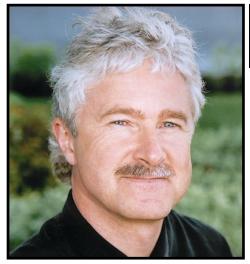




The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts Ontario Chapter

AFCC-O SPRING NEWSLETTER
Issue 19, March 2018





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear AFCC Ontario Chapter Members and Colleagues,

As the president of the AFCC-O, I want to highlight what an honour it is to serve alongside the strong and dedicated group of Directors on the AFCC-O Board, each of whom brings their own lens to the issues we face. My role is made that much easier by their assistance and input. With the current Board members, and interested volunteers, the Association is in good hands. Thank you also to our dedicated people who assist with administrative and bookkeeping tasks.

As I write this Spring message I look out my office window at the huge piles of snow remaining, and long for Spring and our next networking and outreach efforts, during which we will meet again. One of our enjoyable tasks this year will be to showcase the AFCC-O's history, covering the time before and after achieving "Chapter Status" with the AFCC International. This coverage will lead up to our 2018 10th anniversary Chapter celebrations. These messages will be released in our membership e-blasts as we build towards our "Celebration of Excellence" event in October 2018. Our plan is to show little "teaser" items to help advertise this event and provide a recap of our Chapter history, and move forward on outreach and membership efforts across the province. This will hopefully allow us to develop a timeline for the AFCC-O and a more detailed history for our Board website and Board of Directors' manual.

Although the new Board and I have only been in place since October 2017, we have been quite busy. We recently completed a **Strategic Planning Review** at our November 25, 2017 Board of Directors meeting with our consultant, Maria Sanchez-Keane. Ms. Sanchez-Keane completed our previous strategic plan and with her knowledge of the AFCC-O she has been extremely helpful in producing our *Strategic Directions for 2018 through 2021* which can be viewed on our website at www.afccontario.ca/about-us/.

As one can see from this strategic plan, the activities we have highlighted serve as a plan of action for moving forward over the next few years. We hope to grow our membership, organize further outreach events in various parts of the province, facilitate and share research (such as the current project on mediation that is underway), and help others make use of webinars available from the AFCC International. We also want to re-connect with those in mental health and other sectors such as child protection, youth justice, academia, and other communities of practice across the province, to emphasize the benefits of membership with the AFCC International and the AFCC-O. As we perform this outreach, it will be important also to mentor these new members and invite them to get involved on committees or our other initiatives.

Access to Justice will remain on our AFCC-O Board work plan, and Brian Burke (our Treasurer and President-Elect) is leading this effort on behalf of the AFCC-O. I take this opportunity to stress the need

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

for everyone to take every opportunity available to them to raise the importance of the Access to Justice initiative. Over the past few months, the AFCC-O participated in discussions for reforms on a federal and provincial level, and we are confident that our leadership role will help Ontario implement these necessary changes in both criminal and family court matters. We will also have the opportunity to further these discussions on the Access to Justice initiative in Washington at the AFCC International Conference in June 2018.

The AFCC-O 2018 Annual Conference Committee is very excited to announce that our keynote speaker is Dr. Michael Ungar of Dalhousie University, who will be presenting on the subject of Resilience in Youth. We are planning to offer a variety of workshops and diverse presentations as we receive proposals from professionals working to provide conference attendees with a full program of must see events!

As President of the AFCC-O, I am also currently interim Chair of our Communications Committee for the Chapter which manages our e-blasts, website and newsletter. This committee, like most of our committees, is looking for more members and new ideas. Fortunately, I have the benefit of being guided by the past Co-chairs and a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers. This newsletter is a result of their hard work and dedication. Our newsletter goes out to over 2600 individuals in Ontario, a much wider reach than our monthly membership e-blasts. We are always open to new ideas, new sponsors/advertisers, and new members to this committee for one edition or ongoing editions.

As the AFCC-O continues to grow and change, in order to remain current we are re-examining our website, Facebook, Twitter, and the use of other social media methods to reach out to our members and the public. Come join the fun and share your ideas!

Sincerely,

Dr. Daniel T. Ashbourne, C. Psych. President of the AFCC-O

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IN MEMORY OF THE HONOURABLE GEORGE TUCKER WALSH

The Honourable George Tucker Walsh was a pioneer in the growth and development of family law in Ontario.



A pioneer in the growth and development of family law in Ontario, Justice Walsh passed away on December 28, 2017, at the age of 92. The following article borrows from his obituary in The Globe and Mail.

"Justice Walsh graduated from Victoria College, University of Toronto with a BA, and from Osgoode Hall Law School with an LLB. Justice Walsh was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1950 and practiced law with his father, until the latter was appointed to the Supreme Court of Ontario in 1958. Justice Walsh was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1960 and continued to practice law, with an emphasis on family law."

In 1978, Justice Walsh was appointed to the Supreme Court of

Ontario where he was immediately put in charge of the Family Law Division. At the time, spousal support was still called alimony and a woman's entitlement to support depended on English law as it existed before Confederation. All divorces had to be heard in court and trials lasted weeks. There was an enormous backlog of cases waiting to be heard.

Justice Walsh, together with Justice Gertrude Speigel, was at the forefront of the work to simplify, expedite, and humanize family law. Gowns largely disappeared, and litigants, lawyers, and judges met informally. Discussions, offers, and settlement began to occur more frequently as family law belatedly entered the 20th Century.

"Known as the 'dean' of the family law Bar, Justice Walsh's philosophy was: resolution where possible; if not, timely adjudication. His objective was to reduce the cost of resolving family differences and issues, including the direct cost to the litigant and the indirect cost to the taxpayer, all of which had to be done without in any way reducing the quality or caliber of justice and the availability and timeliness of justice in the community." In his honour, the country's first family law moot competition, the Walsh Family Law Moot, was held in Toronto in 2013 and it continues to be held annually with attendance growing every year.



March 10,
2018 is our
Annual
Walsh
Family Law
Moot &
Negotiation
Competition!

As written in The Law Times,

"It is only fitting that the moot is named after former Justice George Walsh, a pioneer in family law. Walsh was the leader of the family law division of the Toronto region's Superior Court of Justice and very involved in family law reform and alternative dispute resolution. He developed a team approach to adjudicating family law cases that was the envy of every other jurisdiction. For example, he was a pioneer in early case management. He also helped establish the first mediation service at the Superior Court of Justice. It is only apt, then, that the establishment of a moot to try to encourage law students to choose family law would acknowledge Walsh's work."

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WALSH FAMILY LAW MOOT AND NEGOTIATION COMPETITION

The Walsh Family Law Moot and Negotiation Competition is named to recognize the outstanding contribution made by Justice Walsh to the development of family law in the province of Ontario.

The Negotiation Competition, initiated by the Superior Court of Justice, was added in 2015. The two competitions came together under the auspices of the AFCC-O in 2016. The AFCC-O is proud to host this annual event in honour of the late Justice George Walsh's legacy.



Justice Philip Clay, OCJ, AFCC-O Board Member

The Walsh Family Law Moot is a competitive moot for 2nd and 3rd year law students. The moot will require a factum with a page limit of 20 pages.

Judges: The moots will be judged by various members of the judiciary including Court of Appeal, Superior Court of Justice and Ontario Court of Justice judges, as well as senior family law practitioners.

Prizes: Awards and recognition will be given to the school with the highest cumulative points for both facta and oral arguments, and second highest cumulative score and oralist score. Awards will also be presented for the best written appellant and respondent team facta.

The Walsh Family Law Negotiation Competition is a competition for 2nd and 3rd year law students. Working in teams of two, using facts for each partner in a family law dispute, the law students will negotiate with opposing teams in three successive rounds of increasing complexity.

Judges: The events will be judged by various members of the judiciary including Superior Court of Justice and Ontario Court of Justice judges, as well as senior family law practitioners, in teams of three.

Prizes: Awards and recognition will be given to the teams for:

- 1. Best Negotiation Plans
- 2. Best Overall Negotiation Teams
- 3. Best Individual Students

While the family law moot allows law students to practice their advocacy skills in an appellate context, the negotiation competition allows them the opportunity to apply their dispute resolution skills to a realistic and compelling parenting dispute. Bringing the two competitions together has allowed participants to experience the full spectrum of services provided to family law litigants in one fabulous weekend!

The AFCC-O recognizes the importance of assisting our future Ontario lawyers by offering them the opportunity to collaborate with our diverse membership of lawyers, mental health professionals, judges and others who support families going through separation and divorce. To recognize and thank law students for their participation in the Walsh Family Law events, the AFCC-O offers a complimentary one year AFCC/AFCC-O membership to participating students.

The Walsh Family Law Moot & Negotiation Competition Rules and Regulations, and sponsorship information can be found at:
www.afccontario.ca/walsh-moot/

AFCC-O 10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE



The AFCC-O's "Celebration of Excellence" October 18, 2018

In 2008 the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts granted Ontario chapter status. We were the first provincial chapter in Canada; we are now one of two.

In 2018 we celebrate our Chapter's Tenth Anniversary! With over 400 members we are the second largest AFCC chapter in the world. We hosted the international conference in 2014 (with close to 1,000 attendees) and will host it again in May 2019 in Toronto.

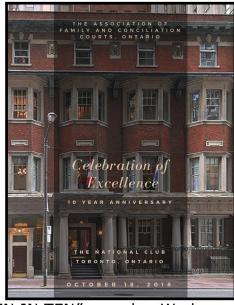
Our 2018 AFCC-O Membership monthly e-blasts have been taking us back to earlier days: we are sharing and highlighting our many Chapter achievements. Stay tuned for more as winter ends and we head into Spring and Summer!

On Thursday, October 18, 2018 we will host our Tenth Anniversary Celebration of Excellence Dinner! Taking place at the historic and elegant National Club in Toronto, the evening begins with a reception where you can mix and mingle with friends both old and new. We will then make our way down a short flight of stairs and into the grand Main Dining Room where guests will enjoy a splendid dinner as we reminisce about past glories and roast and toast (and sometimes both!) our colleagues.

To kick off our 10th Anniversary celebrations we announce our

"Award of Excellence in Family Justice"

A highlight of the evening will be the presentation of our "TEN IN TEN" awards. We have asked YOU, our members, to nominate the most influential practitioners from the rich multidisciplinary backdrop of professions that form our Ontario family justice world. Please take a moment to consider those individuals who have created a legacy, who have influenced your career, who have increased your understanding of the needs of families, who have contributed to your knowledge as a practitioner, or who have changed the landscape of the Ontario family justice system – and nominate them for an award! Nominations for up to TEN (10) recipients of this Award can be made by a member in good standing of the AFCC-O on the Nomination form.



Download our Award of Excellence in Family Justice Nomination form from our 2018 AFCC-O 10th Anniversary Conference webpage at:

www.afccontario.ca/2018-10th-anniversary-conference/

AFCC-O 10th AGM & ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The year was 2009 when we held our first AFCC-Ontario Annual Conference. The keynote speaker then was Dr. Jean Clinton, educating us (with wit, humour and erudition) on the teenage brain.



Fast forward to the present, and it seems like everything old is new again because the 2018 10th AGM & Annual Conference theme is "The Future of Youth: Moving Beyond Risk to Resilience".

Our keynote address will be delivered by world-renowned resiliency expert and magnificent speaker Dr. Michael Ungar. Join us to see how far we have come in the last ten years!

Dr. Michael Ungar

- Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience
- Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University
- World-renowned researcher on resilience
- Published 14 books (translated into five languages) and over 150 peer-reviewed scientific articles and book chapters
- Regularly appears on radio and television
- In addition to his research and writing, maintains a family therapy practice and a prevention program for street youth and their families
- Recipient of the Canadian Association of Social Workers National Distinguished Service Award in 2012

We have also revamped our Conference format a little bit this year with a call for proposals. We appreciate the incredible enthusiasm exhibited by so many of you, as evidenced by the <u>numerous</u> proposals we have received so far. Our Annual Conference Committee is keen on reviewing all your submissions, at which point the full agenda for the Annual Conference will be set. The Committee will have some difficult choices to make in that regard, but what a wonderful burden that is to have.



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AFCC-O 10th AGM & ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Finally, we are also delighted to announce that the AFCC's Executive Director, Peter Salem, will travel from the United States to Toronto to join us for our Tenth Anniversary Celebration of Excellence and also for our Annual Conference the next day. Let's show him how we do it here in Ontario!

But we have even more for you! On the afternoon of Thursday, October 18, immediately preceding the National Club reception and dinner, we are hosting our annual Pre-Conference Institute, "Supporting Adopted Youth to Maintain **Openness Connections with Birth Family and Communities**".

Openness in adoption is an integral part of permanency planning for children at risk, and we are all still in the "learning curve" stage as to what is most important in this regard and how best to implement it. Do not miss this wonderful opportunity to learn from various experts, including the Adoption Council of Ontario, the Office of the Children's Lawyer, and leading practitioners in this area of child welfare.

Plus the ever-popular New Professionals Group is working hard on putting together a New Professionals agenda for the same day that will incorporate the theme of resiliency into the challenging reality of new professional life "in the trenches".

Check our website regularly for program information as it becomes available.



Brian Burke, AFCC-O Board Member, Co-chair-Annual Conference Committee



Jennifer Suzor, **Annual Conference Committee**



Visit our 2018 AFCC-O 10TH Anniversary Conference webpage:

www.afccontario.ca/2018-10th-anniversary-conference/

to view details about our Celebration of Excellence, Pre-conference Institute and New Professionals events on October 18th; and our **Annual Conference on October 19, 2018.**

Registration will open in late April!

Consider our conference sponsorship and display table opportunities Contact bburke@epsteincole.com or jsuzor@familylawspecialist.ca



The Annual Conference committee will apply for accreditation with the Law Society of Ontario, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers as well as the American Psychological **accredited** Association, upon the finalization of the conference agenda.

Certificates of Attendance can be purchased with conference registration, and are provided after the program.

AFCC-O RESEARCH PROJECTS

Dr. Denise Whitehead of St. Jerome's University at the University of Waterloo, and **Dr. Rachel Birnbaum** of King's University College, Western **invite all Family Law Professionals to complete the following survey on "Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of Mediation Services in Ontario".**

Mediation has been part of court services in Ontario for many years. Yet, we know little about its impact and effectiveness. The purpose of this study is to understand the benefits and challenges of on-site and off-site mediation services as well as the use of private mediation services. This study is part of a larger study exploring mediation services—what works and what does not. We will be interviewing and conducting on-line surveys with mediators, lawyers, and family litigants (including those that have used mediation services and those who choose not to).

We are interested in hearing from you directly about these services and good practices in your jurisdiction to better understand the benefits and successes of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution process for families during separation and/or divorce.



The study is funded by the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts-Ontario, St. Jerome's University at the University of Waterloo and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canada.

Please follow the below link to participate in this voluntary and anonymous survey if you are:

- A MEDIATOR who provides family mediation services in Ontario; or
- (2) A **family law professional who REFERS** clients to family mediation services in Ontario

The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

https://tinyurl.com/famlawstudy

We appreciate that you are all busy professionals and kindly ask that you participate in this important initiative. The survey begins with a complete outline of the study and your rights as a participant. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee and through King's University College, Western. Results will be posted on the AFCC-O website when the study is completed.

Send us your suggestions for Future AFCC-O Research Projects

The AFCC-O Research & Policy Committee is organizing a research project that will begin in early 2019. Some previous projects included: The Ideal Family Court; Cross-Over Kids (Child Protection and Youth Justice); The Intersection of the Domestic Family Law System and the Child Protection System; and Supervised Visitation. These projects resulted in reports, publications, and multiple presentations; increased professional awareness, understanding, and collaboration; and several projects contributed to the development or revision of government policies and programs.

We are soliciting AFCC-O members and Ontario professionals for ideas for future research projects that encompass "Ontario-wide" problems with programs, policies, or laws related to the family justice process. The focus of proposed projects should be on increasing understanding of the Ontario context and proposing ideas to improve responses in the province. Our funding is limited and therefore we are pleased when our support can be combined with funding from additional sources. We prefer that research projects are completed within 8 to 18 months.

Please send your ideas to the Research Committee Chair, Professor Nick Bala at bala@queensu.ca by March 31, 2018.

Information about the AFCC-O's Research & Policy Projects can be found on our <u>Recent Initiatives</u>, and <u>Past Initiatives</u> webpages.

AFCC-O MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Justice Trousdale

Justice Anne Trousdale never thought of being a judge while she was in law school. As a law student, she dreamed of becoming the Official Guardian (now called the Children's Lawyer).

Originally from Toronto, Justice Trousdale earned her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Toronto, and went on to study law at Queen's University. She met her husband, Peter Trousdale, at one of the infamous Queen's Law "smokers". They married one week after her graduation.

Justice Trousdale was called to the bar in 1978 and worked as a lawyer at Lang, Michener, Cranston, Farquharson & Wright in Toronto. After a decade of protest and controversy, the Family Law Reform Act (1978) had just been passed. The goal of spousal equality was beginning to drive statutory reform, including the right to claim a division of family assets. It was an exciting time to begin a career in family law.

In 1980, Justice Trousdale and her husband moved back to Kingston and started their own practice, Trousdale & Trousdale. They raised three sons while practising a variety of different kinds of law, including family law, wills and estates, and real estate. Reflecting on the experience of working in a big firm, Justice Trousdale remarked, "We had to do everything!" She continued to focus on family law, and often represented children in contested custody/ access cases and child protection cases as a panel member of the Office of the Children's Lawyer. For more than ten years, Justice Trousdale also served as the Independent Chairperson in the Prison for Women, presiding over hearings for internal disciplinary offenses. Justice Trousdale reflected on the experience as an enlightening one; learning about the inmates' struggles gave her a newfound appreciation for how one's difficulties can be compounded by incarceration.

When Justice Trousdale began practising law, there were so few women in the profession that she was one of only a handful of female lawyers in Kingston. When the Attorney General of Ontario, Ian Scott, sent a letter to all women lawyers in the province who had been practising for ten years, encouraging them to apply for an appointment to the bench, it was the first time that Justice Trousdale had ever even considered it, as there were so few women judges at that time.

Justice Trousdale was appointed to the bench on November 22, 2005. Prior to her appointment she was involved with the Canadian Bar Association of Ontario and she served as President of the Frontenac Law Association. She is a member of the Ontario Family Rules Committee and has been involved with the AFCC-O Kingston group since its inception. Her dedication to advocacy was celebrated in 2014 when she was honoured with the Frontenac Law Association's Lou Tepper Award for distinguished service to the legal profession.

When asked why she chose to dedicate her professional life to family law, Justice Trousdale is insightful in her response, "Family law proceedings can be very difficult for the people involved. The things they care about most – their time with their children, decisions about their health and education, their property and their money – are all on the table, and nobody is at their best. I have always seen my job as a family lawyer and a judge as trying to do my best to help people and their families and children get through a very difficult time in their lives, so they can resume a different but hopefully happier life afterwards."

Erica Morassutti, B.A., J.D. Candidate

AGE OF PROTECTION - CYFSA LEGISLATION CHANGES
Carolyn Leach, Shuah Roskies, and Louise Vandenbosch

On January 1, 2018, the Ontario Youth, Child and Family Services Act was amended to increase the "age of protection" to include all children under the age of 18 years. Under these amendments, 16 and 17-year-olds who are in need of protection are now eligible for a full range of child protection services. A key change is the availability of a new voluntary agreement (a "Voluntary Youth Services Agreement" or "VYSA") for 16 and 17-year-old youth who require an out-of-home placement.

In the Spring of 2018, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* will be repealed and replaced by the *Child, Youth, and Family Services Act (CYFSA)*. In addition to the provisions related to 16 and 17-year-old youth, the new legislation will include provisions expanding the rights afforded to children and young people receiving services under the *Act*, provisions respecting supports and services to Indigenous children and families, changes to the "best interests" test and the test for access to Crown wards, and provisions related to adoption planning and openness orders. The *CYFSA* will also introduce changes to terminology; for example, replacing the term "Crown ward" with "child in extended society care".

The increase in the age of protection has dramatically changed the landscape of services and supports available for vulnerable youth and has required agencies serving youth to develop new systems and approaches. This article will briefly review the range of services now available to this cohort and highlight the roles that will be assumed by different agencies serving youth – including the children's aid societies, the Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL), the Provincial Advocate for Children & Youth (PACY), and child protection ADR service providers.

A children's aid society that is made aware that a youth may be in need of protection is required to investigate and assess the report. It is important to note that while the new legislation allows professionals and members of the public to report reasonable suspicions that a youth may be in need of protection (without exposure to legal action), the *duty to report* provision in the *Act* continues to apply only to matters regarding children under the age of 16. This scheme is intended to reflect the fact that a different approach is required to encourage an older youth's voluntary participation in services – an approach that respects their confidential relationships with trusted adults, but also allows them to access supports when needed.

If protection concerns are verified, a society may work voluntarily with youth and their families to address the protection concerns at home. However, if a society determines that the youth is in need of protection and cannot remain at home, then a range of other options must be considered, beginning with the least intrusive alternative. At this point, a society must make a referral to the OCL so that, where appropriate, the child may obtain legal advice about the different options. The society must also provide the youth with information about the PACY. This office has a mandate to provide an independent voice for children and youth receiving child welfare services and investigate their complaints.

If a youth cannot remain at home, a society must first explore whether the youth can be cared for by a relative, neighbour, or community member – perhaps under a kinship service or customary care agreement. If these less disruptive courses of action are not available, then a VYSA will be offered to the youth. A VYSA is an agreement between the society and the youth for services and supports to be provided to the youth. The living arrangements for the youth form part of this negotiated agreement, and can include foster care, group care, an apartment, a supported living program, or transitional housing. Other financial and social supports are also identified. A VYSA is a voluntary agreement, and the youth may end it at any time. A society can only terminate the agreement in very limited circumstances, such as where the youth refuses contact with the society, or cannot be located by the society after three months of reasonable attempts to locate the youth.

Notably, youth who have a VYSA in place on their 18th birthday will be eligible for the Continued Care & Support for Youth (CCSY) program, which offers financial and non-financial support through the society from age 18 to 21.

AGE OF PROTECTION - CYFSA LEGISLATION CHANGES

Temporary care agreements, which are made between a society and a parent, are now also available for 16 and 17 year olds.

If a VYSA has been offered by a society and refused by a youth, the society can initiate a protection application. Significantly, a 16/17-year old cannot be "apprehended" and brought to a place of safety without the youth's consent; rather, the society must seek a court order admitting the child into the society's care.

Prior to entering into a VYSA with a youth, societies must make a referral to the OCL. The OCL will offer the youth an opportunity to obtain legal advice about the available options and represent the youth if he or she elects to enter into a VYSA. The OCL must also be notified if the youth or the society is considering terminating a VYSA.

As of February 1, 2018, the OCL has received approximately 50 referrals for youths considering

VYSAs. A specialized panel of OCL lawyers has been created to provide service to this unique client group. Numerous issues have been raised in these referrals, ranging from immediate housing needs to longer-term support services. These youth may have experienced family breakdown as a result of conflict, a death, sexual identity issues, or many other issues. The OCL is working to rapidly develop best practices in representing these clients. In the short time that these agreements have been offered, they are engaging a cohort of youth who are looking for help but were previously unable to access assistance from a society.

If disagreements arise between a youth and a society, either in negotiating the initial plan or as the plan is carried out, the society is required to inform the youth about the available complaints process and about options to resolve these disagreements – including Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Family group conferencing, child protection mediation, and indigenous approaches to ADR are methods of ADR that are available across the province and are funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. ADR processes share many of the same guiding principles and can be helpful in encouraging the involvement and support of the larger extended network of family, kin and community, broadly defined, to assist the youth in decision -making. If the youth and the society disagree on a particular course of action, ADR may be used to bring the right people together to explore options and develop a plan.

"In the short time that these **Agreements** have been offered, they are engaging a cohort of vouth who are looking for help but were previously unable to access assistance from a society."

These new legislative changes reflect a modernized approach to working with youth in need of protection. Children's aid societies, ADR practitioners, OCL lawyers, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, and youth-serving community agencies look forward to continued collaboration to better support youth as they transition to adulthood.

Carolyn Leach has been in-house counsel with the Office of the Children's Lawyer since 1998. In addition to her own casework, she provides support and supervision to OCL lawyers in Toronto and Northern Ontario who represent children in custody/access and child protection cases. She also co-manages the child protection ADR program at the OCL. In March, Carolyn will begin a secondment to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Carolyn.Leach@ontario.ca

Shuah Roskies is in-house counsel with the Office of the Children's Lawyer and is coordinating legal representation for youth entering into a Voluntary Youth Services Agreement with a children's aid society. Shuah has also worked as counsel at Legal Aid Ontario and was most recently counsel with the Motherisk Commission. **Shuah.Roskies@ontario.ca**

Louise Vandenbosch is a social worker and mediator who focusses on conflict resolution in mediation (child protection, family and elder), family group conferencing and parent coaching/counselling. Louise can be reached at Wesbrook Mediation Services at louise@wesbrook.org

COMMUNITY CORNER

Improving Parent Support for Families Living with the Effects of FASD; and The Youth Local Poverty Reduction Fund

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol. Individuals with FASD typically show significant impairment in many areas of cognitive functioning, daily living skills, and affect regulation. FASD is complex and requires a multidisciplinary assessment. An individual diagnosed with FASD has a life-long disability with implications for educational planning, health, and societal expectations.

Unfortunately, individuals with FASD are over-represented in our justice system and child welfare agencies both as children-in-care and as struggling biological parents. The London Family Court Clinic (LFCC) has been working tirelessly with their community partners in the London region over the last decade to address the significant gap in service for those with suspected or diagnosed FASD and their families. Last year, the Ontario government released their provincial strategy which included the development of a FASD web-hub and enhancing parent support networks.

As we wait for the provincial strategy to unfold, the LFCC has already been making efforts to improve the caregiver support system through their longstanding facilitation of the FASD parent group. Most recently, the LFCC was granted a multi-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to complement their work in this area. Specifically, over the next 3 years the LFCC will launch, coordinate, and evaluate **FASD CONNECT** - a peer-mentorship based initiative that will connect parents/caregivers in need of support to two trained peer mentors with lived experience in the London area. Parent peer support models of service have been shown to reduce social isolation and increase confidence and coping strategies for those receiving the service. In addition, mentors in these programs benefit from an increased mutual support network, self-worth, and personal growth.

Caregivers of children with disabilities are more likely to report higher levels of depression and/or anxiety, more problematic family functioning, and a lack of social connection or support than parents raising typically developing children. Accessing professional services such as therapy and formal support groups can have significant associated costs, may not provide the flexibility families need, and do not reach at-risk parents who are stressed, exhausted, and not seeking formal clinical care. Specifically, in London diagnostic services, intervention, and other formalized supports for children with FASD and particularly their families are limited or not available. Over three years, FASD CONNECT will facilitate mentorship relationships for over 100 parents/caregivers in need of support through partnerships with community-based family centres and others.

FASD CONNECT will aim to:

- (1) Reduce social isolation and increase mutual support networks in both mentees and mentors, as previous studies have shown these benefits for both groups;
- (2) Improve outcomes for mentees including reduced stress, improved coping, prevention of distress, and increased parenting sense of competence; and
- (3) Improve outcomes for mentors including satisfaction of helping others, self-worth, confidence, and perspective of their own situation.

COMMUNITY CORNER



The LFCC is partnered with Western University as a 3rd party evaluator for these outcomes.

The FASD CONNECT project will include evaluation measures to ensure the program is continually adapted to meet the grant outcomes and the needs of the participants. London has a long history of collaboration in the area of FASD.

Having participants and partner agencies involved in the decision-making process, sustainability and capacity building at a grassroots level is the goal to ensure the intention of the project can continue following the life of the grant. Part of the project model includes creating capacity in participants as they move from mentees in one wave, to mentors in subsequent waves. The number of peers available to mentor are expected to increase exponentially with each wave and create a self-sustaining community of peer supporters.

The LFCC is involved with several ongoing projects to assist communities throughout Ontario. Another grant issued by the Ontario Trillium Foundation supports the **local Poverty Reduction Fund (LPRF)**, which ensures the LFCC can continue to support youth involved in the justice system, whose lives are impacted by poverty. Beginning in April 2018, the LFCC will design, deliver and evaluate trauma-informed interventions for youth. The project will provide trauma-informed counselling supports, ensure youth have access to much needed mental health programming, and provide training to support a community-based treatment response. Through outcome evaluation, the project will seek to measure the impact of the intensive trauma-informed interventions, and will provide insight into the effectiveness of these interventions - in particular their ability to enhance youths' readiness to engage in education, employment, and training activities.

For further information on the LFCC's projects, please visit their website at: www.lfcc.on.ca/about/projects/



Dr. Kimberly Harris, C. Psych, LFCC Director of Assessment Services

Dr. Harris is a registered clinical and forensic psychologist in the province of Ontario and currently works at the LFCC. She has a diverse workload that includes assessment and consultation for youth and their families involved in the justice system addressing issues such as mental health, violence risk, parenting capacity, and custody and access. Dr. Harris has provided expert witness on Family Court matters over the years and engages in teaching and training on a range of forensic issues. Dr. Harris also provides intervention to children and youth who are in conflict with the law and families involved in custody disputes and provides leadership for a number of community collaborations related to high conflict custody disputes and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

The AFCC-O provides an extensive list of resources for families, and professionals on our Resources webpage, divided into the following areas of support:

AFCC Parent Website
 Separation and Divorce
 For Children & Parents
 Parenting Plans & Communications Tools
 Child Welfare
 Domestic Violence
 Child Abductions
 Mediation & Counsellors/Therapists
 Community Resources
 High Conflict Forums in Ontario
 Child and Spousal Support Information
 Court and Legal Services
 Other Government Resources & Information
 Legislation
 Alcohol & Drug Abuse Treatment

AFCC-O AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS; AND BOARD MEMBER APPLICATIONS



The Nicholas Bala Award for Excellence

The Nicholas Bala Award is an annual award granted to a student enrolled in or recently graduated from a graduate level program in social work, joint social work/law or law (LL.B. or JD), psychology and/or medical school (psychiatry). The award includes \$1,000.00 and free registration at our AFCC-O Annual Conference.

The submission deadline is **May 1st** of each year.

For further information on previous award recipients, and to download application forms please visit our website at:

www.afccontario.ca/awards/

The deadline to apply for a scholarship to attend the AFCC-O's Tenth Annual Conference on October 19, 2018 is May 15, 2018

The AFCC-O scholarship recipients are not the only beneficiaries of AFCC-Ontario and AFCC International scholarship funds. Colleagues and courts in their communities, as well as children and families enmeshed in conflict, also benefit. Scholarship recipients take advantage of networking opportunities and state-of-the-art training that are the hallmark of all AFCC conferences. Scholarship recipients include parenting coordinators,

child custody evaluators, court services personnel, social workers, lawyers, mediators, graduate students and others who work with children and families.



Visit our website to view scholarship applicant criteria, and to download scholarship application forms at:

www.afccontario.ca/afcc-conference-scholarships/

The AFCC-O is Accepting Board of Director Applications **SEIZE THE MOMENT -TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN OUR BOARD!**

We are looking for interested AFCC-O chapter members to join our Board as of October 2018. The appointment to our Board is for a three year term with the option of a second three year term. Previous committee work with AFCC-O is an asset. We meet five times a year; a combination of telephone conference calls and in-person meetings, including the Annual General Meeting which occurs on the day of the Annual Conference. The majority of our work is done through various Board committees and working groups. Further information is noted on our

Application Form, or you can contact any Board member for a personal conversation!

Our Board composition reflects the multidisciplinary mandate of the AFCC: including lawyers, judges, mental health professionals, mediators, academics, social works and others working with families and children in the family justice system.

Submit your application by June 30, 2018

Download our AFCC-O Board Application Form

AFCC AND AFCC-O MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

AFCC membership includes:

- A subscription to the *Family Court Review*, quarterly journal with full access to archives dating back to 1963!
- Access to an online membership directory of over 4,800 colleagues worldwide (don't forget to login to the members section of the AFCC website at www.afccnet.org to update your member profile).
- AFCC eNews monthly electronic newsletter.
- Parenting Coordination listserv of AFCC members.
- Special member discounts to attend AFCC Conferences, training programs and publications.

DID YOU KNOW... The AFCC has 21 chapters, only one other in Canada (Alberta), and the AFCC-O is the second largest AFCC chapter to California in terms of membership! AFCC-O members are eligible to receive discount pricing to attend our annual conference, seminars and special events. Check our events calendar at this link: www.afccontario.ca/calendar/



Are you a member of the AFCC who would like to join the Ontario Chapter?

www.afccnet.org/ Chapters/ JoinaChapter

AFCC-O members have access to the new "members only" section of our website. This section contains presentations from past AFCC-O conferences, as well as links to valuable resources and articles.

AFCC-O Communities of Practice

Throughout Ontario, the AFCC-O is working with professional groups in different communities. For example, Standing AFCC-O Sub-Groups in the Kingston and South West Ontario; and High Conflict Forums in Hamilton, London, Toronto, York, and Ottawa. Most recently we traveled to Thunder Bay to meet with professionals working with families in the justice system in North Western Ontario. Through our Membership Committee we are working on development of a webinar schedule, and long distance plan to deliver education programs.

Kingston: This group regularly hosts meetings, generally a panel representative of the multi discipline nature of AFCC-O, followed by audience discussion. The catchment area includes Kingston, Belleville, Perth, Brockville, Cobden and Napanee. Download "Negotiating the Family Justice Maze", or a Kingston regional resource list of services for separating and divorcing parents. For information on the "AFCC-OK" Working Group please email kingstonafcco@gmail.com.

South West Ontario: Round Table dinner meetings are held quarterly in Windsor for the professionals in the Sarnia, Chatham, Windsor, St. Thomas and London-Middlesex area. Organized to reflect current topics (access to justice, high conflict, dispute resolution options to name a few) AFCC-O has partnered with Bridging Family Conflict and Jennifer Suzor to deliver these programs. For information on this group contact juzzor@familylawspecialist.ca.

High Conflict Forums: Many AFCC-O members support the efforts of various High Conflict Forums across the province through dialogue, information sharing, trainings, research, and/or consultations.

For more information visit our **Standing AFCC-O Sub-Group** webpage

As a member of the AFCC-O you will receive regular notices of upcoming events offered by these groups. If you are interested in setting up an event in your area, whether one time or regularly, we can assist you. Please contact Dr. Jay McGrory and Jennifer Suzor, Co-chairs of our Membership Committee by sending an email to info@afccontario.ca.

FILM REVIEW



Avant Que De Tout Perdre / Just Before Losing Everything (2013) (France)

Avant Que De Tout Perdre, an Academy Award nominated short film, chronicles Miriam and her children on the day they attempt to leave her abusive husband and the children's father, Antoine. Miriam's plan is covert, so much so that her own family is not aware. Only her children seem to be in on the plan – one which depends on precision and deception in order for them to get safely away.

The film opens as Julien, the couple's young son, leaves the family's quaint rural French home. Dutifully saying goodbye to Sally, the family dog, Julien seems to be on his way to school. However, as he reaches road end, he heads in the opposite direction of the other children, toward an unknown location. The plan is almost immediately derailed when he is stopped by his teacher as she drives by, asking him where he is going. Without hesitation, Julian offers an excuse – perhaps a learned skill from growing up in a household where interrogation is the norm. There is a moment of relief as the teacher believes Julien, and the fragile plan remains alive. The incident is but the first of

many potential roadblocks which could expose their efforts.

As Julien awaits his mother under a bridge, he plays by the river side. He places three stones on a raft and sets it adrift, perhaps imagining he, his sister, and his mother safely sailing away. As if channeling the vengeful godlike rage of his father, he hurls a rock and sinks the makeshift vessel, foreshadowing the perils of their task.

Having collected Julien and her daughter Josephine, Miriam must make a final stop at the store at which she is employed. Most of her co-workers know little of what is happening, but over the course of her visit they become all too aware of the life Miriam and her children endured in the family home, witnessing not just the physical evidence, but hearing Julien's frighteningly calm disclosure of his father's behaviour.

As the day progresses, Miriam can almost see their escape realized. However, as if by cruel fortune, Antoine arrives at the store, asking to speak with her. Miriam realizes she must now confront him and convince Antoine that all is normal. The realization of what their mother must do proves overwhelming for the children, and threatens to push her colleagues to the point of revoking their support. Miriam maintains a steeled composure, but not everything is in her control, and the eventual exposure of her intentions seems all but imminent.

The film is 30 minutes of growing tension. The suspense builds with every scene as Miriam's plan comes closer to fruition, and the viewer vicariously experiences the stress of every step towards a possible freedom, with the outcome of the effort not revealed to the viewer until the final second of the film.

Available on I-Tunes

<u>www.itunes.apple.com/us/movie/avant-que-de-tout-perdre-just-before-losing-everything/id805616890</u>



Jared Norton, MSW, RSW, Acc.FM, AFCC-O Newsletter Committee



The Social Organization of South Asian Immigrant Women's Mothering in Canada

Dr. Ferzana Chaze, professor of Applied Health and Community Studies at Sheridan College (Toronto), recently authored The Social Organization of South Asian Immigrant Women's Mothering in Canada (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017). The practical impact of this social science research is important as it closes the research gap and answers a critical question posed by many immigrants and their service providers: "What is it about the post-migration settlement process that makes many South Asian women carry out their mothering work in ways that were not in harmony with what they believed to be good mothering?"

Life experiences of Canadian South Asian Immigrant women Using institutional ethnography - a form of social inquiry created by sociologist Dorothy Smith as her method, Dr. Chaze explores the mothering work of South Asian women who have resided in Canada for less than five years. Dr. Chaze's work is based on in-depth interviews with South Asian immigrant mothers about their everyday experience, therefore recognizing the "authority of experience" - the interviewed women. Consequently, Dr. Chaze's research enhances the reader's understanding of exactly what happens when these immigrant mothers are settling in Canada, various stressors and coping strategies used, the role of their culture and its impact on their mothering. This work is a powerful tool for all service providers working with or intervening in the lives of South Asians in Canada, in that it decodes South Asian immigrant parenting. In a nutshell, this research breaks down an abstract complex term of "settlement needs and challenges of South Asian immigrant women" into a concrete, actionable framework.

Why "Mothering"

no parallel study that has looked into the everyday lives of Canadian understood immigrant mothers, their experiences from inside out, and simultaneously analyzed the impact

of external factors such as immigration policies, systemic issues, and settlement challenges, on their mothering practices. This research brings together the personal lives of South Asian mothers, cultural norms of South Asian parenting, systemic and policy overviews, and their inter-relations and impacts from a social work perspective. Dr. Chaze acknowledges her study to be a feminist research project. The questions raised by the author are rooted within frameworks of social justice and inequality, and the goal of her research is to facilitate social change.

The chapter on Mothering Work is particularly revealing as it has in-depth descriptions of immigrant South Asian women's work related to cooking, caring for children, housework, teaching children culture and religious values, and protecting children. The case study in this chapter focuses on immigrant mothers who are victims of domestic violence and how it impacts their mothering.

The honest conversations with mothers on what it means to transmit culture to their children touch on many sensitive topics such as: placing limits on children's potential sexual activities, dating, wearing a head scarf (hijab) or face covering (niqab), physical discipline by the parent, etc. The changes in mothering work after immigration to Canada are also noted in detail. Of further interest is Dr. Chaze's literature review, which covers topics such as merits and demerits of co-sleeping, the Ontario Children's Aid Society's response to this issue, and the child welfare sector's interest in and disregard of aboriginal parenting practices.

The Social Organization of South Asian Immigrant Women's Mothering Work FERZANA CHAZE Dr. Chaze's standpoint in itself makes the study valuable, as there is

.../continued on page 18

BOOK REVIEW

South Asian cultural context

Dr. Chaze's discussions about South Asian cultural context, traditions of mothering, analysis of changing patterns in families, and the impact of migration are particularly fascinating. She notes that the mother is not acknowledged as the sole individual responsible for raising the children, as this responsibility is often shared by members of the extended family. A relatively new development in South Asian immigrant families is the concept of the nuclear family, in which the mother is tasked with the physical care and development of the child, though involvement of the larger family is expected and encouraged. Dr. Chaze notes that migration significantly alters the parenting/mothering dynamic, shifting child rearing from a collective responsibility to an individualized one. Through immigration, the family loses its traditional sources of support, and the responsibility of care and development of the child falls even more firmly on the mother. Thus, she makes the case that in the context of immigrant South Asian women, the term "mothering" is appropriate, but the work of "mothering" is shaped and carried out within larger institutions of family, community, religion, and the institution of motherhood which seeks to control women and their mothering work (Rich, 1986).

The role of religion and culture

The discussion of the role of religion and culture in South Asian immigrant mothering is particularly compelling. The book makes an interesting commentary on the ways in which religion is often meshed with culture, and how child-rearing practices are prescribed by ancient religious text such as Smritis and the Quran in the predominant religions of the region such as Hinduism and Islam. Cultural preferences for a male child and cultural practices such as dowry are also discussed.

Different features of the family

This book compares the concept of "family" across cultures, contrasting the Standard North American Family (SANF) (white, middle class, nuclear and two parents) with the particular features of the South Asian immigrant families - which were rooted in very different social, economic, political, and historical processes. The North American mothering discourse emphasizes raising an autonomous and independent child, while the South Asian discourse on mothering discourages this.

Immigration policy, feminization of migration in Canada

This book examines what the implications of Canadian immigration and settlement policy are on immigrant mothers' mothering work. It further examines how these immigration policies are driven by the market economy and shaped by neoliberalism, mass migration, colonial history, and larger structures of race, class, and gender.

Dr. Chaze discusses important immigration trends such as the "feminization of migration," where female immigrants have outnumbered male immigrants entering Canada. The increase in the number of female immigrants entering Canada as economic immigrants, or as spouses or dependents of economic class immigrants, now make up a fifth of the total female population in Canada. Migration is expected to provide a better life and opportunities for these women, but it also exposes them to new vulnerabilities resulting from their precarious/dependent immigration status.

Why this research is important

Studies such as **The Social Organization of South Asian Immigrant Women's Mothering in Canada** should move beyond academia and change people's knowledge, understanding, and attitudes towards these social issues. This research fills a gap in the literature in relation to immigrant mothers and their settlement experiences and highlights the need to revise governmental policies such as immigration, housing, employment, child welfare, and other policies that negatively impact newcomer women and families, and warns that failure to do so would continue to marginalize these women in Canadian society.

References:

Chaze, F. (2017). The Social Organization of South Asian Immigrant Women's Mothering in Canada. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Rich, A. (1986). Of woman born: Motherhood as experience and institution. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.



Archana Medhekar, B.Sc., LL.M., is a Certified Family Law Specialist and Accredited Family Mediator, practising family law in Toronto, ON. Archana is also a member of our AFCC-O Newsletter Committee. You can reach her by e-mail at: amlaw@amlaw.ca.

CANARIES IN THE COAL MINE: PETS AND FAMILY VIOLENCE Hayley Glaholt

"A single woman entered the shelter; she had 3 dogs who were being taken care of by a neighbor while she was seeking safety with us. She came in and was hiding from her abuser, and was working on a restraining order to keep him away. Her plan was to return home once it was safe and she had the RO. Her abuser was harassing her by phone; he would call and threaten her that if she did not go home he would hurt the dogs. She was worried every day that he would find out where the dogs were. After being in the shelter only four days, she returned home because her neighbor called and told her that her abuser had found and taken her dogs. At our last contact with her she only had 1 dog left; he had killed 2 of them."



"A mother called the shelter seeking help for herself and two children. When shelter staff showed up at the meeting location, the family was waiting for her with a pregnant dog. The mother would not come into shelter without her dog because he had already said if she left he would kill the dog and all the puppies. Because we are not able to house animals at this time, we could not bring her and the kids to shelter. She refused to surrender her dog to the animal shelter for safekeeping because she would not be able to get her out again. She chose to stay on the street rather than leave the animal that had protected her from her abuser. ¹

The above quotes reveal an aspect of domestic violence that is rarely acknowledged - animal maltreatment within the context of intimate partner violence (IPV). As abusers seek to create and maintain power and control over their victims, they will often use their victim's love for a pet to their advantage. Threats of violence, or acts of violence, against animals are a highly effective means of controlling and manipulating their victims.

Recent research conducted by Dr. Amy J. Fitzgerald, Associate Professor of Criminology and member of the Animal and Interpersonal Abuse Research Group (AIPARG) at the University of Windsor, sheds light on the depth and extent of this issue. ² Dr. Fitzgerald conducted a survey of domestic violence shelters across Canada, focusing in particular on the co-occurrence of animal maltreatment and IPV. Her results are alarming. Of pet-owning women staying at Canadian domestic violence shelters:

89.1% had experienced some form of pet abuse. The most common forms were: threatening to get rid of a pet, scaring or intimidating a pet, hitting a pet, and throwing an object at a pet. The most common forms of severe abuse were injuring, killing, breaking bones, and drowning a pet.

56% delayed leaving their abuser due to fear for their pet's safety.

47% said it was "likely" or "extremely likely" that they would have left earlier if they could have taken their pet to shelter with them.

1/3 considered returning to their abuser because he had their pet.

One of Dr. Fitzgerald's more sobering findings is this: "Women who reported frequent/severe animal abuse were significantly more likely to report more frequent and severe IPV (particularly psychological, physical, and sexual abuse) ... [Further,] women who reported little or no animal abuse were least likely to report severe forms of IPV, even compared to those without pets." In other words, pets are the canaries in the coal mine. If they are being severely and frequently abused, so too are the human victims. If they are not being abused, then the human-on-human abuse is usually less severe.

CANARIES IN THE COAL MINE: PETS AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

The relationship between pet maltreatment and IPV fits within a broader field of research focused on "the link". Here, "link" refers to the frequent co-occurrence of domestic violence, child abuse, animal abuse, and elder abuse, within the context of family violence. Where there is one form of abuse, there are usually others, and animal abuse is usually just the "tip of the iceberg". Phil Arkow, Co-ordinator of the National Link Coalition (USA), puts it succinctly: "When animals are abused, people are at risk." 3

As professionals working with families on a daily basis, it is vital that we take seriously the link between domestic violence, animal abuse, child abuse, and elder abuse. If we hope to serve families in the most effective way possible, we must do our best to understand the multiple and varied ways in which abusers assert power and control. It is important to recognize that abuse does not abide by sector boundaries: Children's Aid officers ought to be aware of the condition of the animals in a child's home, just as OSPCA cruelty investigators ought to be aware of the condition of elders and children when responding to a cruelty call. Communication across sectors, and an awareness of where to report all forms of abuse (be it the abuse of women, children, animals, or the elderly), will allow us to address family violence in a more holistic manner.

With that in mind, here are some steps we can take to better serve the families we work with:

Ask about animal abuse, and look for it. Batterers will often go to great lengths to hide their behaviour from outsiders, but this is not always the case with their abuse of animals. Survivors of IPV and child abuse are sometimes more willing to talk about animal maltreatment than abuse directed at themselves. This can open up a larger dialogue about family violence and safety planning.

<u>Know where to report animal abuse</u>. Ensure that police take animal cruelty seriously, as it is a crime in itself, and is often a "gateway" crime leading to other forms of violence.

<u>Familiarize yourself with "link" resources in your community</u>. Link Coalition Toronto runs a SafePet program, through which the pets of victims of domestic violence are fostered while the women stay at Toronto-area shelters. A similar program is offered in Ottawa, through SafePet Ottawa.

<u>Spread the word</u>. Once you begin talking about "the link", you will be amazed at how many lightbulbs you see going on over people's heads! The co-occurrence of these forms of abuse seems obvious once you are aware of it, but often people will not come to that conclusion unless you make the explicit connection for them.

Dr. Hayley Rose Glaholt is an Accredited Family Mediator in Toronto, and a member of our AFCC-O Newsletter Committee. She is also the co-founder and Executive Director of Link Coalition Toronto. She can be reached at info@hgmediation.com. For additional resources and research, please visit Link Coalition Toronto www.linktoronto.org or the National Link Coalition www.mationallinkcoalition.org.

¹Both quotes are from the Family Services of Tulare County Shelter Animal Survey for April 2015-March 2016 (California), as cited in the National Link Coalition's August 2017 *Link Letter*.

² The Intersection of Animal Maltreatment and Intimate Partner Violence in Canada: Findings from Recent and Ongoing Research", presented at the Canadian Violence Link Conference, Ottawa, 2017. Fitzgerald used the Partner's Treatment of Animals Scale (PTAS) to measure animal maltreatment. The PTAS categorizes maltreatment into five key areas: emotional abuse (eg. confining pet in small space for extended time), threats to harm (eg. threatening to get rid of pet to make you do something), physical neglect (eg. refusing to feed pet), physical abuse (eg. hitting pet), severe physical abuse (eg. breaking a pet's bones).

³National Link Coalition website, "FAQ: How are animal abuse and family violence linked?". Jan. 30-18.

ADULT CHILDREN OF DIVORCE AND ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



The Adult Children of Divorce DVD was created by a working group of the AFCC-O and launched for professional education purposes at a Round Table in Windsor in November 2015.

In the last three years we have loaned the DVD for use in lawyer and judge education in British Columbia, to the Alberta Chapter, and within the province of Ontario to various groups of mental health professionals, judges and lawyers in many cities such as London, Windsor, Toronto, Peel, Newmarket, and Kingston.

The DVD contains a number of poignant one-on-one interviews with adult children of divorce, followed by professional interviews on questions related to working with families and children. Most frequently shown during meetings of multidisciplinary professionals working with families, the program is an education opportunity as well as a tool in the important discussion of how children are impacted by separation and divorce.

In September 2017 Board members Dr. Dan Ashbourne, Brian Burke and Justice Gerri Wong, together with Katherine Kavassalis of the OCL, Mary-Anne Popescu of OAFM and Kathleen Chapman of Mediation North, took the DVD on the road to Thunder Bay for Membership outreach in the community and with the Lakehead University Law School.

Community Programs

The AFCC-O has developed several Community Programs to assist in membership outreach, education and development. They provide local communities of practice, professional associations, and new groups with a creative way to network and learn with and from colleagues in their areas.

We invite you to host an AFCC-O sponsored event. We can connect you with AFCC-O members in your area or provide guidance through a Membership Committee member. Invite AFCC-O members and other professionals in your community to attend. We are able to provide a subsidy and printed resource material for your event.

Programs currently available include: Adult Children of Divorce; How to Build a Thriving Practice, Prevent Complaints and Feel Rewarded; and Board member involvement in local educational events.

Programs we are developing include:

- After-work meetings in a collegial and relaxed atmosphere, where an assembled group of multidisciplinary professionals can discuss various topical issues and initiatives, share insights, and network.
- Webinars have been immensely successful at the AFCC International level, so stay tuned for the launch of the AFCC-O's webinars coming soon.
- An update of the multi-day program in Child Protection Law, in collaboration with the Law Society of Ontario.

For further information on current programs and ones we are developing visit our Community Programs webpage at

www.afccontario.ca/community-programs, or contact Dr. Jay McGrory via email info@afccontario.ca

THE LEGACY OF JUSTICE JOHN VANDUZER

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our Ontario chapter it is appropriate to reflect upon the history of the AFCC in Ontario before 2008. Family law professionals from Ontario were instrumental in the growth and development of the AFCC.

In 1983 the Honourable Justice John VanDuzer became the first Canadian president of the AFCC International. Throughout his career Justice VanDuzer distinguished himself as a tireless advocate for children and families. Justice VanDuzer was instrumental in the formation of the first integrated federal provincial family court, the Unified Family Court of Hamilton-Wentworth.

The AFCC International presents the Justice John E. VanDuzer Distinguished Service Award each year at their annual conference awards luncheon. This award recognizes outstanding contributions and/or achievements by members of the AFCC. Two other Ontario presidents of the AFCC, Justice George Czutrin and Justice Emile Kruzick, have previously won this award.

Justice VanDuzer's legacy is also recognized by way of a scholarship. The John VanDuzer Scholarship Award for Family Law was created in his memory to be given annually for a paper on a family law subject by a student at an Ontario law school. This intended scholarship is to



encourage family law students and the award includes a \$2,000 honorarium.

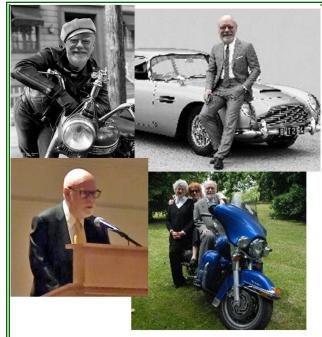
In August, the 2017 winner of the Award was the University of Ottawa law school's Kayliah Miller. Ms. Miller's paper, Canada's Mother-Child Program and Incarcerated Aboriginal Mothers: How and Why the Program is Inaccessible to Aboriginal Female Offenders, examines Correctional Service Canada's Mother-Child Program, which allows women to apply to have their young children live with them in prison while they serve their sentences. Ms. Miller demonstrates that while the program has the potential to positively impact Aboriginal families in ways that accord with the best interests of the child, it is particularly difficult for Aboriginal women to access. She calls for Correctional Service Canada to re-evaluate their current policies, procedures, and criteria. Ms. Miller's paper will be published soon in the Canadian Family Law Quarterly.

The photo above shows past winners (from left to right) Johanna Hunt, Ilana Arje-Goldenthal, Kayliah Miller, Christine Doucet, and Noel Semple together with a portrait of Justice VanDuzer. Other winners over the years include: Sarah Whitmore (2010), Catie Fenn (2011) Jessica Lee (2013), and Jaclyn Sopik (2014).



Justice Philip Clay, OCJ, AFCC-O Board Member

ANNOUNCEMENTS



THANK YOU JUSTICE PERKINS AND SUPPORTERS!

Over the course of more than 40 years Justice Craig Perkins has been in so many ways a leader and highly respected member of the Ontario family justice community – including playing an instrumental role in establishing our dear Ontario Chapter of the AFCC.

In the Fall of 2017, a gala dinner event was held in Vaughan to celebrate Justice Perkins' retirement from the Superior Court of Justice. Attendees who wished to give a gift to Justice Perkins to celebrate his retirement were asked instead to make a donation in lieu of their gift, with those donations then being paid over to a charitable organization of his choosing. At the gala it was announced that Justice Perkins had requested that all donated amounts be directed to the Ontario Chapter of the AFCC!

We are delighted to announce that over \$1,500.00 was donated to the AFCC-O! We are exceedingly grateful to all those who gave and especially to the Honourable Craig Perkins; or "Craig" as we can now call him (he now works as a mediator and arbitrator in Toronto).



Brian Burke, AFCC-O Board Member

UPCOMING BOOK RELEASE

Managing Ethical and Legal Dilemmas: Critical Thinking in Social Work Practice MICH. MODEL STRUCK RACHEL SERNBAUM CRAC H. SIGUROSCH THOMSON REVIEWS

Managing Ethical and Legal Dilemmas: Critical Thinking in Social Work Practice

Rachel Birnbaum and Craig W. Sigurdson

Publish Date February 28, 2018

"This text is written for social work practitioners and students, both undergraduate and graduate, as a guide to understanding and deconstructing the often complex interaction between ethics and the law. The text encourages an appreciation of the complexity that surrounds ethical decision-making and provides the theoretical basis for the articulation of thorny decisions in contemporary practice."

For further details and to order this book visit:

http://deskcopy.thomsonreuters.ca/product-detail/managing-ethical-and-legal-dilemmas-critical-thinking-in-social-work-practice

AFCC & AFCC-O UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 10: Walsh Family Law Moot & Negotiation Competition Toronto, ON
- March 14: AFCC Webinar, Evidence-Informed Approach to Alienation
- March 23: AFCC-O, Suzor Family Law & Bridging Family Conflict full day program, Settlement Focused Practice: Resolving Conflict Efficiently for Families
 – Windsor, ON
- **April 10: AFCC Webinar, Stepping-up Parenting Plans**
- May 15: AFCC Webinar, A Safer Approach to Parenting Arrangements
- June 6 9: AFCC 55th Annual Conference (International), Compassionate Family Court Systems: The Role of Trauma-Informed Jurisprudence Washington, D.C.
- June 20: AFCC Webinar, Evaluating Substance Abuse
- October 18: AFCC-O New Professionals, Pre-Conference Institute, and the AFCC-O 10th Chapter Anniversary Celebration of Excellence Evening reception The National Club, Toronto, ON
- October 19: AFCC-O 10th AGM & Conference, *The Future of Youth: Moving Beyond Risk to Resilience* Toronto Reference Library, Toronto, ON
 - Visit our website <u>Events Calendar</u> to view upcoming event details for the above AFCC, and AFCC-O professional training.

Continuing education credit information provided when available.



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Rethinking Parent Child Contact Problems & Providing Resources for Families and Professionals

Overcoming Barriers Resources www.overcomingbarriers.org

- * Overcoming Parent-Child Contact Problems: Family Based Interventions for Resistance, Rejection, and Alienation. Published by Oxford University Press. Edited by Drs. Abigail M. Judge and Robin M. Deutsch. Available on Amazon.
- * An 11-module online training entitled *High Conflict Coparenting: Interventions for Children's Alignment and Resistance* offered in collaboration with William James College for mental health professionals and including segments for attorneys and judges. Registration Open.
- * Family Camp 2018 scheduled for July in Vermont. Applications are open.

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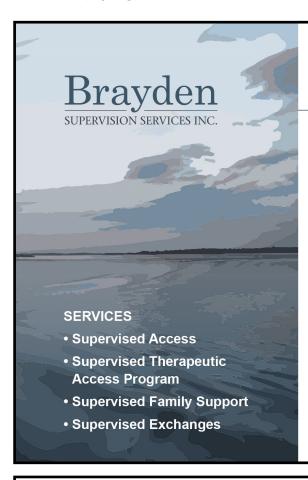
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- Visit our expanded "members-only section" to view past conference presentations.
- You can also view past issues of the AFCC-O newsletters and find out about our committees and working groups, research projects, Access to Justice initiatives, and more.

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