, which was unaltered by the new law, and must also report such communications to the appropriate authorities.

"Minors over the age of 12 now hold the psychotherapist-client privilege and parents are no longer able to obtain copies of their children's mental health records by signing an authorization on their behalf so long as their children are 12 years old or older"

The practical implications of the new law remain unknown and practitioners may find themselves in a precarious spot with respect to the provision of psychotherapy services to minors ages 12 and up if they do not follow the statutory guidelines. We encourage practitioners to take time to review and become familiar with the requirements of the new law and to contact an attorney with any questions or concerns regarding implementation.

NOMINATION TIME

The Nomination Committee is seeking interested individuals to become members of the COAFCC Board of Directors. The next election cycle will be at the Spring Conference held on April 3, 2020. If you wish to nominate yourself or another COAFCC member, please contact the Nomination Committee Chair, Lenny Tanis at ldtanis@broomfieldlaw.com. Thank you!





A VIEW FROM THE BENCH

Caryn A. Datz
District Court Judge, 17th Judicial District

Autumn is here, and with autumn brings seasonal change and a period of transition. As we experience shorter days, cooler nights and the falling of leaves, we are reminded that change is in the air. In response, we adjust our schedules, look ahead, and plan for the days to come.

In reflecting on the work of the family court, I am reminded that the imagery and symbolism of autumn - its ripeness, beauty and tinges of sadness - play out before us in family law every day. Like the seasons, domestic relations cases often signal a shift from an old paradigm to a new one. With such change naturally brings a mixture of excitement, apprehension, and fear. For some, the transition sought is highly anticipated and joyful. For others, the matter represents a gloomy and dark time.

The judicial system, while imperfect, represents a system of change. Notably, over time, the family courts have adapted and ushered in much needed reform to better serve the public as its members navigate such difficult stages in their lives. The development of Child and Family Investigators, Parental Responsibilities Evaluators, Family Court Facilitators and Early Neutral Assessments are just a few of the services and tools implemented to help us improve our service to the community.

For the past year, I have had the honor of working in the domestic relations division in the 17th judicial district. Upon taking the bench, I quickly realized that family law is so much more than its misleading and derogatory moniker of “pots and pans.” It is important, challenging, and rewarding work that has profound effects on the lives of the individuals involved. At its core, domestic relations involve the determination of how people will organize and manage

a time of transition in their personal lives; whether through a dissolution of marriage or a child custody dispute. Whether you are a judge, attorney, mental health provider or self-represented litigant, the work involved requires resilience, patience and courage.

**Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.
I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should
grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.**

Emily Bronte, Fall Leaves, Fall

Courthouses are places to resolve conflict, provide resolution, and maintain stability. As professionals working within this system of change, we can apply the lessons of the seasons in how we approach this important work and most importantly, the people affected. Rather than increasing the fear surrounding the changes that come with any form of familial transition, we can help those involved to prepare and take steps to face the change in the following ways:

First, we can help by anticipating change. Domestic relations cases are predicated on transparency and open exchange of information.

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A VIEW FROM THE BENCH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Nevertheless, some parties would rather pretend that the case will not occur or progress if they do not participate or seek resources. While some may avoid providing required information, such a response only stymies progress and often leads to further skepticism and distrust. No party gains an advantage by withholding important information from the opposing party or the court. In my observation, the cases handled with the most successful results enjoy a transparent flow of information and ideas between the parties, with an eye towards issues that may arise in the future. Rather than addressing each conflict individually as it arises, successful resolutions anticipate other life-events and build-in resolution for future contingencies.

Second, we can help by encouraging and embracing change as part of life. I am impressed by the care and dedication exhibited by the professionals who work in family law. The work is demanding and emotionally draining, and yet practitioners advocate zealously, and treatment providers treat with compassion. Yet no matter how dedicated the professionals involved, following any case will be a family that needs to move forward under a new structure that a party may or may not agree with. Therefore, when possible, we should encourage litigants to maintain control over their lives by contemplating what will truly serve their and their children's best interests and honor all facets of their lives – their work, their schedule, their finances, and their separate family values. We should further encourage all those who appear in our family courts to gain the fundamental knowledge, tools and support to move forward and heal after their matter is addressed within the courtroom.

Third, we can help by communicating – more often, and more substantively. I have often felt perplexed by some of the issues brought before the court that open and honest communication could have resolved. This includes communication between not only litigants, but also between attorneys and other involved professionals as well. Between litigants, it is all too common to hear that two parents have not had a conversation in years and relegate co-parenting to an occasional electronic message. Between professionals, conferral is too often an after-thought or a box to check. Judges have an obligation and a responsibility to communicate their expectations to litigants and professionals through their orders and procedures. When form is placed over substance, little progress can be accomplished. Professionalism is not simply a buzzword or a slogan, but an enduring way of practice. Whenever issues can be raised and communicated, rather than avoided, less misunderstanding and confusion results.

With each interaction in and out of the courtroom, we can all play an important part in shaping the perspective of the individuals involved as they navigate through a season in their lives. As we enjoy the season of autumn and are reminded of all the change it represents, we can each decide of how we will contribute to the work within our family court system. We can all find new and enduring ways to remind all those involved, that change can be positively anticipated, communicated, and embraced.



Judge Datz serves as a District Court judge for the 17th Judicial District. She was appointed to the District Court bench by Governor Hickenlooper in August of 2018. A graduate of the University of Miami School of Law (2001), Judge Datz began her career as an Assistant Public Defender for the Office of the Public Defender in the 11th District of Florida. After relocating to Colorado, she served as a Deputy District Attorney and as a Chief Trial Deputy in Adams and Broomfield Counties. Most recently, Judge Datz served as a Chief Trial Deputy and Senior Deputy District Attorney in Boulder County. She is a 2017 graduate of the Colorado Bar Association Leadership Training (COBALT), has taught as an adjunct professor at the University of Colorado School of Law, and is an active member of several community organizations.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Through the generous donation of members, and proceeds from COAFCC's annual Silent Auction, we are able to provide a limited number of partial scholarships for the Chapter's two annual conferences, as well as full scholarships for the regional educational events, such as the NoCo and SoCo series of dinner speakers.

How to Apply for a Scholarship?

Please complete the application found on the COAFCC website under Scholarships. Your application must be received by the deadline date in the particular program announcement for which you are seeking scholarship; and you will be notified of the Scholarship Selection Committee's decision within seven days of the closing date.

How Many Scholarships Can an Applicant Receive?

An applicant may receive a maximum of two educational meeting full scholarships (e.g., NoCo or SoCo dinners), and one annual conference partial scholarship in any two consecutive year period.

What Are the Income Guidelines for Eligibility for a Scholarship?

Applicants who serve non-profit, "poverty law" organizations in family law; those in practice less than three years; as well as Court staff below judicial officer level; are automatically considered to meet the income guidelines. Other economic criteria listed on the submitted scholarship application are considered separately by the Scholarship Selection Committee.

Diversity Criteria Considered for Scholarships?

COAFCC fully endorses the diversity criteria described by the AFCC parent organization, to include age, gender, ethnicity, disability, culture/economic factors, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region of the state. The scholarship application also asks if there is anything else related to diversity that the applicant wishes the Committee to consider.

References Requested for Conferences?

The Committee requests the name and contact information for a professional reference for conference scholarship applications.



Please accept my sincere appreciation to the COAFCC Selection Committee for the generous scholarship to attend the Southern Colorado AFCC dinner and the annual COAFFCC conference in Breckenridge, CO. Both events provided a fantastic educational experience as well as the occasion to network with other professionals. I am excited about participating in future presentations that COAFFCC offers and am thankful for the opportunities that this organization provides.

Cecilia Wall

The presentations were very professionally done and I received so much helpful information. I will definitely be incorporating the new knowledge in my CFI practice. I also found the networking invaluable. Interacting with new and old friends certainly expanded my understanding of the field. I received some very useful feedback regarding CFI reports that will improve my work product in the future and allow me to better help the families and professionals I interact with. Once again, thank you!

Cheryl Hurst Page, CFI

Join a COAFCC Committee!

WE NEED YOU!



Membership & Outreach Committee

Recruits new members, tracks incoming and outgoing members, welcomes new members, and deactivates non-renewing members. Plans and implements programs in northern, southern, and western regions of the state

Program Committee

Plans and implements COAFCC conferences and annual meetings, and coordinates with other groups on joint conferences

Communication and Public Relations Committee

Tends to the many aspects of maintaining our website, publishing our newsletter and program brochures and communicating with our membership

Scholarship Committee

Sets guidelines for organizational funds to be used as scholarships (hardship, new members, events, etc.)

Outreach Committee

Works to organize and facilitate pop-up events and smaller conferences around the state

MEMBERSHIP/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Co-Chair: Deb Anderson

Co-Chair: Rebecca Pepin

Shelley Bresnick

Sharon Feder

Resa Hayes

Phillip Hendrix

Beth Lieberman

Laurie Mactavish

Patricia Riley

Robert Smith

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Co-Chair: Armand Lebovits

Co-Chair: Lenny Tanis

Marlene Bizub

Katie Hays

Melinda Taylor

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Chair: Robert Smith

Jamie Darr

Laurie Mactavish

Barbara Shindell

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Chair: Katie Hays

Deb Anderson

Resa Hayes

Beth Lieberman

Laurie Mactavish

Rebecca Pepin

Robert Smith

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Co-Chair: Laurie Mactavish

Co-Chair: Resa Hayes

Marlene Bizub

Julie Caputo

Jamie Darr

Terry Duffin

Ann Gushurst

Armand Lebovits

Beth Lieberman

Barbara Pevny

Sarah Quinlan

Barbara Shindell

Robert Smith

Jeanette Troncoso

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Lenny Tanis

Laurie Mactavish



COAFCC Advertising Opportunities

Newsletter Ads: The COAFCC Newsletter is e-mailed to hundreds of COAFCC members and professionals who work with children and parents and in the family court system. Advertising in the COAFCC Newsletter is an effective way to have your message received by the appropriate audience. In addition, the newsletter is accessible on our website.

Advertising Options and Pricing (prices listed are COAFCC member/non-member)

Full Page.....\$425/\$600

7" width x 9.25" height

Half Page.....\$300/\$450

7" width x 4.5" height

Quarter Page..... \$150/\$225

3.25" width x 4.25" height



Ad Submission Guidelines and Deadline

- ◇ Ads must be in image-ready JPEG format for display ads (pictures or logos included) or PDF format for type-only ads
- ◇ Email the JPEG or PDF file to April Freier at aprilfreier@hotmail.com
- ◇ Complete and submit the Advertising Agreement with your payment (April Freier will provide this to you)
- ◇ Advertising space is limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis
- ◇ No refunds are given for advertising due to the nature of print deadlines and the costs associated with layout changes
- ◇ Deadline to submit ads for inclusion in the Fall/Winter newsletter is October 1 and for the Spring/Summer newsletter April 1

Advertising Agreement:

COAFCC reserves the right to accept or reject, in its sole discretion, advertising based upon space limitations, appropriateness, timeliness or similar criteria. All advertising must meet the standards of COAFCC's Mission, Vision and Values, which can be found at our website: <http://www.coafcc.org>. Image-ready ads must arrive by publication deadlines. No refunds will be given for items that fail to arrive by the stated deadlines. Submission of a proposed advertisement implies acceptance of the terms listed herein.

Disclaimer: COAFCC does not independently verify the accuracy of any statements or claims regarding any advertised product or service and is not responsible for the contents of any advertisement appearing in our publications.