



# The Resource Page

## THE ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND CONCILIATION COURTS

The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts is an excellent resource for judicial officers in both the domestic relations and juvenile areas. The AFCC had its beginnings in California in 1963 and since that time it has grown to be an interdisciplinary, international association of professionals dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through the resolution of family conflict.

Per the AFCC website: *The AFCC promotes a collaborative approach to serving the needs of children among those who work in and with family law systems, encouraging education, research, and innovation and identifying best practices. AFCC members have led the way in developing new processes and programs to meet the needs of families in conflict. Members of the association have conducted research and written books that served as the impetus for reform in family courts and public policy arenas throughout the world. Indeed, the changes in family court systems and within AFCC over the years have been remarkable. What has not changed, however, are the ideas that inspired AFCC's founders: that an organization facilitating an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and information can serve as an agent of change and a catalyst for the needs of families, and especially children, in conflict.*

The AFCC publishes a quarterly journal, *The Family Court Review*, which provides scholarly articles on a variety of topics touching on families and children in the court system. The AFCC also conducts an annual conference that attracts respected professionals from all relevant disciplines to discuss the important topics in the field.

Information on membership, the *Family Court Review*, and the annual conference can be found at: <https://afccnet.org/>

## BOOKS, JUSTICE, AND DISCRIMINATION

Kristin Henning (Blume Professor of Law and Director of the Juvenile Justice Clinic and Initiative at Georgetown Law) has recently published, *The Rage of Innocence: How American Criminalizes Black Youth* (Pantheon, 2021). For more than 25

years, Henning has been an attorney representing youth accused of committing crimes in the Washington, D.C. area. This book brings forth the stories of some of those youth and the ways in which the criminal justice system is discriminatory toward Black children. Henning highlights how Black children have been systematically criminalized and marginalized in ways that white children have not been. Publisher's website: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/623467/the-rage-of-innocence-by-kristin-henning/>

## JUVENILES AND MENTAL HEALTH DIVERSIONS

The National Judicial Task Force to Examine Courts' Response to Mental Illness was established by the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators in 2020. The Task Force's objective is to "assist state courts in their efforts to more effectively respond to the needs of court-involved individuals with serious mental illness." In the spring of 2022, the Task Force released its *Juvenile Justice Mental Health Diversion Guidelines and Principles*. Over half of the youth involved in the juvenile justice system had had more than one traumatic experience such as family violence, emotional or physical abuse, or neglect. Nearly 90% have at least one such experience and such issues are prevalent in our juvenile justice systems. The *Guidelines* provide courts with practical guidance for constructing systems that help address these mental health needs and divert appropriate youth away from "deeper involvement with the justice system at multiple points of contact." The *Guidelines* help courts find paths to cross-system collaboration and advise on the appropriate use of standardized screenings and assessments. The report also provides an informative list of resources for a court ready to tackle this critical challenge. The *Guidelines* can be accessed at [https://www.ncsc.org/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0029/74495/Juvenile-Justice-Mental-Health-Diversion-Final.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/74495/Juvenile-Justice-Mental-Health-Diversion-Final.pdf)

## JUDICIAL ETHICS

One of the great resources for new and experienced judges wanting to be sure they maintain the high ethical standards of our

office is the Center for Judicial Ethics (CJE). The CJE is a clearinghouse for information about judicial ethics and discipline. As the CJE itself explains, it "provides research support for the conduct commissions that investigate complaints of judicial misconduct, publishes education material for judges, and tracks opinions issued by ethics advisory committees." The quarterly *Judicial Conduct Reporter* is a must-read for any judge looking to learn lessons from the missteps of others. Few will read it without having some decisions of their own come to mind, whether with comfort or discomfort. CJE's weekly blog called *Judicial Ethics and Discipline* is also an excellent source for brushing up on the daily ethical challenges we face as judges. Both are overseen by *Court Review's* own judicial ethics columnist, Cynthia Gray. You can sign up for either service, find weekly ethics tips, and find more information at <https://www.ncsc.org/topics/judicial-officers/ethics/center-for-judicial-ethics>

## ONLINE WORKPLACE HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION TRAINING FOR JUDGES

The CJE provides another handy resource if you are involved in judicial discipline or have an administrative role in your court—an online training course, *Judicial Branch Workplace Sexual Harassment & Discrimination Training*. This training provides helpful insights to judicial officers about their unique roles and responsibilities in the workplace, helping to bring a perspective that is too often overlooked in judicial training and that can lead to serious problems for the individual judge as well as the court system as a whole. This can be a very useful tool for dealing with situations, hopefully before they develop, in your courthouse. It can be accessed at <https://www.ncsc.org/topics/judicial-officers/ethics/center-for-judicial-ethics/judicial-branch-workplace-sexual-harassment-and-discrimination-training>