



**ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY  
AND CONCILIATION COURTS**

## ***AFCC's New Online Training Program!***

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## **The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations**

*A 24-hour online training program for professionals interested in child custody evaluations.*

**March 16-18 and March 22-24, 2021**

### **Training Team**

Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP

April Harris-Britt, PhD

Sol R. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP

Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD

**AFCC is an 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 Child Custody Evaluations

*A 24-hour online training program for professionals interested in child custody evaluations.*

**March 16-18 and March 22-24, 2021**

AFCC is pleased to introduce a new, comprehensive child custody evaluation (CCE) training, 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 include a complete overview of the child custody evaluation process, including:

- Definition of the purpose and roles of the child custody evaluator
- Specifics of the evaluation process, including interviewing, recordkeeping, and use of technology
- Implications of intimate partner violence and resist-refuse dynamics
- Updates on the current research
- Development of parenting plans
- Review of cultural considerations, bias, and ethical issues
- Utilization of psychological testing
- Best practices for report writing and testifying

Participants will learn the difference between a forensic role and clinical role, how to review court orders and determine which 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 overview of the purpose and roles of the child custody evaluator and dissect the differences between the forensic role and clinical role. An overview of the legal system, court orders, AFCC *Model Standards*, best interest factors, rules of evidence, and caselaw on evidentiary standards will also be provided.
2. **CCE Process I:** This session will outline the child custody evaluation interview process and examine use of collaterals and parent-child observations. Remote interviews, as well as recordkeeping best practices, will be discussed.
3. **CCE 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. Differences between diagnosis and assessment of parent functional behaviors and coparenting will be explored.
4. **CCE Process III:** This session will examine screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) and discuss the impact of IPV on families and the child custody evaluation process. A multifactorial model for resist-refuse dynamics and assessment considerations will also be presented.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **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.
8. **Cultural and Diversity Considerations:** This session will examine ethnic, cultural, and diversity issues that may arise when conducting child custody evaluations. Unique considerations related to religious perspectives, ethnic and racial diversity, and same sex couples will also be shared.
9. **Hypothesis Testing and Cognitive Biases:** This session will explore hypothesis testing, articulate the importance of developing multiple hypotheses, and provide instruction 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.
10. **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-2 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.
11. **Special Issues:** This session will explore challenging issues occasionally encountered in child custody evaluations such as relocation and sexual abuse allegations. The unique considerations of working with families with special needs children will also be addressed.
12. **Report Writing and Testifying:** This session will provide an overview of the parts of a report, including an explanation of the importance of providing well-articulated analysis and synthesis. A primer in drafting recommendations that are well-supported and specific will also be shared.

# The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody 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 caselaw relevant to child custody evaluations.
- Create a checklist of critical components of child custody 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 child custody evaluations.
- Explain at least four considerations for interviewing children during child custody evaluations.
- Identify a method for screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) in all evaluation protocols.
- Describe the impact of IPV on adults, children, parenting, and coparenting.
- Identify at least four factors that could contribute to a child's resistance or refusal to see a parent.
- Describe the 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.
- Identify factors to consider in developing appropriate parenting plans.
- Describe a concrete plan for modifying parenting plans.
- Create a specific recommendation to implement safe transitions.
- Describe how to apply the concept of cultural humility to child custody evaluations.
- Analyze cases and identify diversity considerations that are relevant to child custody evaluations.
- Describe the relevance of hypothesis testing.
- Describe three biases/heuristics that can influence decision-making.
- Identify factors to consider in deciding which tests to employ in child custody evaluations.
- Describe how to use hypotheses from psychological tests in child custody evaluations.
- Apply a decision-making model for relocation cases.
- Apply a risk and protection model when a family has a special needs child.
- Identify multiple hypotheses that may apply to a case that involves allegations of sexual abuse.
- Craft specific recommendations based on a court's referral questions.
- Analyze and synthesize data to form opinions and relay those opinions to a court in a logical and sound manner.

## SCHEDULE

	Vancouver	Chicago	New York	London	Barcelona	Tel Aviv
<b>March 16</b>						
1. Purpose & Roles	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
2. CCE Process I	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm
<b>March 17</b>						
3. CCE Process II	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
4. CCE Process III	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm
<b>March 18</b>						
5. The Research I	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
6. The Research II	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm
<b>March 22</b>						
7. Parenting Plans	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
8. Cultural & Diversity Considerations	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm
<b>March 23</b>						
9. Hypothesis Testing & Cognitive Biases	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
10. Psychological Testing	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm
<b>March 24</b>						
11. Special Issues	8am-10am	10am-12pm	11am-1pm	3pm-5pm	4pm-6pm	5pm-7pm
12. Report Writing & Testifying	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	2pm-4pm	6pm-8pm	7pm-9pm	8pm-10pm

**Note:** If you are unable to attend live, stay tuned to the AFCC website for a special offer. Recordings of the training program 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



**Robin M. Deutsch, PhD, ABPP**, is a Board Certified psychologist in Couple and Family Psychology who provides consultation, mediation, parenting coordination and expert witness services. She developed and was the director of the Center of Excellence for Children, Families and the Law at the William James College where she developed the Certificate for Child and Family Forensic Issues and is currently a Professor of Clinical Psychology. She has trained and supervised more than 60 postdoctoral fellows to conduct child custody evaluations. She has also consulted, presented, and published extensively on issues related to high conflict family relationships. Dr. Deutsch is a former President of AFCC and served on the AFCC Task Force for Guidelines for Examining Intimate Partner Violence and the AFCC Task Force for Court-Involved Therapists. Currently, she is chair of the APA Working Group to Review Scientific Literature for High Conflict Family Relationships.



**April Harris-Britt, PhD**, is a licensed psychologist and parent coordinator who conducts child and adult psychological evaluations, child custody evaluations, civil guardian ad litem evaluations, and parental competency evaluations. Dr. Harris-Britt provides training to mental health professionals, attorneys, and judges and has presented at numerous conferences regarding services for families engaged in high-conflict custody disputes. She is currently a member of the Board for the Center for Cooperative Parenting, APA Advocacy Coordinating Committee, APA Working Group to Review Scientific Literature for High Conflict Family Relationships, AFCC Task Force on Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluations, and AFCC Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.



**Sol R. Rappaport, PhD, ABPP**, is a Board Certified psychologist in Clinical Psychology and Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology. He has been appointed in over 900 custody evaluations and has testified throughout the United States. Dr. Rappaport's national practice includes consulting with attorneys for the purpose of work product review, cross-examination and expert witness testimony. Dr. Rappaport has presented nationally on custody, relocation, alienation, intimate partner violence, autism, psychological testing and other topics to various organizations, including the ABA, AAML, AFCC, and several state bar associations. Dr. Rappaport has published in the area of divorce, child abuse, psychological testing, gatekeeping, custody evaluations, as well as other topics.



**Arnold T. Shienvold, PhD**, is a licensed psychologist who specializes in child clinical psychology and high conflict families. He is recognized nationally as an expert in the areas of custody evaluations and family mediation. In addition to his forensic and clinical practice, Dr. Shienvold has consulted to public and private agencies, lectured at a multitude of professional conferences and schools, and published papers on these topics. Dr. Shienvold is a former President of AFCC, the Academy of Family Mediators, and the Association for Conflict Resolution. He served on the first AFCC Task Force on Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluations and is chair of the current task force.

# General Information

## What's Included?

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

## What Equipment Do I Need?

AFCC recommends using a desktop or laptop computer to take full advantage of Zoom's capabilities. Not only will this provide a better viewing experience, it will permit access to features not available on the Zoom app on tablets and smartphones. A stable internet connection is imperative for the best viewing experience. If you lose internet service, you may call in to the training (call-in numbers can be found on the AFCC training portal) and follow the handouts, which can be downloaded from the AFCC training portal. If you need assistance, please call the AFCC office at 608-664-3750.

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.*** You can sign up for a free Zoom account at [zoom.us/signup](https://zoom.us/signup).

## Continuing Education Credits

The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations training program is eligible for 24 hours of continuing education for psychologists. AFCC is approved by the American Psychological Association (APA) to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. AFCC maintains responsibility for the program and its content. This program is approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval #886478123-8195) for 24 continuing education contact hours. Please be aware that the following states do not accept National CE Approval Programs: Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and West Virginia. Social workers should verify approval with their credentialing or licensing boards. 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 only the training hours viewed **live**.

## 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 at 608-664-3751 or postmarked by March 1, 2021 will be issued a full refund minus a \$75 administrative fee. No refunds will be issued for cancellations received after March 1, 2021. AFCC reserves the right to cancel any training or substitute any presenter should circumstances beyond our control arise.

## Recordings

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 for non-registrants. Please contact AFCC at [afcc@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org) for further information. The certificate of attendance will include time logged while attending the initial live session *only*.

## More Information

For program and registration inquiries, contact AFCC at 608-664-3750 or [afcc@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org).

# Registration

Register online at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org) or return this completed form with payment.

Please type or print clearly.

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

Title/Profession \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle appropriate amount(s) below and total at the bottom

## New Member Special

Join AFCC\* for 12 months and  
register at AFCC member rates!  
For first-time members only

\$150

## The Fundamentals of Conducting Child Custody Evaluations

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**AFCC Member**  
\$340

**Non-Member**  
\$490

**TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*AFCC membership includes a print and electronic subscription to the AFCC quarterly academic journal, *Family Court Review*, with full online access to all 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](http://www.afccnet.org).

## Payment method:

*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 \_\_\_\_\_

Card Holder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**You may register online at [www.afccnet.org](http://www.afccnet.org)  
or return the completed form and payment to:**

**AFCC**  
6525 Grand Teton Plaza  
Madison, WI 53719  
Phone: 608-664-3750  
Fax: 608-664-3751  
Email: [afcc@afccnet.org](mailto:afcc@afccnet.org)