



**ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY
AND CONCILIATION COURTS**

AFCC's Online Training Program

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Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations

A 28-hour online training program for professionals interested in parenting plan evaluations.

March 11-14 and March 18-20, 2024

Training Team

Chioma Ajoku, JD, PhD, ABPP

Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP

April Harris-Britt, PhD

Kathleen McNamara, PhD

Terry Singh, PhD, ABPP

AFCC is the premier interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

The Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations

An expanded 28-hour online training program for professionals interested in parenting plan evaluations.

March 11-14 and March 18-20, 2024

This comprehensive parenting plan evaluation (PPE) training program is conducted online by a team of leading practitioners and trainers. The program will take place in two segments per day, two hours each. Recordings of all sessions will be available for registrants.

This program will incorporate a complete overview of the parenting plan evaluation process, including:

- Definition of the purpose and roles of the parenting plan evaluator
- Specifics of the evaluation process, including interviewing, recordkeeping, and use of technology
- Implications of intimate partner violence and resist-refuse dynamics
- Updates on current research
- Implications of relocations and consideration of children with special needs
- Implications of child maltreatment, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse
- Development of parenting plans
- Review of cultural considerations, biases, and ethical issues
- Utilization of psychological testing
- Best practices for report writing and testifying

Participants will learn the difference between a forensic role and a clinical role, how to review court orders and determine what information should be obtained, strategies for interviewing adults and children, how to assess coparenting issues, how to develop and test multiple hypotheses, and how to craft recommendations.

SESSIONS

1. **Purpose and Roles:** This session will provide an introduction to and an overview of parenting plan evaluations, and the specific roles and responsibilities of the evaluators.
2. **PPE Process I:** This session will outline the parenting plan evaluation process and examine use of collaterals and parent-child observation. Remote interviews, as well as record keeping best practices, will be discussed.
3. **PPE Process II:** This session will delve into the information gathering process and explore relevant versus irrelevant information. Specific strategies for interviewing children and adults forensically will be reviewed. Difference between diagnoses and assessment of parent functional behaviors and coparenting will be explored.
4. **PPE Process III:** This session will examine screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) and discuss the impact of IPV on families and the parenting plan evaluation process.
5. **PPE Process IV:** In this session, a multifactorial model for resist refuse dynamics and assessment considerations will be presented.
6. **The Research I:** This session will explore the current research literature on the effects of divorce on children, issues with high conflict parents, and gatekeeping.
7. **The Research II:** This session will focus on current research literature on young children, parental mental health, and substance misuse within the context of child custody.
8. **Parenting Plans:** This session will provide an overview of best practices for developing effective, supported, and developmentally appropriate parenting plans. Implementation problems related to transitions and long distance, as well as step-up parenting plans, will be discussed.
9. **Cultural Diversity and Considerations:** This session will examine ethnic, cultural, and diversity issues that may arise when conducting parenting plan evaluations. Unique considerations related to religious perspectives, ethnic and racial diversity, and same-sex couples, will also be shared.
10. **Hypothesis Testing and Cognitive Biases:** This session will explore hypothesis testing, articulate the importance of developing multiple hypotheses, and provide instructions on how to do so. Use of decision trees will also be described. The problems associated with heuristics will be explored, along with further explanation of various types of cognitive biases.
11. **Psychological Testing:** This session will explain the place of psychological testing in child custody evaluations, including when and how to use testing. Numerous psychological tests will be described, including objective tests such as the MMPI-3 and STAXI, projective tests such as the R-PAS, parenting tests such as the PAM and CAPI, and child assessments such as BASC. The appropriate use of computer-generated reports will also be reviewed.
12. **Child Maltreatment:** This session will focus on sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, and challenges that arise when these issues become part of parenting plan evaluations.
13. **Relocation and Children with Special Needs:** This session will explore challenging issues occasionally encountered in parenting plan evaluations such as relocation and children with special needs.
14. **Report Writing and Testifying:** This session will provide an overview of the components of a report, including an explanation of the importance of providing well-articulated analysis and synthesis. A primer for drafting recommendations that are well-supported and specific will also be shared.

The Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations *continued*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants in this training will be able to:

- Identify at least three differences between a clinical and forensic role.
- Identify statutes and case law relevant to parenting plan evaluations.
- Create a checklist of the critical components of parenting plan evaluations.
- Evaluate the pros and cons of collecting various types of data for inclusion in the evaluative process.
- Identify at least four functional parenting skills and competencies to assess in parenting plan evaluations.
- Explain at least four considerations for interviewing children during parenting plan evaluations.
- Describe the impact of IPV on adults, children, parenting, and coparenting.
- Describe a screening and assessment process to evaluate IPV in a child custody evaluation.
- Identify at least four factors that could contribute to a child's resistance or refusal to see a parent.
- Describe a continuum of parent-child contact problems.
- Describe the most current research regarding the effects of divorce on children.
- Identify various dimensions of gatekeeping.
- Identify three considerations when crafting parenting plans for young children.
- Describe how mental illness, including personality disorders, and substance misuse impact parenting.
- Describe the relevance of hypothesis testing.
- Describe how to use hypotheses from psychological tests in parenting plan evaluations.
- Describe three biases/heuristics that can influence decision-making.
- Describe how to apply the concept of cultural humility to parenting plan evaluations.
- Analyze cases to identify diversity considerations that are relevant to parenting plan evaluations.
- Identify factors to consider in developing appropriate parenting plans.
- Describe specific recommendations to ensure safe and peaceful transitions.
- Identify factors to consider in deciding which tests to employ in parenting plan evaluations.
- Describe how to interpret psychological tests accurately in the context of parenting plan evaluations.
- Identify risk and protective factors for child maltreatment.
- Identify multiple hypotheses that may apply to a case that involves allegations of sexual abuse.
- Describe how parenting plans may need to be modified for children with special needs.
- Identify at least five best practices for presenting information and opinions in reports and testimony.
- Analyze and synthesize data to form opinions and relay those opinions to a court in a logical and sound manner.

SCHEDULE

Some locations are not listed below. Please convert to your local time zone.

	Pacific Time US/Canada Vancouver	Central Time US/Canada Chicago	Eastern Time US/Canada New York	Greenwich Mean Time London	Central European Time Barcelona	Israel Standard Time Tel Aviv
March 11 Purpose and Roles PPE Process I	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 12 PPE Process II PPE Process III	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 13 PPE Process IV The Research I	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 14 The Research II Parenting Plans	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 18 Culture and Diversity Considerations Hypothesis Testing and Cognitive Biases	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 19 Psychological Testing Child Maltreatment	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm
March 20 Relocations and Children with Special Needs Report Writing and Testifying	8am-10am 11am-1pm	10am-12pm 1pm-3pm	11am-1pm 2pm-4pm	3pm-5pm 6pm-8pm	4pm-6pm 7pm-9pm	5pm-7pm 8pm-10pm

NOTE: Recordings of the training programs will be available at a reduced price for non-registrants following the completion of the program. **Continuing education credit is available only for programs attended live.**

Training Team



Chioma Ajoku, JD, PhD, ABPP, is a private practitioner in New York State and the owner of Forensic Psych Solutions. The focus of her practice is forensic evaluations and child/adolescent therapy. Dr. Ajoku graduated cum laude from Dartmouth College with a BA in Psychological and Brain Sciences. She then obtained a dual degree, MA/JD (psychology/law), from Duke University and Duke University School of Law, and was admitted to the NYS Bar. She subsequently obtained her PhD in Clinical Psychology from the CUNY Graduate Center via the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Additionally, Dr. Ajoku completed her clinical internship year at Rutgers University in Piscataway as the Adolescent Forensic Track intern. Afterward, she completed a Child and Family Forensic Postdoctoral Fellowship at William James College. Dr. Ajoku is licensed to practice psychology in New York State. Currently, she serves on the Mental Health Professionals Certification Committee for the First and Second Judicial Departments of New York, the AFCC Continuing Education Committee, the AFCC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, the editorial board of Family Court Review, and the board of AFCC.



Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP, is a psychologist and former AFCC President, who served on both the first AFCC task force and the APA task force that developed Guidelines for Parenting Coordination. She has provided training internationally and authored chapters and articles about parenting coordination, as well as other issues related to family conflict. She was the founder and the Director of the Center of Excellence for Children, Families, and the Law at the William James College where she developed the Certificate in Child and Family Forensic Issues. From 1990 until 2012 she was on the faculty of Harvard Medical School, most recently as an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychology.



April Harris-Britt, PhD is a licensed psychologist practicing in North Carolina and Virginia. In addition to providing child, adolescent, adult, and family therapy, Dr. Harris-Britt conducts comprehensive psychological evaluations, forensic evaluations, comprehensive child custody evaluations, civil guardian ad litem evaluations, and parental competency evaluations. She also serves as a Parent Coordinator. Specific areas of clinical and research expertise include trauma and violence; child development; developmental psychopathology; adoption and attachment; medically fragile children; divorce transitions; ADHD and learning disabilities; autism spectrum disorders; and the assessment and application of multicultural issues. She focuses on using a strengths-based, systems approach to assessment and treatment. Dr. Harris-Britt contributes to research and teaching at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Fielding Graduate University where she serves as the Lead Faculty for the Forensic Concentration. She is currently a member of the APA Working Group to Review Scientific Literature for High Conflict Family Relationships and the APA Board of Professional Affairs. She serves on the AFCC Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and previously served on the AFCC Task Force on Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluations which revised the 2022 Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations in Family Law Cases. She is currently President for the North Carolina Chapter of AFCC.



Kathleen McNamara, PhD is a licensed psychologist in private practice in Fort Collins, CO, specializing in counseling and forensic psychological services for court-involved families. She has conducted hundreds of parenting evaluations, consults with attorneys and mental health professionals about complex issues in family law cases, and is a parenting coordinator, decision-maker, and therapist. She was the reporter for the 2022 AFCC Guidelines for Parenting Plan Evaluations in Family Law Cases. Before devoting herself to full-time practice, she was a tenured Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Colorado State University, where she was a teacher, researcher, and clinical supervisor for fourteen years. She is a former president of the Colorado Chapter of AFCC and remains involved in program planning and chapter development. She is a past chair and former member of the Colorado Psychological Association Ethics Committee and serves on the Colorado Supreme Court Standing Committee on Family Issues and the 8th Judicial District Domestic Relations Best Practices Team.



Terry Singh, PhD, ABPP, is a clinical and forensic psychologist whose areas of special interest include working with high-conflict families of divorce and separation, child custody evaluation, consideration of cultural factors in assessment and treatment, and the treatment of severe and persistent psychopathology. While his clinical practice is largely focused on working with children and families in his home province, he has also assisted in national and international relocation matters, including Hague Convention applications. He is a regular presenter and trainer at AFCC and other international conferences, and has authored articles on issues regarding child and family forensic psychology. He is a board member of AFCC Alberta, and currently chairs the AFCC Alberta Chapter's Programming Committee.

General Information

What's Included?

The registration fee includes live attendance to the program, access to the program materials including recordings and handouts from the presentation, and a certificate of attendance. **Each attendee's certificate will reflect the hours viewed live only.**

Note: If you are unable to attend live, recordings of the training programs will be available at a reduced price following the completion of the training programs. Continuing education credit is only available for programs attended live.

What Equipment Do I Need?

AFCC recommends using a desktop or laptop computer to take full advantage of Zoom's capabilities. This will provide a better viewing experience and will permit access to features not available on the Zoom app on tablets and smart phones. A stable internet connection is imperative for the best viewing experience. If you lose internet service, you may call into the training (call in numbers will be included in your confirmation email) and follow the slides that are available in advance of each program.

A Zoom account is not required if you are simply joining Zoom as a participant. It may, however, be simpler to sign on if you have an account. Please note that you must sign on from your own Zoom account. If you use a Zoom account that is registered in someone else's name, your attendance will not be recorded and AFCC will not be able to issue you a certificate of attendance. To insure you receive proper credit, use a Zoom account associated with the same email address you use for your AFCC profile. You can sign up for a free Zoom account at zoom.us/signup.

Continuing Education Credits

The Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations training program is eligible for 28 hours of continuing education for psychologists. AFCC is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. AFCC is recognized by the New York Education Department's State Board for Psychology as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed psychologists #PSY-0190. AFCC maintains responsibility for the program and its content. AFCC will make application for continuing education credits for social workers through the National Association of Social Workers. A certificate of attendance will be provided to all attendees. Attendees may use the AFCC Certificate of Attendance to verify attendance and apply for continuing education in their jurisdiction. Each attendee's certificate will reflect the training hours viewed **live** only. Other professionals may opt to apply for continuing education credits in their discipline in their jurisdiction by providing their certificate of attendance, the brochure, and any training materials directly to their accrediting body. AFCC will not be applying for CE for attorneys for this training program due to the vast difference in requirements across jurisdictions. Attorneys are able to apply for CLE in their jurisdiction on their own, but AFCC cannot guarantee that credit will be awarded.

Cancellation Policy

Transfer of registration to another person may be made once, at any time without a fee. All requests for refunds must be made in writing. Written notice of cancellation received by fax, sent, and confirmed by email or postmarked by February 27, 2024, will be issued a full refund minus a \$75 administrative fee. No refunds will be issued for cancellations received after February 27, 2024. AFCC reserves the right to cancel any training or substitute any presenter should circumstances beyond our control arise.

Time Zones

While it is not possible to schedule all sessions for daylight hours in all countries, recordings will be made available for purchase after the program has concluded. Please contact AFCC at afcc@afccnet.org for further information. The certificate of attendance will only include time logged while attending the initial live sessions.

More Information

For program and registration inquiries, contact AFCC at 608-664-3750 or afcc@afccnet.org.

Registration

Join AFCC when you register for the training and save up to \$175 on this program! Select "New Membership Special" below.
Register online at www.afccnet.org or return this completed form with payment.

Please type or print clearly.

(Dr./Mr./Ms./Judge) First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____ Degree _____

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New Member Special

Join AFCC* for 12 months and
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\$150

Fundamentals of Conducting Parenting Plan Evaluations

March 11-14 and March 18-20, 2024

AFCC Member

Non-Member

\$350

\$525

TOTAL:

\$ _____

\$ _____

*AFCC membership includes an electronic subscription to the AFCC quarterly academic journal, *Family Court Review*, with full access to entire archives. Membership also includes a subscription to the AFCC eNEWS; reduced registration rates for AFCC conferences, webinars, and training programs; access to the online Member Center featuring archived webinars; and the searchable Member Directory. More information is available at www.afccnet.org.

Payment

Registrations must be paid in full prior to attendance.

Check for \$ _____ is enclosed (US currency only, please.)

Charge \$ _____ to my Visa / MasterCard / American Express / Discover Credit card. Transactions will be processed in US dollars; exchange rate on day of transaction will apply.

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ / _____ Security Code _____ Postal Code _____

Name on Card _____

Cardholder's Signature _____

You may register online at www.afccnet.org
or return the completed form and payment to:

AFCC

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