

Massachusetts AFCC Fall 2020 Conference (remote)  
October 2, 2020  
9:00am-12:30pm

## **"Can You Hear What I Need?": Eliciting, Understanding, and Integrating Children's Perspectives in Family Law Cases**

9:00 - 10:00 Keynote speaker, Mindy Mitnick, MEd, MA, will discuss how meaningful information can be elicited from children involved in family law cases, with special consideration for how this can happen in the time of COVID-19.

10:00-10:10 Break

10:10-11:10 Breakout sessions: 3 groups of conference participants will each meet with a panel consisting of a Guardian ad litem, Parenting Coordinator, Attorney for the Child, and Probation Officer. The panel will address questions raised by a moderator and the breakout group participants on how they go about eliciting input from children involved in family law cases, interpreting what they learn, and bringing this to the Court's attention according to their different roles.

11:10-11:20 Break

11:20-12:30 Judges Panel: Three sitting judges will participate in a panel moderated by an attorney who will conduct a discussion of how judges integrate into their decisions the various perspectives on children's input to family law cases offered by Parenting Coordinators, Probation Officers, Parenting Coordinators, and Attorneys for the child.

Participants:

Judges:

Hon. Thomas Barbar  
Hon. Janine Rivers  
Hon. Claudine Wyner

Gary Todd, Esquire

Psychologists +/-or Attorney Guardians ad Litem:

Jessica Greenwald O'Brien, PhD  
Ann Rascati, Esquire  
Stephanie Tabashneck, PsyD, JD

Attorneys:

Christine Bonardi, Esq.  
Marry Ferriter, Esquire  
Michael Flores, Esquire  
Joanne Romanow, Esquire  
Vicki Shemin, Esquire, LICSW, ACSW  
Karen Stuntz, Esquire

Family Court Probation Officers

Amy Koenig (Chief Probation Officer)  
Ryan Lefevre (Probation Officer)  
Tahirah Edwards (Probation Officer)