

MISSION To protect the needs and rights of children involved in high conflict divorce and custody cases, while educating and supporting those who have the greatest influence on children.



www.childcenteredsolutions.org

Upcoming CCS Events:

Friday, May 4, 1-5PM:
Joan B. Kelly, Ph.D.
"Divorce and Children's Adjustment: Current Research and Implications for Practice"
[Click here to register.](#)

November 2007:
"Effective Representation of Children."
Send a message to info@childcenteredsolutions.org to receive information about this upcoming seminar.

Board of Directors:

Jody Stahancyk, President
Attorney at Law

Dr. Charlene Sabin
Behavioral Pediatrician

Peter Hamilton
Director of High Schools,
Portland Public Schools

Geoff Walsh
Mortgage Broker

Dr. Catherine Bolstad
PHD

The Honorable Elizabeth Welch
Senior Judge

Darcy Snodgrass

From the Director's Chair

Notes from Executive Director Leslie Abraham



Welcome to spring and Child Centered Solutions' six-month anniversary! In our first half-year, CCS has given a voice and support to 16 children, receiving thanks from families and praise from the courts. In each case we helped place the focus back onto the children's best interests, where it belongs. One family

at a time, we are changing the way families solve their problems.

In an effort to save more families, Dr. Joan Kelly, internationally acclaimed expert on the needs of high-conflict families, will speak at the World Forestry Center in Portland on Friday, May 4 from 1-5PM.

This seminar is not only for judges and divorce lawyers; anyone involved with high-conflict families will find it helpful, including therapists, teachers, school counselors and the families themselves. Registration is now open and space is limited – don't miss out on this opportunity.

By popular demand, CCS will present a one-day workshop on effective representation of children in November 2007. Volunteers are needed to carry out this training; contact us at info@childcenteredsolutions.org if you are interested in helping.

As always, thanks for helping put children at the center of the solution.

Spotlight on Our Child Clients

As always, the names of our clients and any identifying details about their lives have been changed to protect their privacy.

CCS finds creative solutions so children can maintain relationships with both parents.

Due to the court's concern about Eddie, a blonde four-year-old with a love for Legos, the court appointed a CCS attorney to advocate for Eddie's best interests. Although Eddie is bonded to his mother, she suffers from drug addiction and is unable to meet Eddie's basic needs. Eddie's father was able to meet Eddie's needs but was afraid to let Eddie anywhere near his mother.

CCS advocated for Eddie to be placed with his father but also worked out a strategy to help Eddie's mother resume supervised visits after she underwent treatment for her addiction, because it was in Eddie's best interest. This way, Eddie stays safe while his need to maintain relationships with both of his parents is protected.

Quote of the Month: April

"Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."

- Sitting Bull (Tatanka Lyotake),
Hunkpapa Lakota Chief and Holy Man
(1831-1890)

Personnel:

Leslie Abraham
Executive Director/
Senior Attorney

Jennifer Gilmore
Staff Attorney

Ben Sadler
Assistant Director

World-renowned speaker Joan Kelly, Ph.D. is coming to Portland!

Join us on Friday, May 4 from 1-5PM at the World Forestry Center in Portland, Oregon, to hear Dr. Kelly speak on *Divorce and Children's Adjustment: Current Research and Implications for Practice*

**Made possible through the generosity of the Henry L. Hillman, Jr. Foundation
4 CLE and 3.7 CE credits – only \$75!**

Register online at www.childcenteredsolutions.org now!

Stewardship Parenting v. Ownership Parenting

By Catherine Bolstad, Ph.D., Retired Child Psychologist,
CCS Board Member

Real life scenario: Your child has the lead in the annual school play and forgets her lines. After the play, she comes up to you. What would you say?

Ownership parent:

- I was in a play when I was a kid and I always remembered my lines.
- I told you to study your lines and not watch so much T.V.

Stewardship parent:

- You gave it your best – I'm impressed.
- It took courage to stand up in front of so many people.
- What was it like being in front of so many people? What did you learn from this?

As stewards of our children, we have many opportunities to teach them life lessons: trying counts, "suing up" and getting in the game matters. In the stewardship approach to parenting, our own history or our narcissistic involvement in our child's performance is irrelevant. We are growing a unique individual, not a clone. The stewardship parent reinforces the effort and is available post-performance to help her child sort through what happened and how she felt about it.

*Special thanks to Robert Loveland, Ph.D., who originally coined the terms "stewardship parenting" and "ownership parenting."

Children's Bill of Rights During Family Conflicts

As a child I have the following rights and I need you, Mom and Dad, to respect these rights:

1. The right not to be asked to "choose sides" between Mom and Dad.
2. The right to express, or not express, my feelings.
3. The right to have a unique relationship with each of my parents without the other making me feel guilty about it.
4. The right to freely and privately communicate with both Mom and Dad, and not to be asked questions by either parent about the other.
5. The right to be treated as a person and not as a pawn, possession or negotiating chip.
6. The right not to be expected to be a spy or messenger.
7. The right not to hear either Mom or Dad say bad things about the other.
8. The right to have my life change as little as possible while Mom and Dad work out their problems.
9. The right to have my own life and remain a child.
10. The right to expect Mom and Dad to be my parents, not my friend.
11. The right not to be expected to be my parents' confidante or companion.
12. The right to have what is in my best interest protected at all times, regardless of my parents' needs.

(Copies available upon request. Refer our web site for details.)

The Lawyer's Impact on Children – from the Lawyer's Point of View

By Jenny Gilmore, Staff Attorney

Children are made a part of the custody process through no choice of their own. They are at the center of legal proceedings that will determine their future, yet they have no role in the decision-making process. Often, no one even takes the time to explain to them what is happening.

The child's attorney must be a champion for his child clients by advocating their needs to the court and ensuring that their best interests remain at the forefront of everyone's minds throughout the custody process.

Even young children can be quite articulate about their needs and concerns; it just requires someone to listen and to speak for them in a way that also protects them, so that children can remain neutral between their parents.

No matter what the outcome, listening to children and advocating their positions empowers those children and offers them some measure of control over lives that have turned upside down.

Next month: *The Lawyer's Impact on Children – From the Child's Point of View*



Our privacy policy is available online at www.childcenteredsolutions.org/privacy.html

CCS is a public benefit corporation that has been incorporated in the state of Oregon and is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 tax exempt status.

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