



MA AFCC

President:

Kelly A. Flynn
Zawistowski

**Visit us on the
Web!**

<http://www.maafcc.org>

Chapter

Administrators:

Kristin Bean
and
Jeanmarie
Disarcina

admin@maafcc.org

President's Message

Greetings to All,

I hope that you all had a gentle holiday season and are ready to take on 2022. I am honored to serve as your President. I want to acknowledge the leadership provided by Attorney Jenny Clapp during her term and express my appreciation for her and the board members with whom have served and I am excited to continue the good work provided by them.

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded that no one can do it alone. I am grateful to be part of AFCC, and its multi-disciplinary team of professionals including judges, lawyers, mental health professionals, probation officers, guardians ad litem, parent coordinators, and court staff. Together, we have never been more relevant in helping families navigate life's challenges in an ever-changing social, economic, and technological landscape. We serve, guide, mentor, advocate, mediate and resolve. I am grateful for all of you.

To that end, I pleased to announce that Massachusetts AFCC and MAGAL are collaborating with the Probate and Family Court Administrative Office to coordinate a variety of options for continuing education.

The Massachusetts Chapter is excited to announce that Stephanie Tabashneck, PsyD, Esq. and Steven Paymer, M.S.W. will be presenting a drug and alcohol testing three-part series on the second Tuesday of the month beginning on **January 11, 2022, from 1:00 – 2:00 pm on Zoom**. This three-part series will focus on different types of alcohol and drug testing and monitoring, how to read alcohol and drug testing reports, protocol development and implementation, and specific language to be used in agreements and court orders. Additional discussion will include monitoring associated with parenting plans, relapse plans, and alcohol and drug testing in cases involving suspected or confirmed substance misuse. The cost is \$15.00 per session or \$30 for all three. [Click Here](#)

[or if link is inoperative go here: <http://www.maafcc.org/events---conferences.html>]

to sign up through our website. Scholarships are available by emailing admin@maafcc.org

The Massachusetts Chapter annual conference will be held over Zoom this year on **Friday, April 8 from 12:00 pm-4:00 pm** on the topic of ***Doing harm by doing good: The unintended consequences of well-intentioned professional practice in family law cases***

I encourage you to join the AFCC Community at the **59th Annual National AFCC Conference** which will occur in person in **Chicago, Illinois – from May 11-14,**

2022. The Use, Misuse and Abuse of Technology in Family Law. This is a great topic considering how much families and family law professionals have had to rely on technology throughout the pandemic. This conference, like all others will be designed to provoke thought and conversation. In addition, the 15th Symposium on Child Custody is schedule to occur **November 10-12, 2022, in Las Vegas, Nevada.**

Our board meetings are open to all members and are held monthly at 5:00 pm by Zoom, which makes participation even easier!! Members who are not appointed to the Board of Directors can join Committees and assist with the planning of events, writing the newsletter, and the operation of the Chapter. Our meetings for the 2021/2022 term are scheduled on January 4, 2022; February 1, 2022; March 1, 2022; April 5, 2022; May 3, 2022; June 7, 2022. If you cannot attend in person, please feel free to forward questions, suggestions and topics of importance by email to the Chapter Administrator at: admin@maafcc.org.

Sincerely,
Kelly Zawistowski

UPCOMING EVENTS

MA AFCC

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING THREE-PART WEBINAR SERIES

Steven Paymer, M.S.W. & Stephanie Tabashneck, Psy.D., J.D.

January 11, 2022	1:00 – 2:00 pm	Alcohol testing
February 8, 2022	1:00 – 2:00 pm	Drug testing
March 8, 2022	1:00 – 2:00 pm	Parenting plans

\$15 per webinar or \$30 for all three webinars.

[Click here to Register](#)

[or if link is inoperative go here: <http://www.maafcc.org/events---conferences.html>]

Fee waiver for any members/guests facing financial hardship – email admin@maafcc.org for registration assistance.

This three-part series will focus on different types of alcohol and drug testing and monitoring, how to read alcohol and drug testing reports, protocol development and implementation, and specific language to be used in agreements and proposed court orders. Additional discussion will include monitoring associated with coparenting plans, relapse plans, and alcohol and drug testing in cases involving suspected or confirmed substance misuse.

January 11, 2022: Session I will focus on the types of *alcohol*-detection technology available, including windows of detection, limitations inherent in alcohol testing, false positives, and how to read alcohol test results.

February 8, 2022: Session II will target the many methods available to detect *drugs* of misuse, limitations of drug testing, and how to analyze drug-testing results.

March 8, 2022: Session III will focus on *coparenting plans*, how to best implement a protocol to ensure the safety of the children, and how to develop an effective protocol that is time efficient and cost effective. Additional discussion will include monitoring associated with relapse plans, and alcohol and drug testing in cases involving suspected or confirmed substance misuse.

Presenters:

Steven Paymer, M.S.W.

Mr. Steven Paymer is the founder and president of Paymer Associates, LLC, and National Drug Testing Compliance and Management Co., LLC, both drug and alcohol testing and monitoring firms. He emphasizes compassionate drug testing that is professional and non-judgmental. He has testified as an expert witness in over 100 cases in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and North Carolina, and has presented on the topic across the country and internationally. Steven has spent most of the last twenty years working in the field of substance abuse prevention and treatment, in one form, or another. He received his Masters in Social Work, with a clinical concentration, from Fordham University, and a BA in Political Science from the University of Colorado in Boulder. Prior to opening his company in 2006, he worked as a community advocate for adolescent substance use prevention and treatment, and as a school social worker.

Stephanie Tabashneck, PsyD, Esq.

Dr. Stephanie Tabashneck is a psychologist and attorney in Newton, MA. Her practice areas include forensic psychological assessment, substance use issues, child custody, and criminal forensic evaluations. Dr. Tabashneck presents regionally and nationally on psychology and law topics, including at events organized by the American Bar Association, the Federal Judicial Center, the American Psychiatric Association, the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, the Massachusetts Trial Courts, and the New York Office of Attorneys for Children. Dr. Tabashneck is a board member of the Massachusetts chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. Recent publications include the book *Substance Use and Parenting: Best Practices for Family Court Practitioners* (2021), an article on the opioid crisis and family drug courts in the scholarly journal *Family Law Quarterly* (Spring 2019) and a chapter in the American Bar Association book, *Representing People with Mental Disabilities: A Practical Guide for Criminal Defense Lawyers* (2019).

VIRTUAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE!!!!

The annual conference is scheduled for **Friday, April 8 from 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm**. When **Dr. Dan Simon**, USC Gould School of Law will deliver the keynote address on ***Doing harm by doing good: The unintended consequences of well-intentioned professional practice in family law cases***

Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs

Officers:

Kelly A. Flynn Zawistowski, President
Mira Levitt, President-Elect
Jennifer Clapp, Immediate Past President
Stephanie Tabashneck, Secretary
Katherine Potter, Treasurer

Board Members:

Karen Cohen	Colleen Cunnally
Premela Deck	Alicia Doherty
Jordana Douglas	Lisa Gallagher
Mary Klaes	Mira Levitt
Kathleen Michaud	Richard Novitch
Tony Pelusi	Ashton Pouliot
Joanne Romanow	Hon. David Sacks (Ret.)
Vicki Shemin	Harry Somers
Stephanie Tabashneck	

Committees:

Alternative Dispute Resolution Liaison to "Sister" Organizations (MAGAL / MCFM / MCLC / etc.)

Joanne Romanow

Chapter Liaison

Joanne Romanow

Conference Committee

Mira Levitt, co-chair
Bob Zibbell, co-chair
Jon Fields
Donna Feinberg
Lisa Gallagher
Leslie Greenberg
Jessica Greenwald-O'Brien
Alex Jones
David Medoff
Vicki Shemin

Legislative

Jenny Clapp

Membership:

Kate Potter
Kathleen Michaud
Colleen Cunnally
Ashton Pouliot

Newsletter

Tony Pelusi
Jordana Douglas
Lisa Gallagher
Mary Klaes
Vicki Shemin
Harry Somers
Kelly Flynn Zawistowski

Roundtable

Ashton Pouliot
Premela Deck
Stephanie Tabashneck
Jenny Clapp
Harry Somers
Alicia Doherty
Rich Novitch
Karen Cohen

Nominating

Kelly Flynn Zawistowski
Jenny Clapp
Karen Cohen

Scholarship

Kelly Flynn Zawistowski
Jenny Clapp
Mary Klaes
Hon. David Sacks (Ret.)
Karen Cohen

Directory, List-serve, Website

Josh Hoch

Liaison with Chief's Office

Jennifer Clapp

Members, if you are interested in joining one of these committees, please email admin@maafcc.org to let us know. All are welcome!

Mentor Opportunities

If you are new to the practice, and/or our association and would like to develop a mentor/mentee relationship with a more experienced member who is willing to share their wisdom please let us know. We welcome the opportunity to play matchmaker! Email [Tony Pelusi](mailto:TonyPelusi) if you interested.

PC & GAL Update

All members of MA-AFCC who subscribe to the chapter List-serve received a copy of the **Parenting Coordination Bench Card** [cocreated by Denise Fitzgerald, Manager of Legal Research Services in the Chief's Office, Kelly Zawistowski, Assistant Judicial Case Manager, Hampden, Vicki Shemin and Tony Pelusi] which outlines the appointment requirements as set forth in Standing Order 1 – 17. If you would like a copy, check the list-serve archives or email Vicki or Tony.

Gerry Lewis, on behalf of our sister organization, **MAGAL**, hosts weekly **virtual gatherings of GALs** on Wednesdays from noon to 1 pm. Log in credentials are shared via the MAGAL list-serve.

Similarly, **MAAFCC & MAGAL** cosponsor a biweekly **PC Consultation Group**. We meet every other Friday from 1 pm – 2 pm. Log in credentials are shared on the MA-AFCC & MAGAL List serves.

As an organizational benefit, both gathering are limited to members only.

Join the MA AFCC Email List

[or if link is inoperative go here: <http://MA-AFCC-Email-List-on@mail-list.com>]

As of January 14, 2021, we moved from yahoo groups to Mail List as yahoo stopped providing listservs.

If you are interested in creating dialogue online, sharing ideas, publicizing events, debating issues and/or finding experts, please take advantage of this wonderful member benefit by joining the MA AFCC Chapter Email List.

All members are encouraged to join.

To Join: Send a blank email to: MA-AFCC-Email-List-on@mail-list.com

This electronic mailing list allows members to email everyone on the list by sending one email. Once you join the email list, you will start to receive emails from other members and from the Board on topics of interest. You may simply read and follow conversations, respond publicly so everyone can read your

response, or respond privately to an individual's email address.

Group Email Addresses:

- Join/Subscribe - send a blank email to: MA-AFCC-Email-List-on@mail-list.com
- Unsubscribe - send a blank email to: MA-AFCC-Email-List-off@mail-list.com
- Email all members on the email list, send your email to: MA-AFCC-Email-List@mail-list.com
- To send an email to one person, email them separately - don't send an email to the list.
- Questions? [Email Josh Hoch](#).

A few items to note about using an email list:

- If you are responding to an email you received from the listserv, please be aware that simply pushing the "reply" button defaults to "reply all." In other words, your response will automatically be sent to every member of the listserv. If you would like to respond to a single individual, you must type in that individual's email address.

- If you are concerned about receiving too many emails from the group, you can edit your subscriptions to a "digest" format. Digest format will send you only one email per day.

- Please use a clear, specific subject heading that identifies the topic of your email and sign your name to the correspondence.

- Please do not promote your services or trainings. Not sure if your post is appropriate? Email [Josh Hoch](#) first.

It is the hope of the listserv/website committee that our email list will create an additional way for MA AFCC members to communicate, share information, and stay connected.

Online and Printed Membership Directory

In addition to the [On-line](#)

[or if link is inoperative go here: <http://directory.maafcc.org>]

Directory we are in the process of preparing a printed membership Directory which will be shared with all judges of the Probate and Family Court.

All MA AFCC members are responsible for the maintaining the accuracy of their listing and each is urged to log in to establish and/or updated their own profile.

Since the information in the online directory will be used in the printed directory, so you will be well served to attend promptly to this simple request by [clicking on this link](#). [or if link is inoperative go here: <http://directory.maafcc.org>]

This is a great way for you to establish yourself as a competent professional in the eyes of the court, your peers, and the public (you can even add a link to your own website!) It is also an effective and efficient way to find and connect with subject matter experts across the state.

Check it out today: <http://directory.maafcc.org/join>

News from the National

The Use, Misuse, and Abuse of Technology in Family Law

May 11-14, 2022

Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile

Chicago, Illinois

[Brochure \(PDF\)](#)

[Registration](#)

[Online Scholarship Application](#)

[Scholarship Guidelines](#)

[Prospectus for Sponsors, Exhibitors, and Advertisers](#)

Marriott Chicago Downtown Magnificent Mile Reservation.

Make your reservation [online](#) or by phone, 1-877-303-0104.

Interviewing Children with Non-Normative Needs and Unique Considerations

Ann Ordway, JD, PhD

January 12, 2022

1:00-2:00pm Eastern Time US/Canada

[Registration](#)

Registration closes January 11, 2022, at 9 am Eastern Time US

Separation and divorce with children are often naturally more complex as experts and the courts seek to fashion resolutions that will meet the best interests of the children involved. Parenting is no easy task. While there are guidelines for best practices for parenting plans, cookie cutter approaches are rarely ideal. Children with unique circumstances and special needs will always add complexities and new dimensions to more routine expectations.

Some experts are called upon to interview and interact with children for the purpose of developing recommendations regarding best interests in the context of parenting plans or advocating for the welfare of the children the

expert is charged to represent. Finding best answers can be extra challenging when a child's cognitive capacity or ability to articulate how they perceive the world and their experiences are compromised. A professional working with a special needs child must find creative ways to hear the child's voice and then accurately include it in the process, while also discerning the level of each parent's knowledge and ability to meet the child's unique needs. Moreover, the expert must be particularly alert to non-verbal nuances that can reveal potential disconnects between what a parent reports and the actual relationship between the child and that parent.

AFCC is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. AFCC maintains responsibility for the program and its content. The program is eligible for up to 1 hour of continuing education for psychologists.

Member Registration: \$15,

Certificate of Attendance: \$15

Non-Member Registration: \$50, Certificate of Attendance: \$20

Ann Ordway, JD, PhD, is the Program Director for AFCC. Prior to becoming a full-time staff member, she was the College Academic Director of Counseling Programs with the University of Phoenix in Phoenix, Arizona, and a Counselor Educator. She is a retired family law attorney following approximately 25 years of private practice in New Jersey, where she primarily worked with high conflict divorce dynamics, parenting coordination, and child advocacy. Ann has a law degree and a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision, and is a nationally certified counselor (NCC).

In 1991, she co-founded the Battered Women's Legal Advocacy Project in Morris County, New Jersey, which continues to provide pro bono legal representation for victims of domestic violence. Her doctoral dissertation on the experiences of parenting coordinators working with high conflict couples engaged in intimate partner violence dynamics is the foundation of her current research.

Dr. Ordway was a member of the AFCC Board of Directors since 2015. She has been the Co-Chair of the Chapters Committee, a co-reporter for the 2019 AFCC Task Force on Parenting Coordination, and a former president of the New Jersey Chapter.

Guest Contributors

On behalf of the Board please allow us to extend an open and ongoing invitation to each and every one of our members to contribute to this newsletter as a "guest" author. In each issue, we hope to provide the opportunity for one or more of our members to share their insight, knowledge, and experience on a variety of topics that we hope are relevant and of interest to our members. Please contact Tony Pelusi if you are interested in submitting a contribution, or know someone who might be interested if they received a gentle prompt.

The views expressed herein are those of the individual authors.
Neither AFCC nor MA AFCC necessarily endorses or takes a position on that
which is expressed herein.

Those who know him, know Bob Zibbell to be a lifelong learner and teacher. Since the early 1990's Bob has been intrigued with the intersection of law and mental health. As one who is committed to employing best practices in all his work, Bob began creating summaries of Mass cases that impact the work of Guardians ad Litem. As this work progressed, Bob compiled a handbook which he generously made available to his colleagues in MAAFCC and MAGAL.

Below are two links. One to the most up to date version of this invaluable summary of the MA appellate decisions concerning GALs, PCs, forensic investigations and evaluations in general. And, the second to a literature review on shared parenting.

We are pleased and privileged to offer these resources to our colleagues with warm thanks to Bob for his industrious generosity.

[A mental health professional's perspective on how appellate law informs GAL investigations and evaluations](#)

[Shared Parenting literature review](#)

[If hyperlinks are inoperative, please go here: <http://www.maafcc.org/articles.html>]