

MODEL COURT SUMMIT

Cultivating Compassion in Dependency Cases



FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2024

9 AM - 5 PM

Virtual Conference

Bookmark [Model Court Summit webpage](#) for updates and materials.

REGISTER

AGENDA

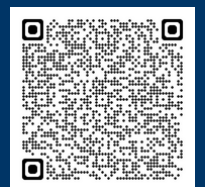
CLE pending

Model court teams and all court & community partners are invited to attend. The Summit will focus on how to use compassion to support families and ourselves in dependency cases.

9:00 AM - 9:05 AM	Welcome
9:05 AM - 9:30 AM	Cultivating Compassion in Dependency Cases Rick Barinbaum, LMSW, Lecturer and Field Instructor, University of Michigan School of Social Work
9:30 AM - 10:15 AM	Choosing Compassion to Support Families Shrounda Selivanoff, Social Services Manager, WA State Office of Public Defense
10:15 AM - 10:20 AM	Break
10:20 AM - 11:20 AM	Why Compassion? Why Now? Vivek Sankaran, Director, Child Advocacy Law Clinic, University of Michigan Law School
11:20 AM - 12:30 PM	Self-Compassion and the Need to Be Kinder to Ourselves Sheri Freemont, Managing Director, Judicial & National Engagements, Casey Family Programs
12:30 PM - 1:20 PM	Lunch
1:20 PM - 2:30 PM	Compassionate Action in Child Welfare: Opening the Door to Personal, Familial, and Professional Change Dr. Jim Henry, Professor, School of Social Work, Western Michigan University
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Narratives and Nuance: Enhancing Child Welfare Practice Through Intentional Listening Bridgette Carr, Director, Human Trafficking Clinic, University of Michigan Law School Rick Barinbaum, LMSW, Lecturer and Field Instructor, University of Michigan School of Social Work
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Local Strategic Planning Breakouts Dedicated time for model court teams to assess and plan their local court improvement efforts.

Heidi Moon, Dependency Law Analyst
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Registration QR Code



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Virtual Conference Information

Please Note:

- As a webinar attendee your video and audio will be disabled.
- The chat feature is enabled for participants to message the host only.
- All sessions will be recorded and made available to attendees.
- For the best experience, please disable all open and background applications.

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For individual viewers, a tab on the right of your screen will open to ask questions and participate in polling or quizzes. Those in watch parties can join here:

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Event Code: MCS

Pass Code: Compassion



See this help guide if this is your first time using WebEx:
[How to join WebEx webinar](#)

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melissa.g.dablow@ojd.state.or.us



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Choosing Compassion to Support Families

Shrounda Selivanoff - Social Service Manager, Washington State Office of Public Defense Parent Representation Program

What if, instead of focusing on risk and permanency as the primary objectives when engaging with child welfare families, we saw relationship building and connection as pivotal factors in supporting families fixed on well-being, considering this approach as one potential route to remedying parental deficiencies? This shift puts us on a path that requires an essential partner—compassion. Compassion serves as a building block for connection and engagement for families. So, let's talk about compassion when supporting parents in child welfare and its impacts on us all.

Why Compassion? Why Now?

Vivek Sankaran- Director, Child Advocacy Law Clinic, University of Michigan Law School

In the demanding field of child welfare, professionals are continually faced with the suffering of the children, families, and communities they serve. This session will make the case for why now, more than ever, child welfare professionals must embrace compassion—not just as a tool for supporting others but as a necessary practice for noticing and responding to their own suffering. By cultivating compassion, we can foster resilience, prevent burnout, and improve well-being, leading to better outcomes for ourselves and the families we serve. Through this lens, the session will explore how recognizing and addressing both external and internal suffering can strengthen our capacity to navigate the complex emotional and systemic challenges of child welfare work. Participants will leave with practical strategies to integrate compassion into their professional and personal lives, ultimately helping to build a healthier, more effective child welfare system.

Self-Compassion and the Need to Be Kinder to Ourselves

Sheri Freemont- Managing Director, Judicial & National Engagements, Casey Family Programs

This session will offer understanding of the ways that our human selves suffer in the context of serving others. Self-compassion concepts and practices can support human brains and experiences naturally. Applying self-compassion can cultivate a balanced perspective as to our roles in child welfare.

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Session Descriptions

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Compassionate Action in Child Welfare: Opening the Door to Personal, Familial, and Professional Change

Dr. Jim Henry- Director of Western Michigan University's SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Compassion is a presence and action that provides people safe spaces where they and their story can be heard and seen without judgment. In such a safe place a person experiences being understood, accepted, and valued. In child welfare, compassion reduces the inherent shame of children and parents who have experienced trauma due to maltreatment. Compassion opens the door to person – personal and professional partnerships to address and resolve familial trauma and subsequent system challenges. Child welfare professionals (i.e. caseworker, lawyer, judge, clinician) increase the opportunity for expediting familial healing and recovery through compassion. However, cultivating such compassionate presence and action can be challenging for child welfare professionals given tremendous system stressors and secondary traumatic stress. However, research details the health, emotional, social, and relational growth to self and others when compassionate action drives interaction and intervention.

Narratives and Nuance: Enhancing Child Welfare Practice Through Intentional Listening

Bridgette Carr, Director, Human Trafficking Clinic, University of Michigan Law School

Rick Barinbaum, Lecturer and Field Instructor, University of Michigan School of Social Work

In this virtual program designed for child welfare professionals, including judges, lawyers, social workers, and caseworkers, we will explore the profound impact of the narratives we create and the ways in which we listen. We will concentrate on the art of deep listening as we delve into the stories we tell ourselves, focusing on how our internal narratives and default perspectives shape our view of the world and what we hear. The program will include didactic presentations and interactive polls to engage participants and encourage reflection on these critical skills in an individual and collaborative team.

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Local Strategic Planning Breakouts

Model Court Teams are encouraged to set aside time for Local Strategic Planning during or soon after the Model Court Summit. Here are some options:

1. Use the sample agenda to discuss compassion in dependency cases and brainstorm actionable steps.
2. Host a watch party during the Summit, followed by in-person strategic planning.
3. Create a virtual meeting space for your team to connect during the Summit and for planning afterward. Invite members early and share the link in advance.
4. Use your next Model Court Team meeting to focus on strategic planning.

Reminder: For teams wanting assistance with projects, there is a Model Court Team SharePoint site for judges and OJD staff. Any team member can also reach out to JCIP.

Sample Agenda

Key Takeaways from Today's Presentations:

- What resonated with our team?
- How are we showing compassion to the families we serve, as well as to ourselves and each other? How can we build on our strengths?

Areas for Improvement:

- Where can we enhance our compassion, both as a system and in individual roles? For example, what would leading with compassion at shelter hearings look like? Consider what this might look like for judges, attorneys, and other roles.

Commitments to Change:

- What specific changes can we commit to? Consider both systemic and individual actions.

Next Steps:

- Who else should join this discussion?
- Identify next steps and assign tasks.

In early 2025, JCIP will connect with Model Court Teams to discuss how the Summit has sparked new projects or changes to existing ones. We'll share these insights with all teams to inspire collaboration and generate fresh ideas!



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Rick Barinbaum

Rick Barinbaum, LMSW, is a clinical social worker, educator, and practitioner. He teaches at the University of Michigan School of Social Work, co-teaches at the Child Advocacy Law Clinic (CALC) and Human Trafficking Lab at the University of Michigan Law School, and consults across a wide array of clinics at the law school. Rick also provides local and national consulting on interdisciplinary approaches for families in dependency cases, team building, and resilience. Rick's experience spans residential treatment, preventive services, interdisciplinary legal advocacy, and integrated health.

Bridgette Carr

Bridgette Carr is a clinical law professor at the University of Michigan Law School. She has dedicated her career to advocating for the rights of human trafficking victims and advancing comprehensive domestic and international anti-trafficking policies. Her work focuses on driving paradigm shifts in the way human trafficking victimization is perceived and addressed, and helping reintegrate victims by developing legal solutions that address the complex issues of coercion and victimization around compelled service and its aftermath.

Shari Freemont

Shari Freemont is the Managing Director of Casey Family Programs. Born and raised in Portland, Oregon, Sheri Freemont attended the University of Portland, and then Arizona State College of Law. She is now the Managing Director of Judicial and National Engagements, Casey Family Programs, a national foundation aiming to reduce the need for foster care. Prior to her current role, she practiced criminal and child welfare in State and Tribal courts. With Casey Family Programs, she works with a strong team of experts and many national partners in the legal field to improve child welfare systems specifically related to the impacts judges and lawyers can have for children and families. Sheri focuses on assisting the legal field better apply the human skills we often are not taught in law school, including trauma understanding and bias awareness, all rooted in the science and natural human capacities for compassion. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Counsel for Children.

Dr. Jim Henry

Dr. Jim Henry is a professor and was the director for Western Michigan University Children's Trauma Assessment Center for 23 years that provided comprehensive neurodevelopmental trauma assessments to 6,000 children. He is now the director of Western Michigan University's SAMHSA NCTSN grant providing family assessments and Trust Based Relational Intervention. His history includes 17 years in child protective services. Dr. Henry has published numerous research articles. He has presented to over 150,000 participants nationwide on trauma, trauma assessment, resiliency, secondary trauma, and building trauma informed systems. He has been the recipient of several awards for his leadership, commitment, and services to children and families who have experienced trauma.

Vivek Sankaran

Vivek Sankaran is a clinical professor of law at the University of Michigan Law School, advocates for the rights of children and parents involved in child welfare proceedings. His work focuses on improving outcomes for children in foster care by empowering their parents and strengthening decision-making processes in juvenile courts. Sankaran directs both the Child Advocacy Law Clinic and the Child Welfare Appellate Clinic, through which law students represent children and parents in trial and appellate proceedings. After graduating from Michigan Law in 2001, Sankaran received a Skadden Fellowship to represent children at The Children's Law Center in Washington, DC, where he remained until 2005, when he joined the Law School faculty. In 2009, Sankaran founded the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy, the first organization in the country to provide multidisciplinary legal assistance to families to prevent the unnecessary entry of children into foster care. In 2011, he was named Michigan's Parent Attorney of the Year. Most recently, Sankaran co-edited both the first national book for family defense lawyers and the third edition of Child Welfare Law and Practice, a widely recognized resource used by child welfare lawyers across the country.

Shrounda Selivanoff

Shrounda Selivanoff is the Social Service Manager at the Washington State Office of Public Defense Parent Representation Program. She was previously involved with the system. Shrounda has extensive work experience as the Director of Public Policy Children's Home Society of Washington, King County Parents for Parents Program and other programs such as the Perinatal Treatment Services and the University of Washington Fetal Alcohol Drug Unit Parent-Child Assistance Program. Shrounda is the recipient of the 2023 Shine Your Light Award, 2021 Casey Excellence for Child Award and the 2021 Unsung Hero Award from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families Strengthening Families in partnership with Seattle Child. She is also a member of the Washington State Parent Ally Committee, a founding member of the Birth Parent National Network, an Executive Board member of the Family Treatment Court of King County, the Co-Chair of the Department of Children, Youth and Families Oversight Board, Co-Chair of the Racial, Equity, and Impact Citizen Review Panel, and a national consultant serving multiple jurisdictions across the United States. She provides a parent with lived experience perspective on the state, local, and national platforms, all in pursuit of justice and family preservation.