

Alberta Family Mediation Society Newsletter

Edition 20: December 2006

Special points of interest:

- We welcome your input about the newsletters and encourage you to submit articles and features

Greetings from the AFMS Board of Directors:

On behalf of the Board of the Alberta Family Mediation Society, we would like to extend our best wishes for the holidays and for a happy new year to our members and their families.

In the midst of your holiday shopping, consider giving a Gift Certificate from the CRNetwork bookstore. Visit <http://www.cnetwork.ca/bookstore/allbooks2.asp?letter=a> to view our selection of available books. For more information about the gift certificate, please e-mail crnetwork@crnetwork.ca Wishing you peace and happiness during this holiday season.

The Board and Staff of Conflict Resolution Network Canada

Inside this issue:

<i>Holiday Greetings</i>	1
<i>Lunch and Learn sessions</i>	2
<i>Helpful Information</i>	3
<i>Article— Human Rights as a Framework for change</i>	4
<i>Quotes</i>	4

AFMS NEW Board of Directors

Ms. Geeta Bharadia (President)

Ms. Jane Warren (Vice President)

Ms. Kim Rieger (Secretary)

Kate Wood (Treasurer)

Lynn Parish

Dr. Trevor Neil

Mary Jane Klein

Mr. Michael Porter

Ms. Bonnie Murray

Ms. Shelley Taggart

Kent Taylor (Past President)

President)

Lunch and Learn Sessions

The location is always the Edmonton City Hall in the Heritage Room. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. and the presentations run from noon until 1:00 p.m. There is a question period and mixer beginning at 1:00 to 1:30. This is a great venue to learn, share information and network with colleagues (all over a lunch break).

Watch for details in the January New Year Newsletter

There is no cost and you just need to bring your own lunch.

These sessions have been held now for several years.

A.F.M.S. Address :

#1650- 246 Stewart Green SW

Calgary, AB T3H 3C8

Alberta family Mediation Society

CONFERENCE 2007 –

MARK THIS DATE: APRIL 27TH, 2007, HOTEL ARTS, CALGARY

It's time to start thinking about our annual AFMS Conference! This year we have engaged **Constance Ahrons**, author of *The Good Divorce* and *We're Still Family*, as our conference speaker.

Constance is an internationally renowned lecturer, workshop leader, and consultant, considered to be one of the top professionals in the field of divorce. An innovative thinker with over 30 years of experience as an educator, family therapist, and researcher, Constance coined the term "binuclear family" and has pioneered the concept of "a good divorce". As a keynote speaker and lecturer, she is known for her ability to explain complex research concepts and findings in clear, understandable language. One of her trademarks is her use of humour to demonstrate current thinking about societal issues and social change.

This year we are trying something new! We will also be offering an evening presentation (Thursday, April 26, 2007, Hotel Arts, Calgary), aimed at the **public** (your clients and potential clients!). **Constance Ahrons** will be presenting a 2-3 hour public lecture on the subject of the Good Divorce, how that is defined from a child's perspective and solid advice based on her own research for your clients to consider as they co-parent their children in two separate households.

Visit the AFMS website (www.afms.ca) for details or email conference@afms.ca

Save the Date-

**April 27, 2007
See the AFMS
website for
registration
details!**

From the newsletter Editor– Charmaine Hammond

2006 is nearly over, where did the year go?

I hope that you all had a wonderful year and that 2007 brings with it happiness, good health and wonderful learnings.

Help us ensure the newsletter features topics and information that you are interested in. Please contact Charmaine Hammond with your ideas, information that you want to let others know about and any resources that are helpful to parents and families.

All the best for the holiday season and the new year.

Charmaine Hammond 780-464-3828



Helpful Information

The Divorce Helpbook for Kids by Cynthia MacGregor

Children, Divorce and the Holidays
How to Make the Best of a Stressful
Time
(provided by Holly Abery-Wetstone)
& Donna F. Ferber, M.A., C.A.C.
Available from:
[http://www.divorcesource.com/CT/
ARTICLES/wetstone1.html](http://www.divorcesource.com/CT/ARTICLES/wetstone1.html)

Divorce and the Holidays: Split Deci-
sions or Family Friendly Compro-
mise?
by Al Ravitz, M.D.
Available from:
[Www.aboutourkids.org](http://www.aboutourkids.org)

[At Daddy's on Saturdays](#)

By Linda Walvoord Girard

This is a story about a young girl named Katie whose parents are going through a divorce. Real emotions are woven through-
out the story - like the boredom Katie sometimes feels when
she visits her dad, and her fears that he might soon forget their
visits. This is a wonderful story for introducing and discussing
the fears your child may have.

[The Divorce Express](#)

By Paula Danzinger

Danzinger tells the story of a ninth-grade girl, Phoebe, who
must ride a bus - "The Divorce Express" - between her parents'
two homes. Resentful of the changes in her life, Phoebe even-
tually begins to cope and adjust. The result is a powerful story
of one child's resiliency.

Age range: teens through young adults

[I Don't Want to Talk About It](#) *By Jeanie Franz Ransom*

This is a beautifully told story about the wide range of emotions children experience upon hearing
of their parents' divorce. The main character's father talks her through some of the emotions she
might experience. With each new emotion, the girl envisions herself as an animal physically ex-
pressing the same emotion. What emerges is a creative way for parents to discuss and share
their children's emotions in a way that feels safe and acceptable. **Age range:** 4-8

[It's Not Your Fault, Koko Bear](#) *By Vicki Lansky*

This is a story for children *and* a valuable resource for parents. In the story, preschooler Koko
Bear faces the troubling news that her parents are getting a divorce. Mama and Papa Bear com-
passionately listen to Koko's concerns and give her ample opportunity to express her feelings,
while conveying the important message that the divorce is not her fault. **Age range:** 3-7
Includes a guide for parents

Membership Categories with AFMS

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in
separation/divorce mediation.

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in
General Family Mediation.

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing
in Family Business Mediation.

Practicing Mediator (designation for those
who are continuing to gain mediation experi-
ence or for whom mediation is a small part of
their practice.

General Member
Student Member

ALBERTA FAMILY MEDIATION SOCIETY (AFMS)

#1650, 246 Stewart Green SW
Calgary, AB T3H 3C8

Phone: 403-233-0143

1-877-233-0143

Email: info@afms.ca

Website: www.afms.ca



Alberta *family* Mediation Society

*Advancing the practice of
family mediation.*

*We're on the web—
look us up!*

About AFMS

Established in 1984,
the non-profit
society provides
services to family
mediators.

The organization has a
part time administrative
assistant and is managed
by a volunteer board of
directors, with
representatives across the
province.

The society is dedicated to
both professional and public
education regarding family
mediation.

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it
is like wrapping a present and not
giving it. ~William Arthur Ward

Christmas gift suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.

To an opponent, tolerance.

To a friend, your heart.

To a customer, service.

To all, charity.

To every child, a good example.

To yourself, respect.”

Oren Arnold

One kind word can warm
three winter
months. ~Japanese
Proverb

*Perhaps the best Yuletide
decoration is being
wreathed in smiles.*
~ Unknown

Human Rights as a Framework for Change

Submitted by Renee Vaugeois

In Edmonton, increasing concerns over teen and gang violence, homelessness, poverty, and discrimination are indicating that all may not be so well in our community; that there are critical social issues that need to be addressed, and in a manner that is inclusive to all. Creating a change in these areas requires a shift of consciousness, locally and globally. Edmonton is a microcosm of the broader world; a world of increasing global inequalities, yet of incredible potential.

Creating a change in consciousness, which is at the core of overcoming many of our social, economic, and political challenges today, is a long term process. It is a process whereby each individual begins to truly understand their own personal dignity, along with the inherent dignity of others around them. It involves a recognition of our rights as an individual, but also our responsibility to others.

The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as drafted by Canadian lawyer John Peters Humphrey, represents an ideal vision of our world and our communities; one which builds on the inherent dignity of individuals and addresses core economic, social and political rights that are a fundamental basis for peace, freedom and justice. In Edmonton, the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights is actively working to make the declaration a living document – in our community, across Canada, and around the world. Creating this shift of consciousness and enhanced social awareness is at the core of our work. We believe that fundamentally, education about human rights and responsibility, as well as the creation of tools to apply these rights to our daily lives will begin to create an environment of change.

Around the world, there is currently a movement lead by the PDHRE, People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, of 22 cities working to embrace the Universal Declaration as a framework for sustainable development (www.pdhre.org). Edmonton is the first North American city to engage in this initiative, led by the John Humphrey Centre. The Human Rights City Edmonton Project (HRCEP) is now three years in the making and moving towards a community which embraces, enhances and affirms human rights through individuals, organizations and government.

The project has just completed its second phase and is now ready to move into some practical implementation strategies to address human rights issues in the community. The first two stages involved ongoing consultations with the community to define the issues that exist in Edmonton. Currently a research report has been drafted highlighting the challenges and opportunities and will be released in April 2008.

Critical issues that stood in this research were racism and discrimination. Various groups of individuals, whether visible minorities, gay, lesbian and queer, disabled, or aged, continue to feel that much progress needs to be made in Edmonton to create an accepting and inclusive environment; one that breaks down the systemic barriers to the discrimination they face on a daily basis. Marginalized individuals, particularly those on the streets or living in poverty, also report the challenges of discrimination as well as feel that they have no support or access to justice when their rights are violated.

HRCEP is now working in a number of areas to start to address these human rights issues. In partnership with the Study Circles Resource Centre in Ohio, the Centre will be implementing a pilot study circle in Edmonton in January that will hopefully be extended throughout the whole community over the next year. Study Circles are a community based method of creating common understandings and a safe place for dialogue among diverse groups that will enable the development of sustainable solutions and action plans. The Centre is also implementing a human rights training program for leaders from various communities to provide the tools necessary to support and advocate for rights. Scheduled to begin in March, this program will create brokers in our community that can assist individuals with human rights concerns. Along with a variety of other projects, ultimately the HRCEP is working towards enhancing community collaboration and engagement to address human rights, and also to create a space for open dialogue amongst citizens and organizations to create common understandings and strategies for the future. A number of activities are planned throughout the next year and we encourage the community to connect with us to find out more.

In efforts specifically to enhance the capacity in Edmonton's youth to become responsible and engaged leaders in the future, the centre recently bid to host the first ever Youth Assembly at the United Nations. We are proud to announce that from July 30-August 4th, 2007, Edmonton will be hosting this major international gathering "Reach Out, Speak Up: Ignite Change Now" Global Youth Assembly. This assembly will provide educational and leadership development opportunities for youth from throughout Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and the world. The focus of the event will be to ensure there is a wide representation of youth from diverse backgrounds to enable the breaking down of prejudices and barriers and development of tools and strategies for youth engagement. This event will seek to bridge diversity through using alternative mediums to let youth express their energies, including art, music and film.

For a small organization, the John Humphrey Centre has big dreams for Edmonton and the world. To find out more about our programming, please visit our website at www.johnhumphreycentre.org.