

International Conference on
SHARED PARENTING 2017
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Shared Parenting Research: A Watershed in Understanding Children's Best Interest?

Faculty

Collectively, the scientific faculty is widely considered to include almost all of the leading currently active scholars in the world on the subject of optimal post-divorce parenting arrangements. This group of eminent scholars may never before and perhaps never again be brought together from all parts of the developed world in the same conference.

Scientific Sessions Plenary Speakers

Dr. Kari Adamsons

University of Connecticut, USA

Kari Adamsons is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Connecticut, where she has conducted research and taught classes on fathering, parenting, and close relationships for the past 10 years. She has published many peer-reviewed articles and chapters in the areas of fathering, co-parenting, and divorce. She is particularly known for her work on nonresident father involvement and father identity, and is considered one of the leaders of the next generation of fathering scholars.

Abstract: Quality vs. quantity of fathering time: An argument against shared physical custody?

Dr. William Austin

Child Custody Services, USA

Dr. Austin is a recognized national expert on relocation and domestic/intimate partner violence as issues that arise in custody cases, and on child custody methodology. Dr. Austin has given over 50 professional workshops and lectures on child custody evaluation for mental health and legal professionals, and law schools. He has published numerous professional articles and book chapters on forensic approaches to conducting child custody issues. Dr. Austin was the co-chair of the task force that developed the Model Standards of Practice for Child Custody Evaluation that is published by the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC).

Presentation Title: Gatekeeping and a social capital analysis in child custody

Dr. Malin Bergström

Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Malin Bergström is a clinical child psychologist with 20 years experience of meeting separating parents. Malin has written several books about child development, attachment theory and parenting. Malin's research focuses on children's health and welfare in shared parenting arrangements. After having conducted mainly epidemiological studies on schoolaged children and adolescents, she is now particularly interested in studying preschool children. Together with the research group in the Elvis project she is keen on finding methods for studying infant's health in shared parenting settings and to conduct longitudinal studies on children in different family types. Malin can be reached through malin.bergstrom@ki.se

Abstract: Health and wellbeing in Swedish 3-18 year olds in equal shared parenting arrangements

Prof. Sanford Braver

Arizona State University, USA

Sanford Braver is a Professor Emeritus at (i.e., retired from) Arizona State University, where he served in the Psychology Department for 41 years. He was affiliated with ASU's Social Psychology and Quantitative Psychology Doctoral Programs, as well as with the Prevention Research Center. He received his Ph.D. in Social Psychology at the University of Michigan in 1971. His primary research interest is in the dynamics of divorcing families, especially divorced fathers. To support this work he was the recipient of 18 competitively reviewed, primarily federal, research grants, totaling over \$28 million. His work has been published in nearly 130 peer-reviewed professional articles and chapters, and he is author of 3 books including *Divorced Dads: Shattering the Myths*.

Presentation Title: Does shared parenting cause better outcomes for children?

Dr. William Fabricius

Arizona State University, USA

William Fabricius is an Associate Professor of Developmental Psychology at Arizona State University. He is an expert on children's cognitive and social-emotional development, and on the role fathers play in promoting adolescents' and young adults' mental and behavioral health. His research in these areas has been supported by grants from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the findings have been published in top journals in the field. He worked for several years with all Family Law stakeholders in Arizona to translate research into Arizona's 2013 shared parenting legislation.

[Abstract:](#) Three Studies of Parenting Time: Evidence of Harm and Protection

Dr. Ned Holstein

Icahn Mount Sinai School of Medicine, USA

Dr. Holstein is the founder and Chairman of the Board of National Parents Organization, the largest organization in the United States advocating for science-based reform of the family courts for the benefit of children. In his earlier academic career, he earned a Master's degree in Psychology, then went into medicine and became a nationally recognized expert on workplace and environmental effects on human health. For ten years he was Associate Editor of the American Journal of Industrial Medicine. He has been a consultant to major corporations, cities, counties, states, federal agencies including the EPA and OSHA, Congressional committees and state legislatures. He remains a Clinical Assistant Professor at Mount Sinai.

Prof. Edward Kruk

University of British Columbia, Canada

Edward Kruk is Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of British Columbia, specializing in child and family policy, with over forty years of clinical and community work experience in child and family social work. He is author of the books "Divorce and Disengagement: Patterns of Fatherhood Within and Beyond Marriage", "Divorced Fathers: Children's Needs and Parental Responsibilities", and "The Equal Parent Presumption", and has published widely in a variety of academic and professional journals. He is the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for research and service contributions, is Canada's leading authority on parenting after divorce, and is president of the International Council on Shared Parenting.

[Abstract:](#) Shared Parenting and Parental Alienation: The Current State and Future Directions for Research

Dr. Michael Lamb

Cambridge University, UK

Michael Lamb is Professor of Psychology at the University of Cambridge in the UK. He is perhaps the most respected authority in the world on several topics in developmental psychology, including the role of parent-child relationships in development and is considered the "father" of fatherhood research. His scholarship has shaped decision making by family court judges, and his expert testimony in major class actions has helped transform U.S. law. In 1980, he became at 27 the youngest full professor in an American university. Over his 40 year career, Lamb has published nearly 500 professional articles and he is the author or editor of nearly 50 books, including 5 editions of *The Role of the Father in Child Development*. He has received numerous awards including, from the American Psychological Association (APA), its 2014 for Distinguished Contribution to Developmental Psychology, and its 2015 Award for Distinguished Scientific Applications of Psychology. He currently edits the APA journal, *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, and is President of APA's Division 7 (Developmental Psychology).

[Abstract:](#) Critical analysis of research on parenting plans and children's well-being

Dr. Pamela Ludolph

University of Michigan, USA

Pamela S. Ludolph is a clinical and forensic psychologist who long served as a faculty member in the University of Michigan Psychology Department and as the psychological consultant to the Child Advocacy Law Clinic at the University's Law School. She is interested in issues of child custody, child protection, and shared parental care, often focusing on the unique needs of very young children. Related interests are child sexual abuse, relocation, and alienation. Dr. Ludolph is an expert on attachment theory and practice, and enjoys helping scholars, attorneys, and mental health professionals understand current attachment research and practice. She is a published author and frequently gives presentations and consultation to officials, judges, attorneys, and mental health professionals in the US and abroad. Dr. Ludolph often conducts evaluations for the courts and consults with attorneys on high-conflict and complex cases, assisting them by providing educational testimony and advice about professional and research issues.

[Abstract:](#) Shared Care for Very Young Children: Research, Theory, and Custody Arrangements

Dr. Linda Nielsen

Wake Forest University, USA

Linda Nielsen is a Professor of Adolescent and Educational Psychology at Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, NC. She is an internationally recognized expert on shared physical custody research and father-daughter relationships, with a special emphasis on divorced fathers. In addition to her many academic journal articles, she has written three books on father-daughter relationships and three editions of the college textbook, *Adolescence: A Contemporary View*. She is often invited to present seminars about the shared custody research to family court and mental health professionals and to policy makers in the U.S. and abroad. Her work has been featured in a PBS documentary, on National Public Radio, and in magazines and newspapers including the *Wall Street Journal* and *Time* magazine.

[Abstract:](#) Joint Physical Custody vs. Sole Physical Custody: Outcomes for children independent of parental conflict and income

Prof. Patrick Parkinson

University of Sydney, Australia

Patrick Parkinson is a professor of law at the University of Sydney, Australia, and was President of the International Society of Family Law from 2011-2014. He has had a major role in the development of legislation and practice in family law and child protection in Australia. He served from 2004-2007 as Chairperson of the Family Law Council, an advisory body to the federal Attorney-General, and also chaired a review of the Child Support Scheme in 2004-05 which led to the enactment of major changes to the Child Support Scheme. He was also Chairperson of a major review of the state law concerning child protection which led to the enactment of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. In 2004, he was instrumental in persuading the Australian Prime Minister of the time, John Howard, to invest in a national network of Family Relationship Centers, offering mediation and other services to parents going through separation. These have had a major role in assisting parents to resolve parenting issues and to stay out of court.

[Abstract:](#) Relocation and the indissolubility of parenthood

Dr. Irwin Sandler

Arizona State University, USA

Irwin Sandler is a Regents' Professor Emeritus from the Department of Psychology at Arizona State University. He was the Director for over 25 years of a national center for research on the development and evaluation of programs to prevent problem outcomes for children following major family disruptions such as parental divorce. His work, along with his colleagues has demonstrated long term benefits of a brief parenting after divorce program to prevent depression and substance abuse of children up to 15

years later. His most recent work focuses on the effects of father parenting following divorce and of programs to strengthen the impact of divorced fathers on their children's well-being. He is the author of over 200 scientific papers and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Society for Prevention Research, and has served on scientific advisory boards and committees for the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Drug Abuse and the Institute of Medicine.

[Abstract:](#) New Evidence of a Program's Impact to Strengthen the Quality of Father Post-divorce Parenting

Prof. Hildegund Sünderhauf

Lutheran University of Applied Sciences Nuremberg, Germany

Hildegund Sünderhauf has been Professor of Family Law and Youth Welfare Law at the Lutheran University of Applied Sciences in Nuremberg (Germany) for 17 years. She is the author of the first and only monograph about Shared Parenting in Germany and co-founder of the International Council on Shared Parenting. She was initiator of Resolution 2079 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe entitled "Equality and shared parental responsibility: the role of fathers", that calls on the member states to "introduce into their laws the principle of shared residence following a separation".

[Abstract:](#) Legal and social development of shared physical custody in Europe

Dr. Richard Warshak

University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, USA

Richard A. Warshak is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and one of the world's most respected authorities on divorce, child custody, and the psychology of alienated children. As a White House advisor, and through his studies on divorce and custody appearing in 14 books and more than 75 articles in eighteen languages, Dr. Warshak has had a broad impact on family law. His book, *Divorce Poison: How to Protect Your Family from Bad-mouthing and Brainwashing* is the best-selling and highest reviewed book for divorced parents.

[Abstract:](#) Complicated Delivery: The Untold Story and Aftermath of the International Consensus Report on Parenting Plans for Young Children

Dr.h.c. Jean Zermatten

Chairman of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Switzerland

Jean Zermatten was elected Chairman of the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child by acclamation of both chambers in 2011. As part of this organization, he has worked tirelessly to improve juvenile justice and strengthen the protection of children. He regularly conducts assessment missions and gives advice to governments on several continents. He has made the rights of the child known by managing bodies and professionals, elevating the status of children in our society. By implementing different levels of training, he has made the Rights of the Children a field of academic study. Zermatten is also Director of the International Institute for the Rights of the Child, and was president of the International Association of Magistrates for Youth and Family.

Video Presentation Title: Parenting and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Scientific Workshop Faculty

Dr. Amy JL Baker

Unaffiliated, USA

[Abstract](#): Restoring Family Connections

Dr. Kim Bastaits

PXL University College, Belgium

[Abstract](#): Is joint physical custody in the best interest of the child? Parent-child relationships and custodial arrangements.

Dr. William Bernet

Vanderbilt University, USA

[Abstract](#): Parental Alienation Update: Distinguishing Alienation and Estrangement

Ms. Kersti Bergqvist

Centre for Health Equity Studies, Sweden

[Abstract](#): The living conditions of children with shared residence –the Swedish example

Dr. Chantal Clot-Grangeat

ICSP Vice-President, Clinical Psychologist, France

[Abstract](#): Parental conflict and shared parenting

Dr. Glenn Cheriton

Canadian Equal Parenting Council, Canada

[Abstract](#): The Collaborative Governance Model in Family Breakup

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[Abstract](#): To take a step back from the ideal of co-parenting, to better serve *all* couples that are separating

Mr. Jan Piet H. de Man

European Institute for the Best Interests of the Child, Belgium

[Abstract](#): Belgian Family Courts Shared Parenting Judgments

Dr. Kostis Demertzis

Kostis Demertzis et Partners, Greece

[Abstract:](#) Evolution of shared parenting as a factor for the emergence of a new family law Paradigm
Abstract

Dr. Sandra Inês Feitor

Sandra Inês Feitor Law Office, Portugal

[Abstract:](#) Legal and Psychological Significance of Deprivation of Family Life - a Contribution to Better Understand and fulfil the Child's Best Interests – PhD project

Prof. Luis Flaquer

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

[Abstract:](#) Gender equality, child well-being and shared residence in Spain

Dr. Emma Fransson

Centre for Health Equity Studies, Sweden

[Abstract:](#) Health and wellbeing of Nordic children and adolescents living in joint physical custody- A literature review of the evidence

Dr. Christine Giancarlo

Mount Royal University, Canada

[Abstract:](#) Kids Come Last: The Effect of Family Law Involvement on Parental Alienation

Prof. Michel Grangeat

University of Grenoble Alpes, France

[Abstract:](#) Judicial decision making: influences and possible perspectives

Dr. Jorge Guerra González

Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany

[Abstract:](#) Joint Custody and the prevention of child harm: the answer of the European Court of Human Rights (Moog v Germany, 06.10.2016)

Dr. Jennifer J. Harman

Colorado State University, USA

[Abstract:](#) Gender biases: How stereotype violations affect recommendations for child custody

Ms. Annelien Jonckheere

Indigo Koekelare, Belgium

[Abstract:](#) Parents and children in divorce: how to communicate to have a good psychological health and sustainable relationships afterwards.

Ms. Karen Kristjanson, MSc, MA

Leading Women for Shared Parenting, Canada

[Abstract:](#) Co-Parenting from the Inside Out: Voices of Moms and Dads

Dr. Yuk-King Lau

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

[Abstract:](#) Post-divorce co-parenting and children's well-being in Hong Kong

Ms. Leslie Loftis, BA

Writer and member of Leading Women for Shared Parenting, USA

[Abstract:](#) The political issues of implementing shared parenting laws

Ms. Catherine MacWillie

Custody Calculations, Calendars & Orders, USA

[Abstract:](#) Why parallel parenting and not co-parenting may be the better choice for families of divorce

Mr. Ian Maxwell

Families Need Fathers Scotland, Scotland, UK

[Abstract:](#) Beating the drum for shared parenting

Prof. Yoav Mazeh

Family, Equality & Law Research Institute, Ono Academic College, Israel

[Abstract:](#) Recognizing the importance of the other parent as a prerequisite for parental responsibility

Dr. Paul Millar

Nipissing University in North Bay Ontario, Canada

[Abstract:](#) Gender in Family Law Contempt of Court Cases in Quebec, Canada

Dr. Roisin O'Shea

Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland

[Abstract:](#) The Family Mediation Project; the Next Iteration, Globally sourced

Ms. Inge Pasteels

PXL University College, Belgium

[Abstract:](#) Is joint physical custody in the best interest of the child? Parent-child relationships and custodial arrangements.

Mr. George Piskor

Osgoode Hall Law School (York University), Canada

[Abstract:](#) Child support determination for complex families

Mrs. Dorcy Pruter

Conscious Co-Parenting Institute, USA

[Abstract:](#) The high road to reunification: A whole family solution to a whole family problem

Prof. Ronald P. Rohner

University of Connecticut, USA

[Abstract:](#) Parental Alienation Update: Distinguishing Alienation and Estrangement

Dr. Vittorio Carlo Vezzetti

ATS-Insubria (Agency for Health Protection), Italy

[Abstract:](#) New approaches to divorce with children: a problem of public health

Prof. Sabine Walper

German Youth Institute e.V., Germany

[Abstract:](#) Post-separation shared parental care in Germany

Mr. Martin Widrig, MLaw

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

[Abstract:](#) Rethinking the Child's Best Interests Standard based on a human rights perspective

Dr. Adam Williams

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

[Abstract:](#) Parental involvement among first and second-generation immigrants to the United States

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Abstracts

Dr. Kari Adamsons

University of Connecticut, USA

Quality vs. quantity of fathering time: An argument against shared physical custody?

What does my meta-analysis (and Amato and Keith's meta-analysis) tell us about the importance of father contact and how do both of those meta-analyses "translate" into a position that supports shared physical custody after parents separate? Should my meta-analysis (and Amato's) be used as evidence against shared physical custody by claiming that fathers can create and maintain high quality relationships throughout the many years of their children's childhood with slices and dices of parenting time on weekends and vacations? Do my findings support the idea that kids benefit from overnights and extended stays during the school week vs. weekends with their dads?

Dr. Amy JL Baker

Unaffiliated, USA

Restoring Family Connections

This paper will present a new manualized treatment approach to working with targeted parents and their adult alienated children, The Restoring Family Connections program. The presentation will begin with an overview of the negative long-term consequences of alienation as well as other reasons the courts should intervene when children become severely alienated from a parent by the other parent. Eligibility criteria of the program will be discussed. Over a dozen theoretical underpinnings of the program will be presented (i.e., it is possible for children to be manipulated to unjustifiably reject a parent, even abused children generally do not reject a parent, diagnosing and treating alienation can be counter-intuitive, and alienation is often accompanied by pathological enmeshment). Clinical principles of the program will also be discussed such as creating a safe space, supporting the relationship, recognizing triggers, and so forth). How the program fits into the landscape of treatment options for families affected by alienation will be discussed.

Dr. Kim Bastaits & Ms. Inge Pasteels

Social Work Research, PXL University College, Belgium

Is joint physical custody in the best interest of the child? Parent-child relationships and custodial arrangements.

In legislation, there has been a shift from sole custody, mainly for mothers, to joint physical custody. This is believed to be in the best interest of the child, as children can maintain a good relationship with both their mother and their father after a parental divorce. Although this assumption is the basis of many legislative systems, especially in Belgium with its legal preference for joint physical custody after divorce since 2006, few studies have investigated whether children in joint physical custody do have better relationships with both their mother and their father than children in sole custody.

This study relies on Belgian data to investigate the parent-child relationships in different custodial arrangements in order to discover if legislative assumptions are based on actual grounds. Using a dyadic subsample of parents and children from the "Divorce in Flanders – DiF" dataset (N = 503), we compare parent-child communication, the parent-child bond and parenting for children in sole mother custody, joint physical custody and sole father custody. This study adds to the literature by not only comparing joint physical custody to sole mother custody but also to sole father custody. Moreover, we include both the mother-child relationship and the father-child relationship. Preliminary results indicate that children in joint physical custody do indeed have a better bond and communicate better with both their mother and their father than children in other custodial arrangements. Furthermore, maternal but especially paternal parenting was more effective if the parent was residential or in joint physical custody.

Ms. Kersti Bergqvist

Centre for Health Equity Studies, Sweden

Malin Bergström

Anders Hjern &

Emma Fransson

Karolinska Institute, Sweden

**Health and wellbeing of Nordic children and adolescents living in joint physical custody-
A literature review of the evidence**

Shared residence or joint physical custody (JPC) implies that children live an equal amount of time in both parents' respective homes after they have separated. This living arrangement is more common in the Nordic countries compared to most other countries, and includes about 25-40 percent of children with non-cohabiting parents.

The aim of this literature review is to summarise recent research on the health and well-being of school aged children and adolescents in JPC in the Nordic countries. Database searches have generated 15 cross-sectional studies of school children in large national or regional survey research. The reader needs to be cautious about these studies' conclusions since a cross-sectional design does not make it possible to fully account for differences in underlying factors such as parents' health, social situation and communication among themselves. However, the studies identified do point to several factors that may explain why children living alternately in general seem to have a greater chance of good mental health than children who live with only one parent. Children in JPC have on average better material resources than children living with only one parent, moreover, they often report having access to and support from both parents.

This literature review will provide a summary of the Nordic research, address knowledge gaps and discuss limitations of the included studies, and will aim to serve as a foundation for future research on the health of children in joint physical custody.

Dr. Malin Bergström

Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Health and wellbeing in Swedish 3-18 year olds in equal shared parenting arrangements

Equal shared parenting arrangements are common in the Nordic countries and the practice is further increasing. Our latest data collections imply that this is now the norm among separating parents. Since 2011 we have studied health and wellbeing in children in shared and single parenting arrangements and are now focusing on preschoolers. In our studies, children in shared parenting have been shown to have better health and wellbeing than those in single care arrangements. In this presentation I will discuss these findings in relation to the Swedish norms on parent gender equity and whether our results can be generalised to children in other countries. In particular our new findings on health and wellbeing among 3-5 year olds will be elaborated.

Dr. William Bernet

Vanderbilt University, USA

Prof. Ronald P. Rohner

University of Connecticut, USA

Nilgun Öngider-Gregory, Ph.D

Vanderbilt University, USA

Kathleen M. Reay, Ph.D

Unaffiliated, Canada

An Objective Measure of Splitting in Parental Alienation: The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire

Both clinicians and forensic practitioners should distinguish parental alienation (rejection of a parent without legitimate justification) and estrangement (rejection of a parent for a good reason, such as a history of abuse or neglect). Numerous writers – for example, Richard Gardner, Joan Kelly, Janet Johnston, Margaret Lee, Nancy Olesen, Leslie Drozd, and Elizabeth Ellis – have suggested methods, based on qualitative research, for distinguishing alienation and estrangement. Most writers familiar with parental alienation agree that alienated children lack ambivalence and engage in the mental mechanism of splitting, i.e., perceiving one parent in extremely positive terms and perceiving the other parent in extremely negative terms. In recent research, the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) was used to identify and quantify the degree of splitting, which distinguishes alienation from estrangement. Participants were: children from intact families; children of divorced parents, who regularly saw both parents; estranged children of divorced parents, who lived with one parent and rarely or never saw the other parent; and alienated children of divorced parents. Severely alienated children engaged in a high level of splitting, by perceiving the preferred parent in a very positive manner and the rejected parent a very negative manner. Splitting was not manifested by the estranged children. The differences between alienated children and estranged children were statistically significant. It was concluded that the PARQ distinguished estranged children and alienated children.

Dr. Chantal Clot-Grangeat

ICSP Vice-President, Clinical Psychologist, France

Parental conflict and shared parenting

My presentation addresses the links between parental conflict and shared parenting. It is drawn on a review of the latest articles in scientific journals and particularly on the recent synthesis by Warshak (2016) and Nielsen (2015). It represents an update of my own presentation during the plenary session of the first ICSP Conference (2014). It is shown how the parental conflict issue had been addressed in a dramatically simplified way by the first research: variables roughly specified, linear causality, reckless conclusions. The analysis of the recent research demonstrates that parental conflict cannot be linked to the impossibility of shared parenting.

The presentation emphasizes the elements from this conclusion that had struck the politicians and journalists who I encountered in the European French speaking area. They have been strongly interested both by a more precise definition of parental conflict, by understanding conflict as a variable that is mediated by others factors (father commitment,...) and by the effects of the residence arrangements on the conflict.

Dr. Glenn Cheriton

Canadian Equal Parenting Council, Canada

The Collaborative Governance Model in Family Breakup

The current system of divorce in Canadian family courts has failed to live up to the promises of those in charge and to the expectations of separating parents passing through that system. I argue that this is a governance failure. I further argue that family breakup is a wicked problem, in that it resists definitive

solution, each family is unique and successful solutions cannot be imposed in general by professionals. I suggest that collaborative governance, with power, information and resources distributed, with no one completely in charge, provides an alternative paradigm to produce better outcomes for children and parents. While the current adversarial family law system statistically prefers one parent in charge, as the judicial system model is hierarchical with a judge in sole charge in family courts, social science shows better outcomes for children when parents collaborate, as the family is a form of collaborative governance. I finally argue that collaborative governance, conflict resolution and non-adversarial processes and techniques provide effective tools to manage family breakup with minimal harm and failure.

Dr. Sinead Conneely & Dr. Roisin O'Shea

Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland

The Family Mediation Project; the Next Iteration, Globally sourced

The Family Mediation project is a research initiative in the South east of Ireland. The project is test-running the next iteration in family mediation, comprising of the most effective elements sourced globally, and is gathering empirical data to evidence outcomes.

The project offers means tested family mediation dealing with guardianship, parenting (access) and maintenance, prioritising the best interests of children, and meeting children to hear their views. We generally offer bi-gender co-mediation. Where one participant is geographically distant in Ireland, or residing in another country, we use Skype to conduct the sessions. This project operates in the context of publicly funded free family mediation service in Ireland, operating since the 1980s, with a very low uptake rate.

The project commenced in December 2013 and is ongoing, and the presenters, Dr Sinead Conneely and Dr Roisin O' Shea, will outline findings to date.

Dr. David Curl

For Kids Sake, Australia

Child Protection Trumps Shared Parenting

2016 may prove to have been a watershed for family law reform in Australia, with censure of the family courts coming from the UN, the Australian Senate, and via the ballot box at a federal election. It now looks increasingly likely that a Government Inquiry into the family law system will be announced.

For the past decade or so, amendments to Australia's 1975 Family Law Act have mirrored a battle both between the sexes and between the two major political parties: shared parenting provisions introduced by the political right-wing, and supported by groups labelled "men's rights activists", were countered by a re-emphasis on child protection by the political left-wing, strongly supported by women's groups and services.

This paper discusses a way forward through this traditional stalemate, based not on the rights of parents or even children, nor even on the principle of shared parenting, but on the most important principle of all: the needs and welfare of children. By focusing entirely on this, the views of two apparently opposing camps can perhaps be reconciled. All share concerns about the timescale, cost, and adversarial nature of family courts, and about child welfare. All share concerns about the qualifications and experience of alleged experts and about routine failures to correctly identify cases of physical or psychological child abuse.

The merits of a new, non-adversarial Commission and of advocating that family separation be treated first and foremost as a health and child welfare issue, rather than a legal one, are also discussed.

Mr. Damien d'Ursel

Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium

To take a step back from the ideal of co-parenting, to better serve *all* couples that are separating

Today, it is no longer so much expected of "good" parents that they do *not* separate, but rather that they separate *well*. According to the new paradigm of co-parenting, parents are notably invited to invest in a form of collaboration between each other around decisions regarding the children.

The application of this program, however, presents certain difficulties in practice.

Many have lived as a couple with almost no communication. In certain cultural milieus, they may even live at a distance from one another. These couples will often be hard pressed, at the time of separation, to invest in a form of collaboration between them for the children.

Additionally, in any social milieu, it can happen that the difficult circumstances of separation provoke a dynamic of "settling of scores" between the ex-partners.

In highly contentious situations, the injunction of professionals to go beyond such negative affects in order to focus on the children's interests, can have the effect, on the one hand, of putting the parents in a situation of perpetual failure and, on the other hand, of making the necessary grieving of their ending relationship even more difficult. Such an injunction to "communicate well" may therefore have the paradoxical effect of increasing the frustration and conflict between the parents.

Inspired, notably, by the intercultural approach, the anthropology and the systemic familial therapy, Damien d'Ursel has developed new attitudes and tools aimed at better serving *all* families experiencing separation, including those that do not fit into the current co-parenting program.

Mr. Jan Piet H. de Man

European Institute for the Best Interests of the Child, Belgium

Belgian Family Courts Shared Parenting Judgments

In this paper I want to present the results of research by myself and the team I'm working together with, in hundreds of recent judgments in cases in which equal shared time parenting has been asked by one parent. They show that too large differences exist between the different courts and individual judges. Among the motivations used, the age of the child is the most often used one. So I'll show how to adapt the parenting time arrangement to the age of the child; for the youngest children these age adapted arrangements inevitably are equal time shared parenting arrangements. I want to add a model of arrangement for reducing the disparity of the judgments, which can be used in mediation and as a default judgment that can be adapted by the parents (and children) to their own family situation.

Dr. Kostis Demertzis

Kostis Demertzis et Partners, Greece

Evolution of shared parenting as a factor for the emergence of a new family law Paradigm

Abstract

The concept of the paper is that, each family system (family Paradigm) is constructed on a multi-doctrinal basis, against which each legal doctrine, or each legal notion, acquires its "meaning". Along family Paradigm shifts, one and the same notion (e.g. the "interest of the child") may display meanings "incommensurable" with each other.

Three family Paradigms are being analyzed:

- (a) The "traditional" family Paradigm, to which the "family-as-a-whole" is fundamental, incorporating the "best interests" doctrine as a factor which moderates the strictness of its rules.

- (b) After the sixties, this model was replaced by the "libertarian" family Paradigm, according to which the family members' individuality prevails decisively upon any concept of "family-as-a-group". The "interest of the child" becomes a "utilitarian" tool for distinguishing the child's individuality vis-a-vis its parents' individualities. "Sole custody", in this system, is by itself a latent doctrine, which is not only defined by the "interest of the child", but also defines it.
- (c) "Shared parenting" points towards another legal Paradigm, which as such is linked, both, to related elements, such as family courts, specialists' involvement and facilitation of negotiated agreements on family disputes, but also to its own prerequisites and applications. It puts parents on an "equal footing" towards their child and towards each other. This is essential, should the family dispute be resolved in a spirit of "justice as fairness". Should the "interest of the child" be re-interpreted within such a system, it affords a fair placement of the child as regards the organized society, its closer family and itself.

Dr. William Fabricius

Arizona State University, USA

Three Studies of Parenting Time: Evidence of Harm and Protection

I will present findings from three new studies of parenting time.

1. Infant Overnights:: When children were under 1 year of age, as well as when they were 2, more overnights with fathers up to and including 50% of overnights at both parents' homes were associated with better long-term mother-child and father-child relationships in college, after controlling for parent conflict, disagreement about overnights, and education; parenting time in later years; and children's sex and age at separation.

2. Relocation: Using a community sample of children living more than 50% time with mothers and stepfathers, we found that relocation of either biological parent before adolescence predicted serious behavior problems including delinquency; anxiety and depression symptoms; and disturbed relationships with non-residential fathers as well as with residential mothers and step-fathers in adolescence and young adulthood, after controlling for mother-stepfather conflict and domestic violence; mother-biological father relationship quality; and mothers' family income.

3. Parenting Time and Parent Conflict. In high conflict families, moderate amounts of parenting time with fathers were associated with long-term painful feelings about the divorce in college, but at 50% parenting time those painful feelings were greatly reduced. Using a community sample and a longitudinal design, we found that low to moderate amounts of parenting time in early adolescence likely caused harm to the father-child relationship 3 years later, whereas relationships were preserved at 50% parenting time. Examining parenting time from these three perspectives reveals a consistent picture of benefits resulting from equal parenting time and harm due to moderate and low amounts of parenting time with fathers. By affecting so many children, parenting time is a major public health issue.

Dr. Sandra Inês Feitor

Sandra Inês Feitor Law Office, Portugal

Legal and Psychological Significance of Deprivation of Family Life - a Contribution to Better Understand and fulfil the Child's Best Interests – PhD project

In last few years we are facing some legal transformations in family law, namely the law 61/208, of 31.10 - that made obligatory the shared parenting, – law 141/2015, of 08.09 – that reform children's procedural law, and law 142/2015, of 08.09 – that reforms children's best interest concept.

Family life is a fundamental and bilateral right granted in Constitutional Portuguese Act, as well, is State obligation to protect children from parental authority abuse, representing child best interest delimitations to parental authority. Civil Code referees that parents can't deny family life of children's. Family law imposes to parents an obligation to actively promote family life of their children with the non-guardian after separation/divorce. Already promoted by European Council in Recommendation 2079, of 02th October 2015, and in the reform of child best interest concept "...high priority on the interests and rights of children, including the continuity of quality and significant caring relationships...", and "...continuity of

deep psychological relations – (...) the child's right to preserve the structural affective relations of great significance and reference for their healthy and harmonious development...”.

This represents the subjective and psychological importance behind the law, recognizing and improving child best interest, sometimes, against parents protecting them from parental abuse of authority.

Understanding the meaning and impact on children's psycho-emotional development facing family conflict and deprivation of family life, as well, law connections and meanings, allow us to conform the content of child best interest and to better improve court decisions.

Prof. Luis Flaquer

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Anna Escobedo

Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Anna Garriga

Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain &

Carmen Moreno

Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

Gender equality, child well-being and shared residence in Spain

In the last few years there has been a significant growth of divorce cases involving shared residence in Spain where they have shifted from 9.6 percent of divorces with children in 2007 to 24.6 percent in 2015. Recent developments show that the debate on shared residence is shifting from benefits gained by parents from the perspective of gender equality to the questions related to the quality of care and to the consequent outcomes for children in terms of their well-being. The development of shared residence reveals an increasing centrality of children's well-being, rights and interests. Furthermore, it is in line with the growth of family diversity and closely corresponds with the movement in favor of father involvement with the care of children. One of the unsettled issues of research agenda is to investigate the extent to which and under which conditions the growth of shared residence makes a positive contribution to the well-being of children.

This paper has a two-fold objective: (1) to explore the factors that are contributing to the growth of shared residence in Spain and (2) to examine child well-being levels in different types of post divorce families with a particular focus on shared residence. Our analyses draw on two different databases, i.e. the Spanish Statistics of Annulments, Separations and Divorces (2007-2015) and Health Behavior in School-aged Children (HBSC) for Spain 2014. Preliminary results suggest that adolescents have better well-being levels in two-homes than in single-parent households but lower outcomes than those living in intact families.

Dr. Emma Fransson

Centre for Health Equity Studies, Sweden

Sara Brolin Låftman

Viveca Östberg

Anders Hjern &

Malin Bergström

Karolinska Institute, Sweden

The living conditions of children with shared residence – the Swedish example

Among children with separated parents, shared residence – i.e., joint physical custody where the child is sharing his or her time equally between two custodial parents' homes – is increasing in many Western countries and is particularly common in Sweden. The overall level of living among children in Sweden is high; however, the potential structural differences between children in various post-separation family

arrangements have not been sufficiently studied. Potential risks for children with shared residence relate to the daily hassles and stress when having two homes.

This study aims at investigating the living conditions of children with shared residence compared with children living with two custodial parents in the same household and those living with one custodial parent, respectively. Swedish national survey data collected from children aged 10–18 years (n≈5000) and their parents were used. The outcomes were grouped into: Economic and material conditions, Social relations with parents and peers, Health and health behaviors, Working conditions and Safety in school and in the neighborhood, and Culture and leisure time activities.

Results from a series of linear probability models showed that most outcomes were similar for children with shared residence and those living with two custodial parents in the same household, while several outcomes were worse for children living with one parent. However, few differences due to living arrangements were found regarding school conditions.

This study highlights the inequalities in the living conditions of Swedish children, with those living with one parent having fewer resources compared with other children.

Dr. Christine Giancarlo

Mount Royal University, Canada

Kids Come Last: The Effect of Family Law Involvement on Parental Alienation

Our study involved twenty-eight families living in Alberta and British Columbia.

All twenty-eight alienated parents (i.e., participants) were recorded by the researchers in face-to face, one-on-one interviews that were subsequently transcribed and analyzed.

Legal involvement was initiated by alienated parents to help their children as a last-ditch effort, sometimes after many years of attempting to collaborate with the alienator. Legal and non-legal, court-directed professionals were ill-equipped to manage alienation clients and cases; in one case, the judge openly refused to read the affidavits of the parents. In others, judges relied on incomplete, inappropriate, or incompetent "reports" from mental health professionals; and some lawyers in court reported hearsay from the alienator as evidence against the targeted parent. Legal professionals, intentionally or not, maximized their profits by unduly prolonging their alienation cases. Alienating parents, motivated to destroy their children's relationship with the other parent, are uncooperative in any resolution initiative ordered by the Court. Resolution of this urgent issue will necessitate timely, appropriate and enforced intervention by social services and police. Prevention can only be achieved by educating parents of the potential damage done to their children should they engage in uncooperative parenting and especially by addressing the root causes of alienation: mental illness in the alienator, vengeance against the targeted parent, and financial benefit to the alienator.

Prof. Michel Grangeat

University of Grenoble Alpes, France

Judicial decision making: influences and possible perspectives

Numerous research results demonstrated that judicial decision making is deeply influenced by factors that are exogenous with regard of the judged case. A seminal study by English, Mussweiler and Strack (2006) shown that judges' decisions are influenced by external factors.

These German researchers demonstrated that the decision of a judge is altered by the suggestion from a journalist's, by the advice of a prosecutor, and even by the number resulting from a dice throwing. In parallel, a Swiss study by Kuhn, Villeta and Willy-Jayet (2005) demonstrated that the judge's decision is influence by the measurement unit: for a same case, a sanction expressed in years is always heavier than a sanction in months or days. In France, an overview by Faget (2008), a researcher from CNRS, shown how judicial decisions are influenced by the current reinforcement of the bureaucratic organization of the judicial system. A synthesis by Goldszlagier (2016), in the French Judicial School journal, shed light

on defense disadvantages in the current trial organization for both the judge and the defense are influenced by the prosecution who benefits of the first statements and claims. The paper suggested that judicial actors can minimize these influences through a collegial council in charge of the most controversial and challenging cases. These studies do not concern shared parenting decisions but suggest fruitful perspectives for further research and for judicial recommendations.

Dr. Jorge Guerra González

University of Lüneburg, Germany

Joint Custody and the prevention of child harm: the answer of the European Court of Human Rights (Moog v Germany, 06.10.2016)

Joint Custody guarantees that both parents are set in a similar legal position after splitting apart. Where it is not the case one of these parents is in a stronger position than the other one. In a potentially (very) high conflictive family situation this power may be used against the legally weaker parent - over their common children.

The worst consequence is the so called parental alienation. One child is prevented to see his or her parents - often at his or her own "request". The harm to the child in this case has been proven - legally it is out of question.

Nevertheless some Family Courts - at least in Germany - have problems in stopping this process. The European Court of Human Rights has just condemned Germany for this reason. This interesting decision (Moog v Germany) constated very recently that if a child does not see one of his/her parents for a sufficient long time, it is the State who is to blame - irrespective of the circumstances.

Some work has to be done in this regard, and prevention - for example by promoting joint custody as a rule - should be one the strategies.

Dr. Jennifer J. Harman

Colorado State University, USA

Julie Prosser, MA,
Pearl Outland, MA,
Alexis Nannini, &
Alexa Vasquez

Colorado State University USA

Gender biases: How stereotype violations affect recommendations for child custody

Decisions about child custody in family courts are largely discretionary, even in jurisdictions where shared parenting laws have been passed. Researchers have long documented how gender stereotypes affect child custody assignment, and both mothers and fathers have argued that they have faced discrimination in family court (e.g., Warshak, 1996). Status incongruity hypothesis (SIH; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012) posits that men and women are penalized for status violations (e.g., backlash) because doing so defends the gender hierarchy. We will present data testing the hypothesis that mothers and fathers who deviate from gender and parental expectations are penalized; they are rated as less effective parents and are not awarded as much custody as those parents who confirm expectations. Participants reviewed a hypothetical divorce case that varied the breadwinner/working status of the mother and father in a fully crossed experimental design. They then rated the parties on perceptions of parenting and employment aptitude, and submitted a ruling and opinion for how property and child custody should be allocated. Although a significant proportion of participants indicated that shared custody (50/50) should be awarded, the overall results lent support to SIH and there being backlash against parents who violated expectations. We will discuss how participants rated fathers who desired more custody of their children (80/20) in comparison to mothers who requested the same arrangement, as well as the justifications for their suggested rulings. Implications for how SIH can be used to increase awareness of bias in family court will also be discussed.

Ms. Annelien Jonckheere

Indigo Koekelare, Belgium

Parents and children in divorce: How to communicate to have a good psychological health and sustainable relationships afterwards.

As a therapist and mediator I work with families in divorce since 10 years. In my experience as well parents as children go to an enormous process of emotions and big changes in how to live together after a divorce.

Also a lot of psychological processes are happening.

- Parents have to let go their relationship as partners but they are still parents. How can they do that? How can they communicate with each other for the best of their children?
- Children have to let go the 'traditional nuclear family' and have to handle with two parents they both love. If the parents are in peace with each other things can be easier but if not...How can children communicate with their both parents in order of having a good psychological health?

In the past years I developed an own method to communicate with children and parents in divorce.

After I heard all the members of the traditional nuclear family and offer them the method of communication, I have a clear sight on possible psychological blockades to communicate optimal. In the end of the method all members are invited to a family circle where we use the learned communication method all together.

It leads to great results which we will measure in a scientific investigation between January 2017 and October 2017.

Ms. Karen Kristjanson

Leading Women for Shared Parenting, Canada

Co-Parenting from the Inside Out: Voices of Moms and Dads

The lived experience of shared parenting is described by Karen Kristjanson, a coach, consultant and author who shared the parenting of her sons, now grown, with their father. Wanting to support other co-parents, Kristjanson chose a grounded research approach, interviewing 42 mothers and fathers from across North America to see what patterns emerged. The situations of the parents interviewed included very co-operative relationships; high conflict interactions with extensive legal involvement; families with lesbian mothers; children with special needs; parents with special needs; parental alienation; and addictions. Patterns of parents' communication with the children and each other, and their impacts, are woven throughout.

Participants will hear:

- Actions parents took that made a difference for them and their children
- Themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews, including how personal growth strengthened parents and children
- Tools that parents can use to understand their situation and broaden their perspective
- True stories illustrating the themes
- A new psychosocial model of shared parenting and the parents' context

The stories are not "happily ever after", but most demonstrate that parents' choices can improve their children's lives and their own. They help parents to understand that they are not alone, and learn from others' experiences.

Prof. Edward Kruk

University of British Columbia, Canada

Shared Parenting and Parental Alienation: The Current State and Future Directions for Research

The intersection of shared parenting and parental alienation is a vital issue for social science research, as it has long been argued that parental alienation flourishes in situations where one parent has exclusive care and control of children, and primary residence of children is often granted to parents with serious psychological problems who mount the stronger case in the adversarial arena (McMurray and Blackmore, 1992; Kruk, 2013). Yet according to Saini et al (2016), there are still relatively few high quality studies of parental alienation, and the alienation phenomenon remain a hypothesis in need of further empirical testing.

This presentation will examine the current state of research on parental alienation, arguing that research advances over the past two years allow us to conclude that parental alienation is far more common and debilitating, for both children and parents, than previously believed. I will argue that given the social science consensus on the reality of parental alienation, the need for research on the effectiveness of different approaches to parental alienation reunification is urgently needed, as reunification programs are rapidly being developed in response to the increasing professional recognition of parental alienation and corresponding demand for reunification programs. A case will be made for the need for both quantitative research from the perspective of children and parents themselves, and qualitative research utilizing a "simulated client" data gathering technique. The presentation will conclude with a summary of the current state of knowledge on parental alienation, and specific recommendations for the study of reunification programs.

Dr. Michael Lamb

Cambridge University, UK

Critical analysis of research on parenting plans and children's well-being

In order to understand children's responses to the divorce or separation of their parents, it is important to understand normative processes of development, including the development of child-parent relationships, stress reactivity, vulnerability and resilience, as well as individual differences in these domains. In that context, it is easier to conceptualize the diverse ways in which children with different backgrounds might be affected by their parents' separation. My presentation will review published research from this perspective.

Dr. Yuk-King Lau

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Post-Divorce Co-parenting and Children's Well-Being in Hong Kong

This article reports a survey study on post-divorce co-parenting and its relationships with children's well-being in Hong Kong. Based on data from 142 resident parents and 84 children, the results revealed that inter-parental conflict and triangulation of children within parental conflict adversely affected children's well-being, while inter-parental support fostered children's well-being. Parental communication and inter-parental support coexisted simultaneously with parent conflicts. These conflicting effects make post-divorce co-parenting a mixed blessing for children. Fortunately, residential parent-child intimacy and quality parenting by both parents protected children's well-being from the effects of negative relational dynamics. Promoting post-divorce co-parenting should always accompany effective interventions in conflict resolution, the renegotiation of growth-enhancing boundaries among family members, the support of parental functioning and individual recovery of both parents, and the facilitation of noncompetitive parental involvement of nonresident parents.

Ms. Leslie Loftis

Writer and member of Leading Women for Shared Parenting, USA

The Political Issues of Implementing Shared Parenting Laws

In the past few years, twenty US states have promoted Shared Parenting bills with Arizona, South Dakota, Utah, and Missouri updating laws to allow children to spend more time with both parents post separation. However, sizable efforts in other states have resulted in failure to implement shared parenting through the normal legislative process, failure to implement recommendations of governor appointed task forces, or failure to enact change through citizen sponsored ballot initiatives. I will provide an overview of the political arguments and opposition to the implementation of shared parenting legislation.

The presentation will include the successful implementation of new law in Arizona as well as a review of the actions of the Bar Associations in various states (Nebraska, North Dakota, Florida, and Massachusetts), the involvement of various women's organizations (American Association of University Women, North Dakota Women's Network, the National Organization for Women, the League of Women Voters, National Council of Jewish Women and UniteWomen.Org), and the progress being made in the gaining acceptance in the media of shared parenting as the best public policy. "Typical" talking points used by those opposing shared parenting will be reviewed.

The presentation will also include a review of the results of all of the reliable polling on shared parenting among the populace as well as a preview of the upcoming legislative session and the territories where we expect the greatest activity in 2017. Finally, opportunities created by the international "anti-establishment" political wave will be examined for how this force relates to the family law industry.

Dr. Pamela Ludolph

University of Michigan, USA

Shared Care for Very Young Children: Research, Theory, and Custody Arrangements

Shared care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers raises heated debates, and presents challenges in creating parenting plans. Traditional custody arrangements have restricted the father's time with young children based on attachment theory, as construed by John Bowlby in the 1950's and 1960's. The theory warned against separating young children from their mothers for fear of undermining a secure attachment which would, in turn, have long-lasting effects on the child. According to subsequent research by Lamb and others, however, babies form attachments to both parents. Both mothers and fathers play unique and critical roles in the earliest years of their child's development. In addition, the recent work of attachment researchers has shown that the link between early childhood attachment to mothers and children's future outcomes is weak and inconsistent. At present there is little evidence for setting limits on children's overnight parenting time with their fathers. The few studies available are not methodologically sound. Nor is there an empirical basis for checklists such as CODIT ("Charting Overnight Decisions for Infants and Toddlers"), which has recently emerged as a list of children's behaviors and family circumstances that purportedly determine whether overnighting is appropriate for particular families. Checklists such as CODIT—which is currently posted on Oregon's family court website—should not be used as guidelines for creating custody plans. Suggestions are offered for parenting plans for very young children based on available research and advice in the literature, as well as the experience of a forensic psychologist and clinician.

Ms. Catherine MacWillie

Custody Calculations, Calendars & Orders, USA

Parallel Parenting and Why Co Parenting May Not Be the Right Choice for Families of Divorce

In today's divorce environment of extreme litigation, parental alienation, false child abuse allegations, false police reports and false restraining orders, field in an attempt to gain an advantage in custody an alternative to co-parenting is a must to protect the parent child relationship and shared custody.

In light of a growing number of judicial decisions across the country due to the inability of parents to co-parent the courts are severing or severely limiting contact between many parents and their children. A decision detrimental to everyone involved specially children who suffer ~ lacking regular and frequent contact with both parents, however different, their parenting styles may be.

This is also in direct opposition to what the courts actually desire but is the result nonetheless. It is also a decision that ultimately results in many cases to the loss of all contact between a parent and a child as the primary parent now seeks further destruction of the non primary parent and child relationship with full immunity lacking recognition of courts of an already existing alternative to the scenario such as parallel parenting.

Aggravating the scenario is that the courts usually decide in favor of the more aggressive and alienating parent who is usually more financially capable and who is by the very definition more presentable to the courts.

As opposed to the target parent who is often under severe duress and suffering from PTSD and seen as less capable in and out of court and during assessments. An issue which could be reduced or obstructed with early awareness and use of parallel parenting by parents, the courts and other experts.

Parallel parenting can be implemented without an order of the courts. Another significant benefit. But certainly a bonus if court ordered at the onset of the divorce, custody and shared parenting process. As opposed to the current failed model of co-parenting.

Mr. Ian Maxwell

Families Need Fathers Scotland, Scotland, UK

Beating the drum for Shared Parenting

This paper will tell the story of how Families Need Fathers Scotland is working to change Scottish family law and what was done to bring other children's and parent's organisations on board to support this effort. Although still part of the United Kingdom, Scotland has its own laws and court system. The current family law dates back to 1995. It still refers to residence and contact orders which makes obtaining court orders for any form of more equal sharing of parental responsibilities more difficult.

In moves to persuade politicians and family professionals of the need for change, FNF Scotland mustered research data and foreign experiences of the benefits of shared parenting for children. By May 2017 we should know how successful this campaign has been. As well as telling the specific Scottish story, the paper will present general lessons for other countries on how to campaign effectively on this topic and build a wide support base to change the law.

Prof. Yoav Mazeh

Family, Equality & Law Research Institute, Ono Academic College, Israel

Recognizing the Importance of the Other Parent as a Prerequisite for Parental Responsibility

Studies have found that joint custody is important for the child's development and wellbeing. The involvement of both parents in the day-to-day life of the children, and the children's ability to maintain a meaningful relationship with both is vital for the children: each parent needs to appreciate the importance of the other for the child, and allow the child to maintain a meaningful relationship with the other parent.

We expect courts to consider joint custody as the default option, and view negatively parents who without just cause undermine the involvement of the other parent. In practice, most custody disputes concern one parent refusing to accept the role of the other, seeking to marginalize that parent's involvement in the upbringing of the children. Because the custodial parent controls the relationship of the other parent with the child, a parent who is hostile to the involvement of the other parent with the child should be declared unfit for sole or even joint custody.

Nevertheless, courts worldwide routinely award custody to hostile parents, particularly mothers. Unless a parent provides evidence that the other parent is dangerous for the children, recognizing the importance of the other parent should be a prerequisite for parental responsibility. This principle should serve as a key test in parental disputes. Implementing this principle would clarify, for example, the need to withdraw parental responsibilities from parents who alienate their children from the other parent, make false allegations, try to relocate and distance their children from the other parent, etc.

Dr. Paul Millar

Nipissing University in North Bay Ontario, Canada

Ms. Martine Dennie

University of Calgary, Canada

Gender in Family Law Contempt of Court Cases in Quebec, Canada

Of all areas of law, family law might be most expected to be affected by gender, yet there are few studies that attempt to measure its effects. Moreover, as the ranks of the judiciary become more populated with women, few studies have explored the difference that female jurists might bring to legal outcomes. With a distinct civil legal regime and strong cultural emphasis on gender equality, Quebec, of all Canadian jurisdictions might be expected to have the least differential outcomes by gender. Quebec also uses general contempt of court proceedings in superior court where most decisions are reported, to deal with child support defaults and access denial. This study examines all reported cases of contempt of court in family law in the province of Quebec for the period 2000-2015 to understand the effects of gender the gender of both the judge and the defendant on the determination of culpability and sentencing.

Dr. Linda Nielsen

Wake Forest University, USA

Joint Physical Custody vs. Sole Physical Custody: Outcomes for children independent of parental conflict and income

Is joint physical custody (JPC) where children live with each parent at least 35% of the time linked to any better or worse outcomes for children than sole physical custody (SPC)? In what situations is JPC linked to worse outcomes? To what extent are children's outcomes linked to their parents' incomes and levels of conflict? When parents do not have low conflict, collaborative co-parenting relationships, are children better off if one parent has sole physical custody or if parents have shared physical custody? In 40 of 50 studies JPC children had better outcomes on measures of behavioral, emotional, and physical well-being and better relationships with parents and grandparents. In 4 studies the outcomes were equal. In 6 studies on some measures certain groups of children had worse outcomes. In all 35 studies that controlled for family income or parental conflict, JPC was linked to better outcomes. In the 20 studies that compared JPC and SPC parents' levels of conflict at the time of separation or in subsequent years, JPC parents did not have significantly more cooperative or lower conflict relationships. Higher conflict and poorer co-parenting were not linked to worse outcomes for children in JPC than in SPC families. JPC was linked to worse outcomes when children had poor relationships with their fathers or had poor relationships with both parents while simultaneously being caught in the middle of high conflict.

Prof. Patrick Parkinson

University of Sydney, Australia

Relocation and the indissolubility of parenthood

Relocation disputes are the San Andreas Fault of family law. They reflect the tension between the freedom of people as adults to leave a relationship and begin a new life for themselves, and the harsh reality that while marriages (and other relationships) may be dissoluble, parenthood is not. Children usually benefit from a close and continuing relationship with a non-resident parent who loves them and wants to be involved in their lives. Maintaining that connection, if one parent moves a long way from the other is difficult.

This paper is based upon the findings of a five-year prospective longitudinal study of relocation disputes in Australia, involving 80 parents and 33 children. It is argued that decision-making in relocation cases must be resolutely child-centered. It cannot be based upon adults' rights. The adjudication of relocation disputes should involve asking three fundamental questions. First, how close is the relationship between the non-resident parent and the child and how important is that relationship developmentally to the child? Second, if the relocation is to be permitted, how viable are the proposals for contact with the non-resident parent? Third, if the relationship between the child and the non-resident parent is developmentally important to the child and is likely to be diminished if the move is allowed, then a) what are the viable alternatives to the parents living a long distance apart? b) is a move with the primary caregiver the least detrimental alternative?

Mr. George Piskor

Osgoode Hall Law School (York University), Canada

Child Support Determination for Complex Families

Existing Child Support models dating back to 1980-90 are premised on the nuclear family construct which does not reflect the contemporary where up to 30% of situations are multi-sibship, multi-household "complex" families. No mathematical model exists for these situations leaving the courts to adopt crude rules of thumb or to apply existing models which typically ignore extended family implications. Indeed, many jurisdictions have yet to deal with shared parenting situations in a consistent and predictable manner. Research to date indicates that the complex family problem enters into new considerations of multi-criteria group decision not amenable to a straight forward solution. This paper breaks new ground by proposing two scalable interactive heuristic solutions utilizing extensions to the dominant Income Shares calculation methodology. It demonstrates that tractable solutions backward-compatible with existing methodologies are possible albeit correspondingly more complex and likely requiring specialist training. Additionally, it identifies the need to confront the societal question of obligations of one household to support possibly unrelated households linked together through complex sibship relationships-i.e. the "brother's keeper" conundrum.

Mrs. Dorcy Pruter

Conscious Co-Parenting Institute, USA

The High Road to Reunification A Whole Family Solution to a Whole Family Problem

Traditional therapeutic models have failed to recover and reunite alienation children with their normal range targeted parents. Many reunification programs reunite children in the short term and have no plan for long-term success. The High Road provides a supportive environment where the entire family learns the same set of skills to consciously collaborate and thrive. The High Road is an all-inclusive response to an all or nothing problem. This four-step process successfully restores and reorganizes families after a high conflict divorce

The process requires participation from all family members much like a process for any child abuse or protection issue. Once diagnostic clarity is achieved as an attachment-related family pathology by a

trained mental health professional following the assessment and diagnostic process laid out by Dr. Childress, the child is brought into protective custody, then the child and targeted parent are coached through a process of recovering the child's access to empathy and the family learns the resiliency skills needed to bring the child out of the middle and back into a relationship with both parents. The child and parents learn how to participate in the new family paradigm. The pathogenic parent is reintegrated back into the child's life once the family is stabilized.

Dr. Irwin Sandler

Arizona State University, USA

New Evidence of a Program's Impact to Strengthen the Quality of Father Post-divorce Parenting

This presentation will discuss the state of evidence of the relations between the quality of father parenting following divorce and children's post-divorce adjustment. We will first discuss what we mean by "quality of parenting". We will then discuss new evidence that the quality of father post-divorce parenting is associated with children's well-being particularly when there is high levels of interparental conflict and low levels of father parenting time. Finally, we will discuss new evidence on the effects of an experimental study of a brief 10-session program to strengthen the quality of father-child relationship. The study will address two questions: Can the brief program strengthen the quality of father post-divorce parenting? What is the impact on children of strengthening quality of father parenting?

Prof. Hildegund Sünderhauf

Lutheran University of Applied Sciences Nuremberg, Germany

Legal and social development of shared physical custody in Europe

Since WW II, the role model in families has changed all over Europe from the "bread earning father and housewife"- ideal to both working parents with shared parental responsibility (legally and physically). This change has been followed by law in a first step already: Countries in Europe have changed from single legal custody after divorce to shared legal custody. As a second step law is changing from sole custody to shared physical custody. Looking at the development in several European countries makes a prognosis possible: shared parenting will be the legal presumption and getting "normal" soon.

The European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights and article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantee for a parent and child, being together as an essential part of family life. Due to this and due to the doctrine of non discrimination to fathers, the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe passed in October 2015 Resolution No. 2079 "quality and shared parental responsibility: The role of fathers." This resolution includes the strong recommendation to all nations to introduce into their laws the principle of shared residence following a separation, limiting any exceptions to cases of child abuse or neglect, or domestic violence.

Dr. Vittorio Carlo Vezzetti

ATS-Insubria (Agency for Health Protection), Italy

New approaches to divorce with children: a problem of public health

What do we really know about parenting&health? This broad review elaborates objectively on the most up-to-date knowledge on biochemical and psychobiological aspects of parental loss and other childhood adversities during divorce involving minor children. So far divorce involving minor children was unfortunately considered by authorities only as a purely juridical problem and this approach has often allowed a completely different approach according to the Courts. Now scientific research, also making use of animal models, is demonstrating the biological basis of the problem and the indisputable consequences on the wellbeing and health of children. The researches cited in this review were identified by searching the databases in PubMed, PsycINFO, Social Science Research Index, MedSciNet and considered able to give a meaningful contribute to five areas:

1. biological effects on animal models health linked to parental separation
2. psychobiological effects on infant health linked to parental separation and other childhood adversities,
3. biological consequences of parental loss and childhood adversities in humans (more in detail: A- influence on hormones like ACTH, Growth Hormone, Oxytocine, Thyroid hormones and TSH. B - Cytokines as Tumor Necrosis Factor and Interleukine 6 -and consequences on a broad range of diseases-. C- Chromosomes and genes D- Immunitary system. E- CRP levels. D- Influence on puberty and height)
4. social effects of parental loss and stress
5. comparison between possible effects of shared and sole parenting on child and young adult health (A-conflict B-parental loss C-general wellbeing).

The innovative conclusion of this review (the most complete ever on this topic and just published on double blind peer reviewed "Journal of Health Psychology Open" <http://hpo.sagepub.com/content/3/2/2055102916678105.full.pdf+html>) is that this argument is primarily a question of public health and that it is necessary to further harmonise practices in this area such as in the medical world where shared and common guidelines usually exist.

Prof. Sabine Walper

German Youth Institute e.V., Germany

Post-separation shared parental care in Germany

Compared to other European countries, there is a lack of information about post-separation parenting arrangements in Germany. While the current legal situation acknowledges only strict arrangements of children's dual residence (50% time with each parent), there is a demand for a broader understanding of shared care. This study used three data sets to analyze demographic features, socio-economic conditions, (co-)parenting and children's well-being in separated families using different arrangements of children's overnights and contact with each parent. The data come from two representative surveys ("Growing Up in Germany: Everyday Life" and the German family panel "pairfam") and a study focusing separated families only. The findings suggest an overall low prevalence (5%) of shared care (60% : 40% arrangements). Dual residence is largely restricted to parents living in the same area. Furthermore, there is a higher rate of shared care among higher educated parents. No differences regarding children's well-being could be found. The findings are discussed in the context of international evidence.

Dr. Richard Warshak

University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, USA

Complicated Delivery: The Untold Story and Aftermath of the International Consensus Report on Parenting Plans for Young Children

Warshak, with the review and endorsement of 110 researchers and practitioners, analyzed more than four decades of research and issued a peer-reviewed consensus report on parenting plans for children under four. As intended, the report stemmed a tide of misinformation that was threatening to resurrect myths about infant attachment and child development and enshrine them in professional practice and family law. The list of endorsers and their professional accomplishments reflect the widespread acceptance among scientists of the consensus report's findings that favor shared parenting and overnighting for very young children under normal circumstances. More than three years after its publication, the conclusions and recommendations of the Warshak consensus report remain supported by science. Critics of the consensus report have not challenged its conclusions but some have impugned the motives and scholarship of the endorsers and expressed concern that the report's critique of two outlier studies contributed to divisiveness among scholars. Some critics questioned the value of publishing a paper with scientists' endorsements. Having the paper reviewed by the endorsers brought the benefits of feedback and vetting from prominent international authorities on attachment, daycare, and divorce, and the outstanding stature of the signatories has captured the attention of decision makers for the report's conclusions and recommendations. The report does not maintain that its conclusions are scientific merely because a large number of well-qualified researchers and practitioners endorse the conclusions. Rather,

the consensus report reflects that 110 highly accomplished professionals, based on their understanding of the literature and on their professional experiences, accept the report's research-based conclusions.

Mr. Martin Widrig, MLaw

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Rethinking the Child's Best Interests Standard based on a Human Rights Perspective

The Child's best interests standard has been widely criticized. Hillary Clinton, for instance, called the Child's best interests standard a "rationalization by decisionmakers justifying their judgements about children's future, like an empty vessel into which adult perceptions and prejudices are poured". Her statement brings to the point concerns shared by many scholars: Although it is a sound standard in theory, in practice it may provide too much judicial discretion and a potential risk for abuse. This can be illustrated by the fact that in the past the Child's best interests (CBI) have been used to justify father as well as mother custody standards. In Switzerland, the CBI was even an argument brought up in the 1970ies to justify the prevention of women from the right to vote. Furthermore, individualized decision-making based on the CBI-standard has been held for too ambitious in practice, e.g. for the lack of sufficient know-how or insufficient economic resources, overburdened courts and practitioners. In consequence, although thought for children, the Child's best interests standard might cause more harm than benefits for children concerned.

Adequate guidelines could reduce this problem. Such guidelines are provided by Human Rights. They seem to provide a rebuttable presumption of what the CBI mean, are compatible with and complementary to knowledge from social science research.

This presentation questions the CBI-standard as it is used in practice from a human rights perspective by analysing Human Rights Treaties, namely the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and comparing the application of the Child's best interests standard in custody disputes with its application in other areas of law concerning children under the perspective of the principles of equality and non-discrimination of children. It concludes that human rights provide a basic framework that limits judicial discretion without jeopardizing possibilities for justified interventions to protect children. The Human Rights approach may also provide new legal questions to be answered by social science research.

Dr. Adam Williams

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Parental Involvement Among First and Second-Generation Immigrants to the United States

Research has consistently shown that higher father involvement is associated with positive outcomes for children. Antecedents of fathers' involvement have been studied mostly from a micro perspective, focusing on the individual or couple level, showing that antecedents of father involvement include parental identity, mother's perception of the role of the father, and different individual attributes, such as education, ethnic, and racial background. Few studies have attempted to take a broader perspective on fathers' involvement and estimate the role of cross-cultural differences. The current study aims to estimate the effect of national culture on fathers' involvement by using the American Time Use Survey to study the effect of country of origin on the quantity and type of fathers' involvement between first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants, and Americans who are at least third generation in the United States. We expect father involvement levels among first-generation immigrant fathers to be aligned with cultural norms of their country of origin and we expect second-generation immigrant fathers to be closer to that of U.S. fathers. Additionally, we code each country of origin based on two cultural dimensions: masculinity/femininity score and individualism/collectivism score. Finally, we interact immigration status with the cultural dimensions to estimate if the convergence of fathers' involvement among immigrants is slower when they immigrated from national cultures that are more dissimilar to the US, controlling for time in the United States, age upon arrival to the United States and demographic characteristics.