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MySpace or YourSpace?

Using MySpace.com and other web pages in forensic evaluations of adolescents and children.

Jessica Griffin, Psy.D.

“You know, I wasn’t born yesterday...,” words said to one of the many teenage and prepubescent faces that enter the office doors.

However, in some respects, myself and many in the forensic arena may have been born yesterday. With technology changing so rapidly, it is easy feel like a neophyte when it comes to computers and the fluency with which our children speak the windows language.

Within the last two years, I

have discovered that the MySpace/Facebook/Twitter phenomenon is an effective way to connect with children, particularly hard-to-reach adolescents. I have also found the information on these web pages to be invaluable to forensic work with this age group.

I have utilized *MySpace.com* and other social networking sites in evaluations for Probate and Family Court matters (e.g. as GAL in divorce and custody matters) as well as in the Juvenile

Justice arena (e.g. Competence to Stand Trial and dispositional matters).

Known to some as the “Colombo” approach to forensic work, many find purposeful naiveté to be a valuable tool. With teenagers, this has been an effective way to both disarm them and to engage them in providing useful personal information. Accessing *MySpace.com* pages is a primary arena in which this intentional gullibility has been effective.

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Cultural Competency Project – Lowell

Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh, Ph.D.

As part of the AFCC Roundtables, First Justice Jay Blitzman of the Lowell Juvenile Court invited all professionals who interact with the court to come and discuss the issues with him and fellow AFCC board member Joanna Rohrbaugh.

About 15 professionals affiliated with the court came to the first meeting on April 27th, and decided

to hold another meeting on May 13th in order to involve people from community organizations and social service agencies throughout Lowell.

Almost 40 people attended the second meeting, including professionals affiliated with 15 different social service agencies and organizations.

Each person at the meeting described what they have

experienced as the most challenging aspects of cultural diversity in Lowell, which has a large Cambodian immigrant community. The following five main issues or themes were discussed at both meetings:

Communication difficulties

▪ **Language** – The client may not be fluent in English, and the provider may be unaware of the nuances in the client’s language, even when an interpreter is used.

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AFCC Listserv: Enhancing Your Practice

Josh Hoch

Would you find value in creating dialogue online, sharing ideas, publicizing events, debating issues or finding experts? If so, take advantage of a member benefit by joining the MA Chapter listserv.

A listserv, also known as an *electronic mailing list*, is an email-based mailing list of people who belong to a certain group or

organization. Just as in a written mailing list, a listserv can be used to send email messages to a number of people at one time. Once you sign up as a member of the listserv, you will receive emails from other members about topics of interest, and you may choose to respond to these emails either publicly (as a response to the entire list) or privately (to an individual's email address).

As an AFCC member, you can join the listserv by sending an email to: [<maafcc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>](mailto:maafcc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Once the Listserv committee verifies your AFCC membership, you will be able to use the Listserv by sending and receiving emails. You will also receive a copy of our Listserv protocol.

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Bourbon Street, FrenchQuarter
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AFCC – International Conference in New Orleans

Joseph McGill, LICSW

Once again, the Massachusetts Chapter of AFCC was well-represented at the 46th Annual Conference, Children, Courts and Custody: Back to the Future or Full Steam Ahead, held in the New Orleans, Louisiana May 27-30, 2009. Over thirty chapter members were in attendance, with many members offering workshops. David Medoff and Mary Ferriter offered a pre-conference institute on the *Effective Use of Experts in Family Court: An*

Interdisciplinary Institute.

Kimberly Larson and Joe McGill presented the workshop, *Adolescent Input into Custody Decisions*. Marsha Kline Pruett presented an *Update on*

Same Sex Marriage. Mary O'Connell served as a member of a Plenary Session entitled *The Evolving Family Court System: Progress at What Price?* That same day

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Steamboat Natchez in New Orleans, just before the cruise

AFCC in New Orleans, continued

Robin Deutsch, Peggie Ward, and the Hon. Paula Carey offered a two-part workshop on their summer camp program, *OverComing Barriers: Summer Camp (but no picnic) for High Conflict Families*.

Hon. Arline Rotman's workshop addressed *Attachment Theory: A Summary of Research and Implications for Parenting Plans for Young Children*. Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh, William Levine, Nan Elder, and Hon. E. Chouteau Levine helped to close the conference with their workshop on *Relocation in High Conflict Custody Cases*.

Robin Deutsch presided

over the AFCC Awards Luncheon and relinquished her crown as President of AFCC during the Annual Banquet.

While the conference offered a wide variety of interesting and informative workshops and programs, it does not mean that our time in the Big Easy was all work. The Massachusetts Chapter had its own special event on Thursday night, when we all took a Mississippi riverboat cruise steamboat Natchez. The Massachusetts chapter was joined by the Ontario Chapter for dinner, live jazz and beautiful views of the city during the two-hour cruise.

Many Massachusetts members had other

adventures as well. David Medoff found a fried oyster club sandwich (Po-Boy) that was reportedly to die for. A few of our intrepid travelers accounted well for themselves on a mechanical bull, while some of us demonstrated our singular inability to sing on key at a piano bar.

An outdoor venue on Bourbon Street provided a firsthand opportunity to observe rats in their natural environment, while other Chapter members took in the offerings at the Preservation Hall. Not to be outdone, Linda Cavallero, Mary Ferriter, Arline Rotman, and fourteen others spent 90 minutes stuck on a hotel elevator.

All in all, it was a great experience and opportunity



Jazz musicians play in the French Quarter, New Orleans

not only to attend sessions and learn, but also to connect with others from the Chapter in a more relaxed and fun way.

The 47th Annual Conference will be on June 2-5, 2010, in Denver, CO. Plan on being there! ■

The Effective Use of Experts in Family Court

David Medoff, Ph.D.

On Wednesday May 27, 2009 our distinguished former president of International AFCC Mary Ferriter, the Honorable Justice R. John Harper, and our very own David Medoff, Ph.D. presented a day long pre-conference institute in New Orleans.

This institute was well attended by judges, lawyers and mental health professionals from around the world, and special recognition goes to a group of judges from Egypt who

attended as part of their tour throughout the United States.

The institute provided a comprehensive overview of the use of experts in family law matters with an emphasis on mental health experts. The institute focused on: the legal requirements and qualifications for an expert; the judicial gatekeeping function; effective preparation by the expert and by legal counsel; and the use of experts outside the litigation path, inside the litigation path, at trial, and post-trial.

The institute used a case

study approach to help the judges, lawyers, and mental health professionals learn to work with one another, develop appropriate expectations, and make the most effective use of resources.

The goal of the institute was to expand the knowledge and use of the extensive reservoir of professionals who have the ability to assist families and other professionals in dealing with crisis and conflict, both inside and outside the litigation process. The institute provoked and

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"The institute provided a comprehensive overview of the use of experts in family law matters..."

Experts in Family Court, *continued*



inspired those who have the expertise that can assist families into considering roles that may result in better informed, rational, and multiple solution options to resolving disputes and creating life plans that are realistic and sustainable.

In the financial realm subject matters included financial considerations for support purposes, vocational and occupational assessments, valuations of pensions, businesses,

real estate and chattels. From a mental health perspective, factors related to child development, child and adult mental health and emotional states of family members were discussed.

A wide range of expert resources were reviewed and included accountants, business evaluators, actuaries, vocational and occupational therapists, child and adult therapists, mental health investigators and evaluators, child development specialists,

other medical and psychological professionals and mediators.

In addition, presenters discussed the complex web of ethical and legal duties as well as the conflict of competing legal and ethical demands in expert consultation. Creative solutions for the use of professionals as related to family law matters were considered and available resources to assist in resolving potential ethical/legal conflicts were provided. ■

AFCC Listserv, *continued*

A few items to note about using a Listserv,

- 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 participant on 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, you can sign up for subscriptions in a “digest” format. You can

choose to receive a single email message each day, to receive only special notices, or to check your messages on a website rather than receiving email. Instructions will also be made available for these options.

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

It is our hope that the Listserv will create an additional way for members to communicate, share information, and find value in MA AFCC Membership.

If you have questions, please contact our Listserv Committee Chair, Josh Hoch, at jhoch@mwj.org. ■

“If you would like to respond to a single individual, you must type in that individual’s email address.”

AFCC Symposium – Fall 2009

Mark your calendars for the Massachusetts Chapter's Fall Symposium and Dinner on October 15, 2009 at the Henderson House in Weston, Massachusetts.

The event will begin with a symposium by Dr. Marsha Kline Pruett on *"How Fathers Parent Differently Than Mothers and Why It Matters,"* including information on overnights with young children and maternal gatekeeping. This is a condensed version of the two-day AFCC training Dr. Kline Pruett presented in Baltimore in December 2008.

The symposium will take place from 2:30 – 5:30 p.m., followed by cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and dinner.

The cost is \$75 for the training and dinner. Continuing education credits will be available for psychologists and Category E and F Guardians *ad Litem*.

We look forward to seeing everyone there! ■

How Fathers Parent Differently than Mothers



Henderson House, Weston, MA



Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D.

Program for Parenting Coordinators

Jennifer Sevigney Durand, J.D.

On Thursday, May 7, 2009, the Massachusetts Chapter of AFCC co-sponsored a Continuing Legal Education Program with the Boston Bar Association entitled: "So you think you want a Parenting Coordinator..." Approximately thirty registrants attended the program held at the BBA headquarters.

Parties to a divorce or modification action often agree to work with Parent Coordinators during and at the close of litigation in an effort to resolve on-going child related disputes without the necessity of court intervention.

As practitioners, lawyers routinely write language into Separation Agreements, Modification Agreements, Paternity Agreements, and Temporary Orders that govern the appointment, powers, and functions of Parent Coordinators.

It is only after the Agreements are executed that the limitations or ambiguity of the language in the Agreement are brought to light. The program was designed to provide an overview of the Parent Coordinator "movement" in Massachusetts and around the country and to examine

critical issues that are not generally recognized when parties agree to work with Parent Coordinators.

The panel consisted of Judge Edward Donnelly, psychologist Robin Deutsch, and attorneys Julie Ginsburg and Jennifer Sevigney Durand. The moderator was attorney Judith Farris Bowman.

The interdisciplinary panel discussed many issues including:

- History of the PC Movement
- What PCs are, who they serve, and the legal basis for their appointment.

- Legislative history of PC statutes across the US, including attempts at passing statutory provisions in MA.
- When and how attorneys should draft appointment orders for a PC
- Pros and cons of serving as a PC
- Methodologies and common dilemmas for PCs

Two weeks after the program, the cover story of the *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* focused on the state of PCs in Massachusetts, quoting three of the AFCC panelists: Dr. Deutsch and attorneys Ginsburg and Durand. ■

AFCC Roundtables

Hampshire Probate and Family Court.

Beth Crawford, J.D.

The Massachusetts Chapter of the AFCC, in collaboration with the Probate and Family Court, sponsored a roundtable discussion on cultural issues in the family court on April 21, 2009 at the Hampshire Probate and Family Court.



Panel for Hampshire Roundtable (from left): Judge Geoffrey Wilson; Attorney Marianne Zurn; Judge Linda Fidnick, former MA-AFCC President (rear); Judge Gail Perlman (front), Attorney Beth Crawford, current MA-AFCC President (rear); Attorney Kathleen Townsend, past MA-AFCC President.

The roundtable was a follow up to the Chapter's annual conference "Our Melting Pot: Practical Implications of Cultural Differences in Juvenile and Family Court." A group of twenty-five, which included members of the bar, as well as court staff, discussed how to identify when an interpreter is needed and how to determine whether the judge hearing the case needs to know about the litigant's cultural background.

The lively discussion also included tips for best practices for attorneys representing clients from diverse cultural backgrounds, negotiation tools and views from the bench.

The panel participants included Judges Linda Fidnick, Gail L. Perlman, and Geoffrey Wilson of the

Probate and Family Court, as well as attorneys Marianne Zurn, of Zurn, Sharp & Heyman, and Wendy Berg, of Western Massachusetts Legal Services. Attorney Kathleen Townsend moderated the discussion.

Probate and Family Court Chief Justice Paula Carey states, "I am grateful that discussions such as this one are held, as each discussion heightens awareness to the differences in cultures, and how a person's cultural background may affect their relationships, interactions and decisions. I appreciate the panelists for taking the time to bring these issues to the forefront."

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Cultural Competency Project – Lowell, continued

▪ Customs of address – Actions that the client uses to convey respect may be misperceived by the provider. For example, a Cambodian looks away from officials such as judges, teachers, and police officers in order to convey respect and compliance. A North American may interpret this lack of eye contact as a sign of inattention, disrespect, or even defiance.

▪ Generation gaps Immigrants from war-torn countries have seldom had an opportunity to obtain an education in their native land. They often speak less English than immigrants from other areas and are invested in maintaining key aspects of their traditional culture in their new home.

The children of these immigrants, who come to the U.S. at a young age or are

born here, become fluent in English, familiar with American customs, and hopefully have the chance to obtain an education at least through high school.

The gap between the life experiences of the two generations in these families causes a variety of challenges which undermine the authority of the parents, including:

▪ The parents often have to

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"Actions that the client uses to convey respect may be misperceived by the provider."

AFCC Roundtables, continued

Norfolk Probate and Family Court

Anne Cremonini, J.D.

On June 17th, a roundtable seminar on Cultural Issues in For the Probate and Family Court took place at the Norfolk Probate & Family Court. The panel included Justices John Casey and Angela Ordonez, who sit in Norfolk County; Attorney Ernst Guerrier; Claudine Demesmin, Probation Officer; and Karen Ryan, Trial Clerk. Dr. Peggie Ward served as moderator, offering the panel and audience an opportunity to reflect on the subject of culture from two perspectives: recognition of one's own culture,

and of the clients with whom we interact. The forum was quite interactive between panel and audience, giving lots of opportunity to share ways to better serve the families in our county. We came away from this seminar reflecting on the powerful meaning of the authority of the judicial system for those coming from oppressed cultures. We also learned ways of approaching our clients to better understand their expectations about court as well as improve their preparation for and understanding of the legal process. Thank you to all who participated in making this forum such a valuable event. ■



Never Married Parents Initiative - update

Beth Crawford, J.D.

The Massachusetts Chapter of the AFCC undertook a two-year project to review the needs of never married parents and their children in the context of family litigation.

One of the outcomes of the project was the development of *For The Children*, a supportive parent education program that focuses on the needs of children of never married parents. Topics include the vital role of parents in children's lives, cooperative parenting, pitfalls for parents to avoid, understanding children's

needs, and supporting children when parents live apart.

For The Children, which began as a pilot project in Hampshire County in 2005, has now expanded to Essex and Suffolk counties. All never married parents with cases in these counties are required to attend this five-hour program.

There are currently three approved programs offering *For The Children*. The Probate and Family Court Administrative Office, in coordination with the Massachusetts Department of

Revenue, has obtained funding in order to offer the program without cost to these parents.

In 2007, *For the Children* won the Irwin Cantor Award for innovative programs at the AFCC annual conference in Washington, D.C. ■

Massachusetts AFCC

Karen Henell
Chapter Administrator
P.O. Box 269

Chesterfield, MA 01012

Tel: 413-296-0389
Fax: 413-296-8085
Email: khenell@verizon.net

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[http://www.
maafcc.org/home](http://www.maafcc.org/home)

Our Melting Pot:

Practical implications of cultural differences in juvenile and family court.

MA-AFCC annual conference, April 2009

Robert Zibbell, Ph.D.

Our annual conference this year focused on the issue of cultural differences and their implications for mental health professionals and attorneys who practice in the area of family and juvenile law.

The conference appeared to be heading for disaster when our keynote speaker, Sujata Warriar, Ph.D., fell and badly injured her back a few days beforehand. Dr. Warriar is the Director of the New York City program of that state's Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

After some intense deliberations, the committee chose to proceed with the conference, allowing those who paid in advance to receive refunds if they so desired (only a very few chose that option).

Thanks to the ingenuity of our fearless leader/chair, *Peggie Ward, Ph.D.*, we were able through telephone hookup to have Dr. Warriar give an abbreviated, hour-long version of her presentation, while Peggie showed the PowerPoint slides in sync with Dr. Warriar's talk. We were fortunate to hear some of Dr. Warriar's ideas about how cultural issues can

can affect family dynamics, even though she was unable to give her full presentation.

Following that presentation, Gaye Gentes, manager of the Office of Court Interpreters, spoke about the number of languages for which interpretation services have been sought, the professional training that court interpreters receive, and the means to access those services.

At the lunch break we held our annual meeting. *Alex Jones, M.S.W., J.D.*, gave a brief farewell address, held the election of officers, and introduced the new

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Cultural Competency Project – Lowell, continued



use their children to translate for them in a variety of settings: in stores and in meetings with professionals such as teachers, doctors, social workers, police officers, and probation officers.

- The children often experience "cultural confusion" due to the varying expectations of their American and immigrant cultures.

- The parents have difficulty supporting their children's educations because:

- The parents' lack of English language skills, as well as their lack of education, make it almost impossible for them to help their children with homework.

- Sometimes the children have no place in the home to do their homework.

- The parents don't know that they need to send the children to school with pencil and paper.

- The parents tend to lose books and other school materials easily, because these things were not valued or useful in their previous lives.

- The parents' fear of official institutions, including the courts and schools, make them defer to the decisions of authority figures such as teachers.

- The parents perceive education as the responsibility of teachers. This means that the parents seldom volunteer or participate in school activities, which is then perceived as a lack of support or interest in the children's school progress.

Psychiatric problems

The parents may have experienced severe trauma in their country of origin. Behaviors due to the

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Cultural Competency Project – Lowell, continued

emotional impact of trauma and abuse have to be differentiated from behaviors due to differences in cultural norms.

Views of the legal system

In the immigrants' countries of origin, the justice system may have worked very differently than the US justice system.

For instance, immigrants from Cambodia often do not expect fair and reasonable treatment in the US courts, may expect a quick resolution, and may have had no experience with examining options. Immigrants from these areas often hesitate to question police and court officers, because in their culture such questioning would be disrespectful.

Cultural differences in parenting

There are many cultural differences in the approach to parenting, including acceptable methods of discipline, forms of

address, and expected involvement in family activities.

Everyone who works with immigrant families needs to be aware of cultural diversity in order to avoid misinterpreting cultural differences as examples of family dysfunction or parental indifference and/or incompetence.

Ongoing cultural diversity project

Everyone at the two meetings agreed that in order to be effective, all discussion of cultural competence must include representatives of the various ethnic and racial communities in Lowell, as well as representatives from the various social service agencies and courts who work with this population.

In discussing this issue, the group emphasized the

importance of interaction between immigrants and the professionals who work with them.

Professionals need to learn more about Cambodian culture in order to better serve the Cambodian immigrant population. Cambodian immigrants need to be provided with more information about the legal, educational, correctional, and social service agencies in Lowell.

To accomplish this exchange of information, it is important to establish comfortable two-way channels of information sharing.

The group considered various ways to facilitate a dialogue and exchange of information with members of the Cambodian immigrant community. The main format discussed was public forums, where community members could talk about their needs and professionals could

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"The group emphasized the importance of interaction between immigrants and the professionals who work with them."

"It is important to establish comfortable two-way channels of information sharing."

Our Melting Pot, continued

president, *Beth Crawford, J.D.*

The afternoon panels started with a focus on "cases with cultural considerations." *Bill Levine, J.D.* moderated the first panel whose speakers included Ernst Guerrier, J.D., Douglas Reynolds, J.D., and Christine Wichers, J.D. Mr. Guerrier spoke about representing parties from the Haitian community; Mr. Reynolds discussed how understanding cultural differences can assist lawyers in business law and mediation; and Ms. Wickers reported on her efforts to help

reunite the children of an abused Pakistani woman with their mother, after her husband had taken them to Pakistan.

Jennifer Durand, J.D. then moderated a judicial panel that included Hon. Jay Blitzman, Hon. Angela Ordoñez, and Hon. Geoffrey Wilson. Judge Blitzman spoke about dealing with families of different cultures in Juvenile Court, while Judges Ordonez and Wilson talked about similar issues in Probate and Family Court.

We will soon begin work on the 2010 conference. Anyone who has an idea for a topic or a speaker should contact a member of the conference committee, which includes:

Jennifer Sevigney Durand, J.D., Jonathan E. Fields, J.D., Lesley E. Goldsmith, J.D., Alexander D. Jones, M.S.W., J.D., William M. Levine, J.D., Joseph McGill, L.I.C.S.W., Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh, Ph.D., Peggie Ward, Ph.D. (first chair) and Robert A. Zibbell (2nd chair).

▣

MySpace or YourSpace?, continued

Engaging youth in a conversation about MySpace.com, Facebook, etc. and accessing these websites in our offices with them are ways to open the door with children and teenagers, and allows us to see the image that they wish to be projected onto the world.

A Rogerian groupie could argue that this is similar to the “real self” versus the “ideal self.” However, it is open to debate which image is projected onto the MySpace page.

As the internet is also an area in which children can be exploited, manipulated, bullied, or harmed in other ways, it is often critical to have access to this information, particularly as many of the children who enter our offices appear to be especially vulnerable to harm.



A MySpace Primer

The first disclaimer. I do not own or operate a MySpace page. [There are a number of reasons for this, professionally, but that is a different topic for a different day]. With adolescents, I use the fact that I do not have a MySpace page to allow them to “help” me figure out how to access their information.

The second disclaimer. The intersection between the Internet (e.g., MySpace, YouTube, virtual worlds) and professional disciplines (e.g., Psychology, Education, the Law) is a rapidly growing area of area of interest, and is also a hotbed for innumerable

ethical concerns and dilemmas. Although the ethical and privacy concerns need to be considered, I cannot adequately address them within this article. I think that it is not an infringement of privacy rights to ask to see a child's MySpace, however, because at this point in the interview I have already fully explained my role, the purpose of evaluation, and the limits of confidentiality.

During the interview, I simply ask if the child if they have a MySpace page and then tell them that I'm curious about MySpace [e.g. “I'm curious about MySpace...I talk to lots of kids and teenagers about MySpace and I really like to see the different pages that kids have...etc.”] and wonder if they will allow me to see their page.

Then, I demonstrate my excitement in their wanting me to see their page and immediately pull up the web browser. I type in www.myspace.com and then ask them to show me how to get onto their page. To date, my request to see an adolescent's pages has never been turned down.

The child then logs on using their username and password and voila, instant access to information.

Once on the youth's page, you can see a picture of them, their online name, and how they describe their “Mood,” for which they often use “emoticons” (aka smiley faces).

All of this information can enhance the evaluator's understanding of the youngster in the office. For instance, in a case involving an Assault and Battery of a Police Officer, one adolescent girl's username was similar to “cop killer” and demonstrated a cartoon defecating on a policeman. This information was helpful to the girl's attorney because it provided a concrete example of the girl's poor judgment and (mis)understanding of her legal situation, which were both in question during an assessment of the girl's competence.

On the MySpace pages you can see the youth's “friends,” which are individuals to whom the child or adolescent has granted access. The adolescent is able to communicate with these “friends” through the MySpace pages belonging to the “friends.”

Many youth have “blogs” which are basically a journal of their thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Others can also write comments on the youth's MySpace pages. After reviewing the youth's pages, I record my observations and print the pages on my printer.

Here are some examples of the information that MySpace has provided in my clinical and forensic work:

◆ A teenage girl with a history of depression posted information about her moods and suicidal thinking, which she had previously denied experiencing

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MySpace or YourSpace?, continued

when she talked with her parents and therapist.

◆ In a case where there were concerns about adequate parental supervision, a teenage girl posted provocative pictures of herself scantily clad using alcohol and illegal drugs. This page was dated during a time in which the parent in question was supposed to be home and in the caretaker role.

◆ Confirmation of a young girl's gang involvement, which she had previously denied.

◆ Information that demonstrated an adolescent's poor judgment in grasping the severity of the charges against him.

◆ A 9-year-old's eloquent description of her involvement in the inter-parental conflict.

◆ Descriptions of an adolescent's wish to have a child of her own.

◆ Bullying of a child by other peers, which was unknown to the parent

◆ A teenager who posted somewhat provocative pictures of herself and also included her address, school, age, and other personal information. This girl had her site as "public," meaning that anyone could go online to view this information.

In sum, for those who were born yesterday and have not attempted to discuss *MySpace* pages with clients, I encourage you to give it a try. ▣

Glossary of Terms

Facebook and MySpace: Free-access social networking websites, used internationally. These sites include personal profiles, networks of "friends," blogs, photos, and can also include videos or music. On Facebook, users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school, and region to connect and interact with other people.

Emoticon: a smiley face, or other face which demonstrates whatever "mood" a person is in

Blog: from the term, "weblog," an online journal, diary, or commentary often updated several times a day

Friend Request: when a person asks someone to be their "friend," which grants them mutual access to their social networking pages

Twitter/Tweet: Twitter is a free social networking and blogging service that enables its users to instantly send and read each others' updates, known as tweets. Tweets are short text-based posts of up to 140 characters, displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to other users (e.g., "followers") who have subscribed to them.

WANT TO HELP WITH THE NEWSLETTER?

HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN ARTICLE OR PROJECT?

Contact the Newsletter Committee:

◆ Joanna Bunker Rohrbaugh, Ph.D. (chair) – Rohrbaugh Associates
192R Upland Road, Cambridge, MA 02140
Tel: 617-876-6110
Email: jbr@post.harvard.edu
Website: www.rohrbaughassociates.net

◆ Jessica Griffin, Psy.D. ---- Child and Family Forensic Center
UMass Medical School
306 Belmont St., Worcester, MA 01604
Tel: 598-793-6911
Email: Jessica.Griffin@umassmemorial.org UMassmedicalschool.org

Cultural Competency Project – Lowell, *continued*

talk about their needs and professionals could learn more about the community.

The forums could be held in churches, libraries, or other public facilities, or in the offices of community organizations. Although representatives from the Police Department and the Lowell Juvenile Court offered to make space available for these forums, many people felt that these

locations would be intimidating to Cambodian immigrants, who often have a history of being intimidated and mistreated by officials and government agencies in Cambodia.

As the discussion progressed, it became clear that even a short series of roundtables or other types of meetings would not be sufficient. An ongoing, long-term project is needed to

a thorough and effective manner.

About a dozen people at the second meeting volunteered to participate in an ongoing cultural competence committee. This committee will explore how to facilitate an ongoing series of community meetings which will focus on issues of cultural diversity in the Lowell area.



MASSACHUSETTS AFCC
P.O. Box 269
Chesterfield, MA 01012

