**Family Law Forum: Forensic Family Law Ethics and Bias in Family Law Evaluations**

**Presented by: James D. Davidson, Ph.D.**

**AGENDA**

**Wednesday, August 16, 2017**

*Hosted by: Family Court Services*

*Third Judicial District*

**11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Sign in, grab lunch**

**12:00-1:00 p.m. Ethical Considerations for Forensic Evaluations and Mental Health Assessments in Family Law Proceedings**

* Best practices for Forensic evaluations, mental health assessments, and ethical codes of conduct go hand-in-hand. The AFCC model standards and guidelines for family law activities, as well as the codes of conduct for various professional organizations all shed light on how forensic evaluators should conduct their work. This presentation provides an overview of forensically relevant ethics topics and the treatment of forensic matters in the ethics codes for professional counselors, social workers and psychologists. Practical ethical pitfalls will be highlighted, as well as techniques to embed ethical practices in your work. A few examples from the “Oh No” file illustrating ethical failures will be discussed.

**1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Identifying and Minimizing Bias**

* Bias is present in every evaluation and assessment. This presentation focuses on understanding how bias pervades evaluation procedures, identifying specific types of bias, and learning how to minimize bias. Basic techniques designed to minimize the most common forms of bias in a family law proceeding, including identifying Primacy, Recency, Data Selection, Anchoring, Counter-transference, and Confirmatory bias, will be discussed. An emphasis will be placed on managing the flow of information to help manage bias, separating facts and data from opinions and recommendations in the evaluation or assessment, and learning to present alternative hypotheses along with your opinions and recommendations.