

# LAW STUDENTS ON INTERDISCIPLINARY, PROBLEM-SOLVING TEAMS: AN EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER'S RESOURCE CENTER FOR SEPARATING AND DIVORCING FAMILIES

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Models of lawyering in separation and divorce disputes are evolving to emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration, problem solving, alternative dispute resolution, and changes in legal education that reflect these changes in practice. At the University of Denver's Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (Center), supervised law and mental health graduate students worked as a team to provide assessment and service planning, mediation, therapy, and agreement drafting to parents. Evaluation results showed client satisfaction, and that students acquired new knowledge, skills, and values in line with a collaborative, problem-solving orientation. Strengths and weaknesses of the model are considered.

Key Points for the Family Court Community:

- Modern family law representation requires collaboration and problem-solving skills.
- The Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (RCSDF) is a model designed to educate law students into the practice of interdisciplinary, coordinated legal services that minimize the risks of the adversarial legal process for family well-being after separation/divorce.
- An evaluation indicated that students increased in certain knowledge and skills (e.g., mediation, interviewing, financial planning, drafting agreements, preparing parenting plans) and in their comfort working in interdisciplinary teams.
- The evaluation also established that the interns provided competent services to clients who were very satisfied with the services rendered.
- If law schools want to be in the forefront of legal education, they should move in an interdisciplinary, problem-solving direction that provides hands-on opportunities for education and training.

**Keywords:** *Divorce; Interdisciplinary; Legal Education; and Separating Families.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This article reports on an empirical evaluation of what law students learned as members of an interdisciplinary team composed of graduate students in psychology and social work who provided coordinated services to separating and divorcing families. The team was formed at the University of Denver's (DU) Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (RCSDF or Center) and provided assessment, legal information, dispute resolution (mediation), therapy, legal drafting, and filed documents with the court. We first briefly describe the evolution of models of lawyering in separation and divorce, which led to the formation of the Center's service plan and educational goals. We also discuss calls for reform in the education of future family lawyers that were central in shaping the interdisciplinary educational mission of the Center. We then summarize results of the evaluation of Center services and the education of the Center law students. The final section focuses on lessons learned and hopes for the future.

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## I. CHANGING GOALS FOR EDUCATING FUTURE FAMILY LAWYERS

### A. THE EVOLUTION OF FAMILY LAW REPRESENTATION TOWARDS COLLABORATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

The Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) at the DU developed the RCSDF to provide comprehensive interdisciplinary legal and psychological services to families in a supportive and cost-efficient model that enables families to separate and complete the legal process without exacerbating family conflict and disharmony. The Center's goals included educating law students about the value of coordinated, collaborative, problem-solving interdisciplinary services to separating and divorcing families. IAALS believes that providing such services at a reasonable cost is an effective way to address the complex and interrelated needs of many separating and divorcing families while focusing on their planning for the future and maintaining as much stability as possible.

Divorce is, in part, a legal event that requires resolution of disputes, drafting of agreements, and filing appropriate documents with the court. However, those are hardly the only needs of parents and children in reorganizing families. Parents need financial planning to manage the pressures of setting up two households. Their children sometimes need a mental health assessment and support to deal with their acting out and educational difficulties in reaction to parental conflict. Parents, in some cases, need mental health therapy for depression or treatment for alcoholism. Couples need assistance in moving past their anger and hurt to resolve financial issues pertaining to the divorce and to develop a strategy for co-parenting in the future.

Traditional models of lawyering focus on courtroom advocacy and decisions by a judge. For many families, however, the courtroom-based model is too emotionally and economically expensive and takes longer than is tolerable.<sup>1</sup> Caseloads in family courts are overwhelming. The expense of representation is increasing. Middle-class separating and divorcing couples—who receive no legal aid—have been largely priced out of the market for legal services. More and more family law litigants are self-represented mostly because they cannot afford to pay lawyers' fees<sup>2</sup> but also because they question whether the lawyers' input will increase the adversarial nature of the case in the long run.

Even more concerning is the impact of the adversarial, courtroom-based model for decision making on the children involved in family court proceedings. Parents can put a child's economic, emotional, and educational welfare at risk with ongoing conflict between each other. A recent convening of social science and legal experts organized by the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) reviewed the available empirical evidence on the needs of children in reorganizing families and concluded:

Promotion of shared parenting constitutes a public health issue that extends beyond a mere legal concern. Parents who collaborate in childrearing have a positive effect on their children's development and well-being. Parents who engage in protracted and/or severe conflict that includes rejecting or undermining the other parent have a negative impact. The potential for shared parenting is present for children regardless of the family structure in which they live, and it represents a key protective factor in (a) helping children adjust to separation and divorce and (b) establishing an ongoing healthy family environment in which to rear children and facilitate high-quality parenting.<sup>3</sup>

Recognition of the public health effects on children from conflict in separating and divorcing families is part of a broader recognition that family reorganization is not just a legal problem but also a challenge to the family's total economic and emotional well-being. Separation and divorce, for example, create significant emotional stress on those who experience it, often resulting in declining performance at work. As described in a recent article by Rebecca Love Kourlis:

Family conflict also has been linked to individual problems—mental health, domestic violence, impaired immune function, addiction—that have known links to diminished job performance and absenteeism.

Emotional and personal problems are associated with increased absences, tardiness, on-the-job injuries, property damage, medical claims, and employee turnover. It is also a significant safety concern when personal problems have been implicated in eighty to ninety percent of industrial accidents.<sup>4</sup>

In response to these trends, the procedure for resolving separation- and divorce-related disputes has undergone, in Jana Singer's felicitous phrase, a "velvet revolution."<sup>5</sup> Singer stated that "this paradigm shift has replaced the conventional model of adjudication with a more collaborative, interdisciplinary and forward-looking family dispute resolution regime. It has also transformed the practice of family law and fundamentally altered the way in which disputing families interact with the legal system."<sup>6</sup> As noted in a previous article:

In many jurisdictions today, parents of children are required to attend parent education as a prerequisite to obtaining a decree of dissolution. In other jurisdictions, mediation continues to be another mandatory component. Some states have looked beyond these services and provide parents with early neutral evaluation. Still others have developed a form of triage that attempts to match available services to family needs.<sup>7</sup>

These procedural changes in the dispute resolution process have generally proved themselves to have a positive outcome for parents and children by reducing time, expense, and delay while promoting improved child well-being.<sup>8</sup>

Also, in response to these trends, the family law bar has begun to articulate models of representation that emphasize problem solving and collaboration. Lawyers involved in collaborative law have revolutionized the nature of divorce practice in that direction, a change in many states that has been reflected by enactment of the Uniform Collaborative Law Act.<sup>9</sup> The American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers' *Bounds of Advocacy*—an aspirational code of ethics for divorce lawyers—holds that "[a]n attorney should attempt to resolve matrimonial disputes by agreement and should consider alternative means of achieving resolution."<sup>10</sup> Many states have also enacted provisions of their lawyers' ethics codes or rules of procedure that require lawyers to discuss alternative dispute resolution (ADR) with their clients.<sup>11</sup> The theme in a recent report by the national summit of family lawyers organized by IAALS' Honoring Families Initiative (HFI) is that the family law bar should "[r]ecalibrate our understanding of advocacy to emphasize problem solving, teaching, and counseling."<sup>12</sup> Rather than assuming the parties will be positioned as adversaries, the recommendation suggests that lawyers and the system should help the parties work together.

## **B. CALLS FOR CHANGE IN THE EDUCATION OF FUTURE FAMILY LAWYERS**

The development of problem-solving representation models has occurred concurrently with calls for change in the education of future family lawyers. The Family Law Education Reform Project (FLER) Report led the way.<sup>13</sup> FLER was created to systematically address the gap between the teaching and practice of family law, which is a unique undertaking in legal education and the first critical interdisciplinary outside look at the family law curriculum. It is a collaboration between a law school—Hofstra Law School's Center for Children, Families and the Law—and AFCC, an interdisciplinary organization of family court professionals that has been a leader in developing family dispute resolution processes outside of the academy.

The premise of FLER is that "in the last quarter century, the process of resolving legal family disputes has, both literally and metaphorically, moved from confrontation toward collaboration and from the courtroom to the conference room."<sup>14</sup> The FLER Report made significant recommendations for changes in family law education to include interdisciplinary knowledge and client relationship skills, in addition to courtroom-based advocacy skills.

The FLER Report focused on family law education. Its recommendations, however, paralleled the influential recommendations for reform in legal education of the Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Carnegie Report).<sup>15</sup> The Carnegie Report called on law schools to

match “the first year’s . . . emphasis on well-honed skills of legal analysis . . . by similarly strong skill in serving clients and a solid ethical grounding.”<sup>16</sup> It recommended that law schools “[o]ffer an integrated curriculum” that joins instruction in lawyering, professionalism, and legal analysis from the start.<sup>17</sup>

Reform in the directions recommended by both the FLER Report and the Carnegie Report is gradually coming to family law education in the form of new clinics, courses, and programs with an interdisciplinary, problem-solving emphasis.<sup>18</sup> A follow-up report five years after the initial FLER Report concludes that “significant progress has been made since the inception of the . . . (FLER) project over five years ago. . . In the legal profession, not only law schools, but courts and legislatures, have increasingly recognized that family law, particularly that part of family law that impacts children, is a highly specialized field that requires different dispute resolution mechanisms, interdisciplinary teams, and specialized training” in order to be effective.<sup>19</sup>

The family law bar has joined in the call to reform family law education. The report from the recent National Summit of Family Lawyers previously mentioned recommends that “[l]aw school curricula for students pursuing family law practice should be specialized in recognition of the different and interdisciplinary skill set that a family law attorney must possess.”<sup>20</sup> Citing the recommendations of IAALS’ Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers Initiative and the FLER Report, the HFI Family Law Bar Report strongly recommends clinical and experiential education to prepare new family lawyers to better serve their clients and their children.<sup>21</sup>

## II. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RCSDF

### A. OVERVIEW

The RCSDF was a university-based clinical project designed to implement and test innovative ideas in service delivery for separating and divorcing families. The model for the Center was developed by the IAALS’ HFI as part of its efforts to identify needed changes in the divorce and separation and parental responsibility processes to improve outcomes for families. The Center provided services between September 2013 and August 2015. The DU-supported implementation of the model on campus as a demonstration project, establishing the organization and providing the infrastructure (physical and human resources) for it to function.

The first center of its kind in the United States, RCSDF provided legal dispute resolution, therapeutic, and educational services to separating and divorcing families in a single location outside the courthouse, providing a nonadversarial alternative to the courts. The services were provided by teams of DU law, psychology, and social work graduate students (student interns) supervised by a staff of licensed professionals, thus providing an educational opportunity to train and support future professionals who wish to work with separating and divorcing families. For needed services that could not be provided at the Center, RCSDF offered referrals to outside services based on established relationships with other clinical settings.

Center clients did not receive legal representation in the traditional model of each person having his/her own counsel. Instead, Center parents received legal information from a single source, Center mediators and legal educators. Mediation proved to be the right primary procedural vehicle for Center parents. The lawyer-mediator provides legal education and information to both parents and facilitates resolution of their dispute. Either of the parents could also choose to be represented by counsel outside RCSDF on an unbundled basis. Parents could retain and bring their own attorneys to mediation if they wished because there is nothing in the model that precludes it, however, few of the clients at the Center took that approach.

### B. THE RCSDF SERVICE MODEL

Families moved through the program in a series of steps that began with an intake process conducted with potential participants through an online portal.<sup>22</sup> The intake provides information about

demographics, number and ages of children, their current living situation, and parental reasons for seeking RCSDF services. Next, individual screening interviews allowed for private, in-person interviews conducted by a team of one law student and one mental health student (psychology or social work) interns. The interview provided information into the circumstances and issues facing each family and individual family member. If the interview raised any concerns about substance use, mental health issues, or family violence, a thorough follow-up assessment was conducted using the Mediator's Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns (MASIC).<sup>23</sup>

Once the intake and screening interview process was completed, the two-student team, guided by their supervisors, made a decision concerning RCSDF's ability to meet the family's service needs; if the Center was not deemed appropriate, the family was referred elsewhere. Parents continuing in the program participated in a joint service planning meeting, after which they engaged in a set of services.<sup>24</sup> As it is a required component of the process, all parents who engaged in the RCSDF process participated in at least one mediation and one legal education session. Further, most families participated in co-parenting coaching, and many also chose to participate in adult individual therapy, family therapy, or child interview counseling options.

Legal document drafting was another potential service parents could choose to access at the Center. Supervised by an experienced attorney-mediator, Center law student interns, mediated and drafted the documents necessary to present to the court to finalize the divorce of the Center's client. Concern that a mediator drafting an agreement is potentially the "unauthorized practice of law"<sup>25</sup> was resolved in collaboration with Colorado professional responsibility regulators who helped provide training for Center legal interns. The necessary documents to finalize a divorce were filed electronically with the court.

A required "Permanent Orders Hearing" is the final step in the Colorado divorce process.<sup>26</sup> The judicial decree dissolving the marriage or civil union is typically issued at or after this hearing. Permanent Orders Hearings are generally required in uncontested cases where one or both parties are unrepresented by counsel and there are children involved. The court questions the parties, considers the agreement, and determines if it is fair and in the best interest of the children before ruling. The Colorado Court System collaborated with the Center by assigning a senior judge to hold the Permanent Orders Hearings at the Center rather than in the courthouse. Parents who mediated their divorce through the Center process could thus have it finalized without setting foot in the courthouse. The content of the Permanent Orders Hearing for Center parents was the same as if the hearing was conducted in the courthouse, but the tone was a bit different. For example, the judge who presided over the hearings at the Center often complimented the parents for creating an agreement in the best interests of their children and suggested they return to the Center should future disputes arise. As noted above, the Permanent Orders were filed electronically with the court.

### C. CENTER STUDENTS

RCSDF provided an internship for students in three different graduate schools on the DU campus: The Sturm College of Law, the Graduate School of Social Work, and the Graduate School of Professional Psychology. The internship at the Center was comparable to a clinical placement in a law school or mental health program. Students were recruited through their respective schools: professionals from the Center gave a talk at each school and provided information to students about the program. Interested students applied within their own schools, were interviewed and selected based on subject knowledge and past experience (especially for psychology and social work students), quality of student performance, maturity, eagerness, and ability to put in the necessary time.

Over the course of two years, eighteen students interned; eleven of those were law students (seven in the first year and four in the second year). The students were responsible for the delivery of services to families participating in Center services. They were trained before they began delivering the services and were carefully supervised by qualified professionals while delivering them. Based on lessons learned in the first year regarding the number of families receiving services at RCSDF and

the students' needs for a higher workload, RCSDF reduced the total number of student interns in the second year.

#### **D. TRAINING AND SUPERVISION FOR CENTER STUDENT INTERNS**

The first-year student training was a two-week, full-time program prior to RCSDF's official opening, which took place in a large conference space on campus. Local and national experts were brought in to participate, observe, and lead various aspects of the training. The first week was dedicated to a variety of short presentations on relevant legal and clinical topics<sup>27</sup> as well as interviewing role plays with professional actors, and a field trip to Denver District Court to observe divorce and separation matters on the docket. Students observed cases and spoke extensively with court personnel. The second week was dedicated entirely to a forty-hour mediation training.

The second-year student training was a six-day, full-time program followed by a series of shorter training sessions spanning several weeks. It was facilitated by RCSDF staff and the mediation trainer, and it took place at the Center. The content was generally the same, though more tailored to RCSDF based on what had been learned about the program and the population served over the course of the previous year. Following the initial training, Center students were assigned to families as workload required. They worked in interdisciplinary teams. Caseloads were kept reasonably low so that students could perform their tasks without undue pressure.

Supervision of Center student interns followed the format typical of a law school clinical program. Students from each professional school were closely supervised by licensed and experienced professionals from the profession for which they were preparing. Law students were, for example, supervised by a well-regarded Colorado divorce lawyer trained and experienced in mediation. Psychology students and social work students were similarly supervised by Center faculty from their own disciplines. Supervisors often held interdisciplinary supervision conferences with teams together. Each week, a half-day seminar would cover topics that students felt they needed more training on as they became responsible, under supervision, for cases. Topics included domestic violence, parental alienation, child support, working with accountants or financial planners, and so on.

### **III. STUDENT LEARNING AT THE CENTER**

#### **A. THE CENTER EVALUATION PLAN**

IAALS developed a comprehensive evaluation of the Center's functioning in anticipation of possible replication at other Centers and graduate schools nationwide, and this was an integral part of the plan for the Center. Indeed, the evaluation plan considers family demographics, process timelines, service utilization rates, parent feedback on the process, parent and child well-being measures, staff feedback, and partner organization feedback—in addition to student outcomes, which are the subject of this article. In 2016, IAALS published a report chronicling the findings from the Center's two-year experience with providing services to families in transition under an interdisciplinary service-delivery model using graduate students from law as well as social work and psychology.<sup>28</sup> Below are the results related to student learning, which were provided by student self-report and RCSDF staff/supervisor reflection.

#### **B. THE QUALITY OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE STUDENT TEAMS**

The evaluation establishes that students delivered competent services to separating and divorcing families. Those results were published in detail in an earlier article.<sup>29</sup> Overall, eighty-two to eighty-seven percent of parents rated the impact of the Center on their family, selves, or children as positive. The highest ratings parents gave were based on their perceptions that participation at the Center:



- Kept their children's interests protected,
- Maintained concern for their children, and
- Resulted in fewer co-parenting problems.

The process was highly efficient:

- An average of four months was spent resolving the legal conflicts.
- The average time spent to divorce was five months overall (including involvement in services).<sup>30</sup>

These results were coupled with statistically significant increases in parent and child well-being.<sup>31</sup> The students provided high-quality services despite having to learn a body of unfamiliar law, new skills such as mediation and drafting, and how to work with a new group of professionals in a short, intense training program.

The positive psychosocial and satisfaction outcomes obtained for family members suggest that when faculty resources are committed to students who are carefully trained, the students can competently provide services. Many professionals argue that family cases are not optimal training grounds for students because the amount of management and life experience needed to handle the case makes them a poor fit for students. These results should allay fears that law students and mental health graduate students are too young or inexperienced to deliver high-quality services to parents and children in reorganizing families, when carefully supervised. While the RCSDF model required considerable mentoring, in our experience it was no more than typically provided in law school-based clinics. Yet it offered a high level of exposure to families of varying socioeconomic levels and the many issues that cooccur in family cases pertaining to division and redistribution of economic assets with high client satisfaction outcomes.

### C. DATA COLLECTION ON STUDENT LEARNING<sup>32</sup>

At three different points in the process—before training, after training, and after the internship—RCSDF student interns were asked to provide a self-assessment on the following:<sup>33</sup>

- Level of comfort in their ability to successfully accomplish certain professional tasks (1 = very uncomfortable; 2 = somewhat uncomfortable; 3 = unsure; 4 = somewhat comfortable; 5 = very comfortable).
- Level of knowledge in relevant substantive topics (1 = no knowledge; 2 = very limited knowledge; 3 = basic knowledge; 4 = intermediate knowledge; 5 = advanced knowledge).
- Level of truth of certain statements regarding attitude and belief (1 = mostly false; 2 = somewhat false; 3 = unsure; 4 = somewhat true; 5 = mostly true).

Both after the training and after the internship, the students also were asked to provide a self-assessment on their level of preparedness with respect to topics relating to work with separating and divorcing families (1 = mostly unprepared; 2 = somewhat unprepared; 3 = not sure; 4 = somewhat prepared; 5 = mostly prepared).

For all data collection points, students were assigned a unique research identification number, which remained confidential and the same throughout the internship. No information for the research was shared with the interns' program faculty. This approach created the opportunity for students to provide candid self-evaluations anonymously as well as the ability for us to track individual student progress.

For all disciplines combined, the internship experience is reported as having an effect on those items with an average difference—between any of the three periods of self-assessment—of at least one point on the five-point scale (twenty percent) reaching statistical significance.<sup>34</sup> We recognize

that this is a high standard, as even a ten-percent increase is often considered substantive in the social sciences. So the following summary offers a conservative estimate in order to highlight the areas in which students gained the most knowledge or expertise. For reporting on each discipline separately, differences of at least one point are again used to denote important change (without analysis for statistical significance) due to the low number of students in each group. In addition to the scored scale items, students were asked open-ended questions about their learning and the experience in general. Summaries of responses are presented in narrative form.

Finally, the staff was asked about their experience with the student interns. The executive director as well as a legal, social work, and psychology supervisor each provided feedback. These are aggregated and reported together as they were very similar in content and perspective.

## **D. RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the self-assessment areas in which the aggregate group of students reported on their knowledge gains from before to after training. Results are shown separately for Year One, Year Two, and both years combined. The Year One students' self-assessment showed reportable increases in eight areas (out of nineteen) as a result of the training. The Year Two students experienced gains in all the same areas as Year One, except for knowledge of parenting plans. However, Year Two added gains in knowledge of the Colorado Dispute Resolution Act and knowledge of the Code of Professional Responsibility/Conduct (ten out of nineteen areas with increase).

### **1. Feeling Prepared to Provide Center Services**

In addition, Year Two students indicated feeling more prepared to work with separating and divorcing families. Examining the results within disciplines, Table 2 includes items for which there was a one point or greater change (i.e., where students of a particular discipline differed from the trends shown above for the entire RCSDF intern groups). Because the sample size was quite small, the results are shown without regard to statistical significance.

Overall, the training was effective in specific areas of knowledge as well as in comfort performing tasks. In contrast, the training by itself did not advance attitudes about working with separating and divorcing families in an interdisciplinary setting. While it might be beneficial to try to generate enthusiasm for the program and convey the important nature of the work as part of the training, this type of attitude proved changeable only upon direct experience.

The students also were asked to list the competencies/skills that most improved as a result of the training. Although there were differences in the approach to training between the first and second years, the students' reports of the competencies/skills that improved during the training were virtually indistinguishable from one year to the next. A majority of students expressed that the training improved mediation skills. Students also indicated that the training improved clinical skills such as interviewing (both children and adults), conducting intakes with clients, listening, and communicating. Students reported having improved knowledge of divorce law, as well as skills that cut across disciplines such as issue spotting, preparing parenting plans, and reframing. These data are largely consistent with the students' responses on the quantitative scale items.

### **2. Growth and Development During the Internship as a Whole**

Because most learning is expected to come from the internship rather than simply from the training, students were also assessed from pretraining to the end of the internship in Year One, shown in Table 3, during which it was hoped that skills and attitudes would indicate growth and development.

The skill areas that changed positively over the course of the internship show increasing sensitivity to clients (e.g., comfort responding to clients and adapting to their changing circumstances), comfort working in interdisciplinary teams, and knowledge and comfort on the tasks that constitute



**Table 1**  
**Knowledge Gains Among All Interns Combined (Pre- and Posttraining and Pre- to Postchange)**

	Year One <sup>35</sup>			Year Two <sup>36</sup>			Both Years Combined <sup>37</sup>		
	Pretraining (n = 14)	Posttraining (n = 14)	Difference in Means (p-value)	Pretraining (n = 9)	Posttraining (n = 9)	Difference in Means (p value)	Pretraining (n = 23)	Posttraining (n = 23)	Difference in Means (p value)
The Uniform Dissolution Act	1.71	3.00	+1.29 (0.001)	1.78	3.00	+1.22 (0.023)	1.74	3.00	+1.26 (0.000)
The Colorado Dispute Resolution Act	1.77	2.54	+0.77 (0.018)	1.67	3.00	+1.33 (0.004)	1.73	2.73	+1.0 (0.000)
Parenting plans	2.50	4.00	+1.50 (0.000)	3.11	3.78	+0.67 (0.111)	2.74	3.91	+1.17 (0.000)
Counseling	3.29	3.79	+0.50 (0.013)	3.33	3.89	+0.56 (0.051)	3.30	3.83	+0.52 (0.001)
Maintenance and alimony	2.14	3.36	+1.21 (0.000)	2.33	3.67	+1.33 (0.004)	2.22	3.48	+1.26 (0.000)
Financial planning postseparation	2.00	3.00	+1.00 (0.007)	2.11	3.11	+1.0 (0.053)	2.04	3.04	+1.0 (0.001)
Child support	2.43	3.43	+1.00 (0.002)	2.67	3.67	+1.0 (0.028)	2.52	3.52	+1.0 (0.000)
Common law marriage	2.36	3.14	+0.79 (0.010)	2.44	3.11	+0.67 (0.111)	2.39	3.13	+0.74 (0.001)
Retirement and pension issues	1.86	2.71	+0.86 (0.008)	1.89	2.78	+0.89 (0.009)	1.87	2.74	+0.87 (0.000)
Self-represented litigants	1.93	3.50	+1.57 (0.000)	2.00	3.50	+1.50 (0.003)	1.95	3.50	+1.55 (0.000)
Domestic violence	3.36	3.57	+0.21 (0.385)	3.78	3.67	-0.11 (0.681)	3.52	3.61	+0.09 (0.628)
Mandatory disclosure requirements	3.43	3.93	+0.50 (0.187)	3.22	4.00	+0.78 (0.023)	3.35	3.96	+0.61 (0.019)
Code of professional responsibility/ conduct	3.93	4.29	+0.36 (0.208)	3.22	4.22	+1.00 (0.009)	3.65	4.26	+0.61 (0.007)
Family dynamics	3.71	3.86	+0.14 (0.500)	3.67	3.89	+0.22 (0.512)	3.70	3.87	+0.17 (0.328)
Child development	3.64	4.00	+0.36 (0.096)	3.56	3.78	+0.22 (0.347)	3.61	3.91	+0.30 (0.050)
Interviewing adults	3.79	4.14	+0.36 (0.096)	3.67	3.89	+0.22 (0.447)	3.74	4.04	+0.30 (0.069)
Interviewing children	3.43	3.64	+0.21 (0.512)	2.67	3.11	+0.44 (0.104)	3.13	3.43	+0.30 (0.166)
Ethical practice	4.07	4.29	+0.21 (0.189)	4.00	4.44	+0.44 (0.035)	4.04	4.35	+0.30 (0.016)
Early neutral evaluation	1.86	3.07	+1.21 (0.001)	2.11	3.44	+1.33 (0.016)	1.96	3.22	+1.26 (0.000)
Mediation	2.50	4.00	+1.50 (0.000)	2.44	3.78	+1.33 (0.004)	2.48	3.91	+1.43 (0.000)

**Table 2**  
Outcomes with +1 Increase After Training Program by Discipline

	<i>Pretraining Mean</i>			<i>Posttraining Mean</i>			<i>Difference in Means</i>		
	<i>Law (n = 9)<sup>38</sup></i>	<i>MSW (n = 8)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 6)</i>	<i>Law (n = 5)</i>	<i>MSW (n = 8)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 6)</i>	<i>Law (n = 5)</i>	<i>MSW (n = 8)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 6)</i>
	<i>Comfort Items</i>								
Listen in a professional context	4.00	4.25	4.33	4.56	5.00	4.83	+0.56	+0.75	+0.50
Respond to clients professionally	3.33	3.88	4.00	4.11	4.50	4.67	+0.78	+0.63	+0.67
Problem-solve in a professional context	3.89	3.63	4.17	4.22	4.25	4.67	+0.33	+0.63	+0.50
Work as a team with professionals from other disciplines	3.89	3.38	3.83	4.22	4.63	4.67	+0.33	+1.25	+0.83
Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances	3.38	3.63	4.00	4.38	4.13	4.67	+1.00	+0.50	+0.67
Negotiate agreements	3.44	2.75	3.33	3.78	3.63	3.83	+0.33	+0.88	+0.50
Draft professional documents in your field	3.44	2.25	3.67	3.78	3.25	4.17	+0.33	+1.00	+0.50
	<i>Preparation Items</i>								
I am excited to be training for work in the area of separation and divorce.	4.89	4.75	4.83	5.00	4.75	4.50	+0.11	+0.00	-0.33
I feel prepared in my knowledge and skills to work with separating and divorcing families.	4.11	3.00	3.83	4.67	4.13	4.33	+0.56	+1.13	+0.50
I believe there are many benefits to be gained by working with students and professionals from disciplines other than the one I am studying.	5.00	4.88	4.83	5.00	4.88	4.83	+0.00	+0.00	+0.00
I believe I will benefit from networking with professionals in my local community.	5.00	4.75	4.67	5.00	4.88	4.67	+0.00	+0.13	+0.00
I want to work with separating and divorcing families after graduation.	4.44	3.63	3.67	4.56	3.38	3.33	+0.11	-0.25	-0.33

family law cases. The same areas of knowledge and comfort were assessed by individual discipline, summarized in Table 4.

These items show that students honed their knowledge and skills in areas relevant to their specific disciplines. Law students improved the most in areas with lower initial scores, while mental health students improved in areas with higher initial scores. However, the degree of change was similar across disciplines, relative to where they started. Psychology students reported change in more areas than did the other disciplines. This is discussed further below.

The following observations about general trends can also be made from the data. Knowledge of family dynamics did not increase with the two-week training but tended to increase over the whole experience. However, expressed excitement for training to work in separation and divorce went down over the course of the training and even more so over the course of the experience. In addition, students felt less prepared in the areas of crisis management and family violence. It may be that the internship served as a reality check for students, both about their interests and about how much they know and are prepared to do divorce-related work.

Students were asked to identify three competencies/skills that improved as a result of the internship. Almost every student noted that mediation skills improved over the course of the internship. Many students indicated that interdisciplinary or teamwork skills improved, an aspect that was not mentioned in relation to the training and was probably only appreciated after experiencing the work

**Table 3**

Student Experience in the Internship as Overall Sample (Pre, Post, and Pre-to-Post Change Mean Scores)

	<i>Pretraining Mean (n = 13)<sup>39</sup></i>	<i>Postinternship Mean (n = 13)</i>	<i>Difference in Means (p value)</i>
Comfort Items			
Listen in a professional context	3.92	4.85	+0.92 (0.068)
Respond to clients professionally	3.62	4.77	+1.15 (0.021)
Problem-solve in a professional context	3.77	4.54	+0.77 (0.147)
Work as a team with professionals from other disciplines	3.54	4.92	+1.38 (0.009)
Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances	3.67	4.83	+1.17 (0.019)
Negotiate agreements	3.08	4.08	+1.00 (0.004)
Draft professional documents in your field	2.92	4.31	+1.38 (0.003)
Knowledge Items			
The Uniform Dissolution Act	1.69	3.54	+1.85 (0.000)
The Colorado Dispute Resolution Act	1.62	3.23	+1.62 (0.000)
Parenting plans	2.54	4.31	+1.77 (0.000)
Counseling	3.15	3.85	+0.69 (0.006)
Maintenance and alimony	2.15	3.46	+1.31 (0.003)
Financial planning postseparation	2.00	3.08	+1.08 (0.009)
Child support	2.46	3.46	+1.00 (0.006)
Common law marriage	2.38	3.08	+0.69 (0.056)
Retirement and pension issues	1.92	2.46	+0.54 (0.068)
Self-represented litigants	1.92	3.31	+1.38 (0.000)
Domestic violence	3.38	3.77	+0.38 (0.096)
Mandatory disclosure requirements	3.31	4.00	+0.69 (0.013)
Code of professional responsibility/conduct	3.92	4.31	+0.38 (0.096)
Family dynamics	3.62	4.15	+0.54 (0.028)
Child development	3.54	3.92	+0.38 (0.054)
Interviewing adults	3.69	4.38	+0.69 (0.006)
Interviewing children	3.31	3.62	+0.31 (0.392)
Ethical practice	4.00	4.46	+0.46 (0.027)
Early neutral evaluation	1.85	2.62	+0.77 (0.035)
Mediation	2.46	3.85	+1.38 (0.001)
Preparedness Items			
I am excited to be training for work in the area of separation and divorce.	5.00	4.69	-0.31 (0.040)
I feel prepared in my knowledge and skills to work with separating and divorcing families.	4.00	4.54	+0.54 (0.047)
I believe there are many benefits to be gained by working with students and professionals from disciplines other than the one I am studying.	5.00	5.00	0.00 (1.000)
I believe I will benefit from networking with professionals in my local community.	5.00	4.54	-0.46 (0.053)
I want to work with separating and divorcing families after graduation.	4.15	4.00	-0.15 (0.549)

environment. Students also tended to describe clinical and therapeutic skills, specifically: interviewing, family dynamics and communicating with clients. With respect to legal skills, some students mentioned parenting plans and legal drafting. A few students described improved case management abilities.

An interesting sidebar is that incorporating the three disciplines together showed how differently each discipline evaluated their growth in knowledge and comfort as a result of training. As noted above, the psychologists endorsed many more areas of change than the attorneys or the social workers (who endorsed only one area). One interpretation of this is that the psychologists had the most to

**Table 4**  
 Student Experience in the Internship by Discipline (Pre, Post, and Pre-to-Post Change Mean Scores)

	<i>Pre-training Mean</i>			<i>Post internship Mean</i>			<i>Difference in Means</i>		
	<i>Law (n = 5)<sup>40</sup></i>	<i>MSW (n = 5)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 3)</i>	<i>Law (n = 5)</i>	<i>MSW (n = 5)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 3)</i>	<i>Law (n = 5)</i>	<i>MSW (n = 5)</i>	<i>PsyD (n = 3)</i>
	<i>Comfort Items</i>								
Listen in a professional context	4.00	4.00	3.67	4.60	5.00	5.00	+0.60	+1.00	+1.33
Respond to clients professionally	3.40	3.80	3.67	4.60	4.80	5.00	+1.20	+1.00	+1.33
Problem-solve in a professional context	4.00	3.60	3.67	4.60	4.40	4.67	+0.60	+0.80	+1.00
Work as a team with professionals from other disciplines	3.80	3.40	3.33	5.00	4.80	5.00	+1.20	+1.40	+1.67
Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances	4.25	3.40	3.33	5.00	4.80	4.67	+0.75	+1.40	+1.33
Negotiate agreements	3.80	2.60	2.67	4.20	4.00	4.00	+0.40	+1.40	+1.33
Draft professional documents in your field	3.60	2.00	3.33	4.20	4.20	4.67	+0.60	+2.20	+1.33
	<i>Knowledge Items</i>								
The Uniform Dissolution Act	2.60	1.00	1.33	4.20	3.40	2.67	+1.60	+2.40	+1.33
The Colorado Dispute Resolution Act	2.40	1.00	1.33	3.40	3.20	3.00	+1.00	+2.20	+1.67
Parenting plans	3.00	2.40	2.00	4.40	4.20	4.33	+1.40	+1.80	+2.33
Counseling	2.20	3.80	3.67	2.80	4.20	5.00	+0.60	+0.40	+1.33
Maintenance and alimony	2.60	2.00	1.67	4.00	3.20	3.00	+1.40	+1.20	+1.33
Financial planning postseparation	2.20	2.00	1.67	3.80	2.80	2.33	+1.60	+0.80	+0.67
Child support	3.00	2.20	2.00	4.00	3.40	2.67	+1.00	+1.20	+0.67
Common law marriage	2.80	2.00	2.33	3.80	2.80	2.33	+1.00	+0.80	+0.00
Retirement and pension issues	2.20	1.80	1.67	2.80	2.20	2.33	+0.60	+0.40	+0.67
Self-represented litigants	2.60	1.40	1.67	3.80	3.20	2.67	+1.20	+1.80	+1.00
Domestic violence	2.80	3.80	3.67	2.80	4.20	4.67	+0.00	+0.40	+1.00
Mandatory disclosure requirements	2.60	3.40	4.33	3.80	3.80	4.67	+1.20	+0.40	+0.33
Code of professional responsibility/conduct	3.80	4.00	4.00	3.80	4.40	5.00	+0.00	+0.40	+1.00
Family dynamics	2.80	4.00	4.33	3.60	4.40	4.67	+0.80	+0.40	+0.33
Child development	2.60	4.00	4.33	2.80	4.60	4.67	+0.20	+0.60	+0.33
Interviewing adults	3.00	3.80	4.67	3.80	4.60	5.00	+0.80	+0.80	+0.33
Interviewing children	2.80	3.60	3.67	2.20	4.40	4.67	-0.60	+0.80	+1.00
Ethical practice	4.00	4.20	3.67	4.20	4.60	4.67	+0.20	+0.40	+1.00
Early neutral evaluation	1.20	2.40	2.00	3.00	2.60	2.00	+1.80	+0.20	+0.00
Mediation	2.80	2.20	2.33	4.20	3.60	3.67	+1.40	+1.40	+1.33
	<i>Preparedness Items</i>								
I am excited to be training for work in the area of separation and divorce.	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.40	4.67	+0.00	-0.60	-0.33
I feel prepared in my knowledge and skills to work with separating and divorcing families.	4.00	3.60	4.67	4.60	4.20	5.00	+0.60	+0.60	+0.33
I believe there are many benefits to be gained by working with students and professionals from disciplines other than the one I am studying.	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	+0.00	+0.00	+0.00
I believe I will benefit from networking with professionals in my local community.	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.40	4.60	4.67	+0.60	-0.40	-0.33
I want to work with separating and divorcing families after graduation.	4.60	3.80	4.00	4.60	3.40	4.00	+0.00	-0.40	+0.00

learn. That was not our experience in training them or listening to feedback from supervisors. In fact, the psychologists entered the training with broader and deeper understanding of many areas of separation and divorce as well as interviewing skills. It seemed, instead, that they approached the training with an open mind and an eagerness to increase their learning that appeared less defensive than students in the other two professions. Thus, combining the three groups in training may have had the unexpected benefit of including a discipline more comfortable with the content area and dynamics of difficult family cases, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration, leading to deeper learning among the law interns as well. While it is speculative, it is consistent with supervisor reports and our own observations during training.

### **3. Most Positive and Least Positive Aspects of the Internship**

Students were asked to identify the three most positive and the three least positive aspects of the internship. The most positive aspects identified mirrored responses to the most improved skills, as mediation and working on an interdisciplinary team were most commonly reported. Many students also described the hands-on experience with real families going through a divorce, working with the supervisors, and working with the other interns as positive aspects.

Aspects students identified as the least positive included a low and unpredictable workload, disorganization at the newly emerging Center, and issues with case management. Several students correctly noted that these issues were likely attributable to RCSDF being a new organization and still figuring out what would work best. Additionally, a theme was internal conflict between some students and one particular supervisor. More generally, though, several students reported that effective communication between supervisors and students was at times lacking. In addition, students noted awareness of a hierarchy between supervisors and students that led to students not feeling included in decision-making processes.

### **4. Staff Views on Student Training and Growth and Development**

*a. Pre-Casework Training.* The supervisors and executive director agreed that the second-year training was a vast improvement over the first-year training. The consensus was that, because so much was up in the air operationally prior to RCSDF's opening, the first student training was constricted in several respects. First, because RCSDF did not yet know who Center clients would be, policies and solid definitions of RCSDF services were not yet established and thus could not be provided to students. Also, the first-year training lacked smooth integration of the various topics, as it was not yet clear which ones would be most relevant to students' internship experience. The shared feeling of the supervisors and the executive director was that the first-year students left the training crammed full of information and uneasy about how to digest it.

The second-year training was a much more positive experience for all involved. Conducting the training at the Center with the supervisors completely involved (rather than participating primarily as trainees themselves, as was the case in the first year) fostered a more intimate, authoritative and yet supportive atmosphere. As a result, the training was more cohesive and helped the students better understand the respective staff roles. In addition, after a year of experience working with the families and providing services, the second-year training was presented with more concrete expectations of what it would be like to work at RCSDF.

The supervisors and executive director acknowledged continued room for improvement. Specifically, there was agreement that the training has not hit the right balance of instructional and hands-on content, though there was disagreement on the direction to take to achieve such a balance. The supervisors expressed the need for more practice and role-playing scenarios as well as additional fact patterns (moving from straightforward to more complicated scenarios as students become more comfortable). However, the executive director expressed the need for more instructional content.

While these experiential and instructional elements are not incompatible, fitting them in during the time available for training presents an ongoing dilemma.

*b. Working as a Team.* The executive director noted that the supervisors worked very well with each other and with most of the students over the first year. There was the sentiment, though, that there could be improvement in the way the director and the supervisors worked together as a leadership team to foster a community atmosphere and a commitment to the organization as a whole rather than to individual students and families. The executive director also suggested that the supervisors might spend more time interacting with students as a group rather than individually. The supervisors agreed that having an open line of communication with their respective students was invaluable. One supervisor noted that, because RCSDF is unique in that the supervisors do not have caseloads of their own, they are able to be fully available to the students. The supervisors agreed that having weekly meetings with their students to debrief on cases was very helpful and allowed everyone to stay on the same page in terms of each family's progress through the program. One concern, however, was that communicating across the entire team could be challenging, as the students were rarely all at the Center at the same time. With respect to selecting students for the internship positions going forward, supervisors identified a few key qualities. Students who have life experience, initiative, flexibility, genuine interest in the subject matter, and interest in the interdisciplinary work are the ideal candidates.

*c. The Value of an Interdisciplinary Model.* There was agreement among the supervisors and executive director that the interdisciplinary aspect of RCSDF worked very well for students. The families benefited from holistic assistance, while students were able to learn needed skills relevant to their own discipline as well as to gain understanding of and respect for other disciplines. The two-student teams worked well because the students could share case management responsibilities while working closely with a student of another discipline.

There were, however, some issues that arose as a result of the relatively low volume of families in the first year. Namely, there was some tension between the psychology and social work students about case assignments and being able to satisfy the clinical hour requirements of their respective schools. The executive director also commented that there is a need to develop some distinct policies and procedures for each student group: for example, a leave policy with makeup requirements appropriate to the school.

#### IV. LESSONS LEARNED AND LOOKING AHEAD

Implementing student internships at RCSDF was certainly not without its challenges. Primarily due to issues surrounding financial sustainability of the model, after two years of operations, the decision was made to shift the RCSDF model to a community-based setting and change the name to the Center for Out-of-Court Divorce (COCD). Students continue to have the opportunity for a robust experiential learning internship and play an integral role at COCD as service providers; however, the primary service providers are now professionally licensed staff, and the new model allows for only a few student interns per term. A depth experience has thus been exchanged for a breadth experience, by staying focused on the interdisciplinary and hands-on aspects of the model, which made for the richest learning opportunities.

The Center experience with law student learning suggests that if law schools want to be in the forefront of education for family law practice they should move in an interdisciplinary, problem-solving direction. We observed that the direction of reform advocated by the FLER and Carnegie Reports and the recent calls for reform of the family bar are both feasible and desirable. Students can be the engine rather than the caboose of these trends.

First, interdisciplinary experience is increasingly required for lawyers to effectively work with mental health colleagues to provide integrated services and expertise. Lawyers and ADR legal



professionals draw upon psychological theory, research, assessment and evaluation to help them sort out individual mental health issues, and family dynamics that complicate case settlement and finality. Having a better idea of what kinds of knowledge and skills mental health colleagues have and how these can best be utilized by the lawyer can only enhance the lawyer's practice and help provide better services to parents and children. Interdisciplinary training fosters respect for and understanding of how the mental health disciplines work with families, their ethical obligations, and knowledge that is likely to lead to better collaboration. It fosters understanding of how mental health colleagues can support an attorney's representation and the family's satisfaction with the process, as well as individual and collective outcomes that support successful family reorganization. But like any relationship between persons with different orientation, goals, and values, being exposed to each other during training rather than later in practice encourages stronger relationships based on mutual respect.

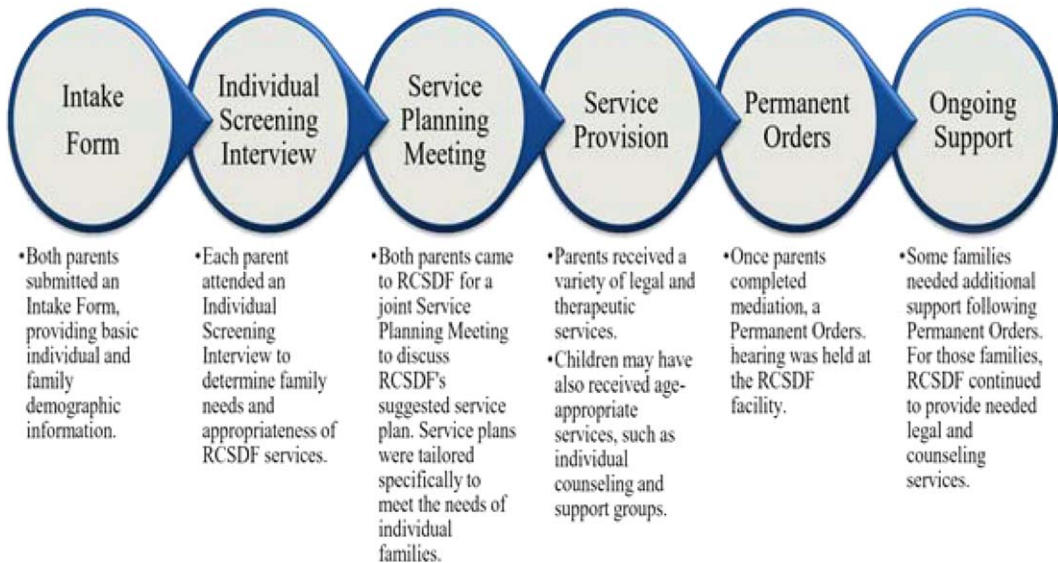
Second, experience like that provided at the Center gives young family lawyers a leg up over those who are limited to traditional case law education without clinical experience. Clinical experience improves a student's capacity to assess whether the field is a good fit for their interests and skills. Real-world experience can also make the difference when a new lawyer searches for a job or clients in a crowded market. Family law has moved increasingly toward an integration of ADR models and techniques, and there is a need for training that is not traditionally obtained in law school—such as recognition of substance use and abuse, mental health, and domestic violence problems. Without such experience and training, new family lawyers cannot successfully compete in a field where paraprofessionals, mental health professionals, and retired legal professionals (e.g., in forms of arbitrators or special masters) increasingly claim a share of the client market and lawyers are less often sought or retained by clients.<sup>41</sup>

We recognize that the training provided through the RCSDF model is costly in terms of faculty and administrative resources. In effect, it is the Mercedes Benz model of family law legal education that is not always possible. There are, however, less costly educational models that can serve as a bridge between the traditional casebook and training students at an interdisciplinary clinical site. The models and examples of courses generated by the FLER Project provide one source for inspiration. Another possibility is a three-credit course that is interdisciplinary and includes observing and role playing about real cases. Another is a week-long course that covers all the material with simulations and role plays. Finally, another is an externship that incorporates more shadowing and less actual responsibility, thereby decreasing the amount of supervision needed. These are scaled back approaches to the experiential training we are espousing, but they offer possible models that could be implemented with less financial or faculty resources.

The positive Center experience brings into focus the significant risks of not changing the direction of education for our future family law attorneys toward interdisciplinary collaboration and problem solving. One is that lawyers will not be able to deliver high-quality service to parents and children in reorganizing families. Another is the risk that lawyers will become increasingly obsolete because they are not prepared with the legal or interpersonal and interprofessional skills that are salient in current family law practice. This would be a serious loss. Families are entering the legal system in record numbers. They are increasingly diverse; the issues they raise are complex, and their resolution requires the attention of interdisciplinary perspectives. Unmarried parents, same-sex couples, reproductive technology, and legal recognition of multiple parentages engender family conflict and clients in those situations have important needs for legal information, guidance, and intervention, as do more traditional reorganizing families. Family law is a changing field, and it is a growing one. Legal education has a chance to provide the best educational training and opportunities for future family lawyers to participate effectively while contributing to the betterment of society. We cannot turn away from the challenge. The Center's experience with student learning demonstrates that it can be met.

## APPENDIX A

### SERVICE PATHWAY THROUGH RCSDf



## APPENDIX B

### TYPES OF SERVICES AT RCSDf

#### LEGAL EDUCATION

Informational session provided by a law student intern on what to expect in the legal system when separating/divorcing, including information about how to draft legal documents (e.g., complete forms) and navigate the court system. There was no charge for this service, but it was mandatory for families who did not have a court initial status conference.

#### LEGAL DRAFTING

Legal interns drafted documents with and for families, to support their completion of agreements and parenting plans.

#### CHILD INTERVIEWING

Session in which a mental health intern assessed the child's view about the family's situation, determined how the child was coping with the transition, and supported the child in expressing concerns. There was no charge for this service, and feedback was provided to the parents.

#### CO-PARENTING COACHING

Session(s) designed to provide assistance and support toward effective co-parenting, which may include feedback to both parents regarding the child interview(s) and the development of a parenting plan.

## ADULT INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

One-on-one therapy session(s) with a neutral mental health intern to work on individual emotional and mental health issues related to the transition process.

## CHILD COUNSELING

Therapy session(s) with the child provided by a mental health intern to work on emotional and mental health issues related to the transition process. Generally, these were individual sessions; however, some sessions included two or more siblings.

## TRANSITION SUPPORT GROUP

Gender-specific group sessions designed to provide an opportunity for parents to meet and support other parents going through the separation/divorce process.

## NOTES

1. See generally Rebecca Love Kourlis et al., *IAALS' Honoring Families Initiative: Courts and Communities Helping Families in Transition Arising From Separation and Divorce*, 51 FAM. CT. REV. 351 (2013).

2. A recent IAALS study of self-represented litigants found that out of 117 respondents, 43.4% reported an annual individual income of under \$20,000; 27% reported an annual individual income of between \$20,000 and \$40,000; and 15.6% reported an annual individual income of between \$40,000 and \$60,000. The same study found that just over 90% of all self-represented litigant participants indicated that “financial issues were influential—if not determinative—in [the decision to self-represent]. . . it was the most consistently referenced motivation for proceeding without an attorney.” NATALIE ANNE KNOWLTON ET AL., *CASES WITHOUT COUNSEL: RESEARCH ON EXPERIENCES OF SELF-REPRESENTATION IN U.S. FAMILY COURT* 9, 12 (2016).

3. Marsha Kline Pruett & J. Herbie DiFonzo, *Association of Family and Conciliation Courts Think Tank Final Report, Closing the Gap: Research, Policy, Practice and Shared Parenting*, 52 FAM. CT. REV. 152, 160 (2014).

4. Rebecca Love Kourlis, *It Is Just Good Business: The Case For Supporting Reform In Divorce Court*, 50 FAM. CT. REV. 549, 550 (2012) (citations omitted).

5. Jana B. Singer, *Dispute Resolution and the Post-Divorce Family: Implications of a Paradigm Shift*, 47 FAM. CT. REV. 363, 363 (2009).

6. *Id.*

7. Kourlis et al., *supra* note 1, at 362.

8. *Id.*

9. See J. Herbie DiFonzo, *A Vision for Collaborative Practice: The Final Report of the Hofstra Collaborative Law Conference*, 38 HOF. L. REV. 569 (2009); *Collaborative Law Act*, UNIF. LAW COMM'N, <http://www.uniformlaws.org/Act.aspx?title=Collaborative%20Law%20Act> (last visited Oct. 2, 2017) (explaining that since being completed by the Uniform Law Commission in 2009, the Uniform Collaborative Law Act has been enacted by statute or court rule in fifteen states as of May 1, 2017, and maintaining a current list of states that have enacted it).

10. *Bounds of Advocacy: Goals for Family Lawyers*, AM. ACAD. MATRIMONIAL LAW. (Nov. 2000), <http://aaml.org/library/publications/19/bounds-advocacy>.

11. See Andrew Schepard, *Kramer vs. Kramer Revisited: A Comment on the Miller Commission Report and the Obligation of Divorce Lawyers for Parents to Discuss Alternative Dispute Resolution with Their Clients*, 27 PACE L. REV. 677 (2007); Marshall J. Berger, *Should An Attorney Be Required to Advise a Client of ADR Options*, 13 GEO. J. LEGAL ETHICS 427, 462–71 (2000) (listing court rules, state statutes, and ethics provisions).

12. NATALIE ACENTER KCENTER, IAALS, *THE FAMILY LAW BAR: STEWARDS OF THE SYSTEM, LEADERS OF CHANGE 1* (2016).

13. Mary E. O'Connell & J. Herbie DiFonzo, *The Family Law Education Project: Final Report*, 44 FAM. CT. REV. 524 (2006).

14. Andrew Schepard & Peter Salem, *Foreword to the Special Issue on the Family Law Education Reform Project*, 44 FAM. CT. REV. 513, 516 (2006).

15. WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN ET AL., *EDUCATING LAWYERS: PREPARATION FOR THE PROFESSION OF LAW 4* (2007).

16. *Id.*

17. *Id.*

18. See, e.g., Barbara A. Babb, *Another Look at the Need for Family Law Education Reform: One Law Schools Innovations*, 55 FAM. CT. REV. 59 (2017); Andrew Schepard & J. Herbie DiFonzo, *Hofstra's Family Law with Skills Course: Implementing FLER (The Family Law Education Reform Project)*, 49 FAM. CT. REV. 685 (2011).

19. Barbara Glesner Fines, *Family Law Education Reform: Progress and Innovation*, 49 FAM. CT. REV. 675, 675 (2011).

20. KNOWLTON, *supra* note 12, at 15.

21. See *id.*, at 20. For a general description of IAALS' Educating Tomorrows Lawyers Initiative, see *Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers*, IAALS, <http://iaals.du.edu/educating-tomorrows-lawyers> (last visited Oct. 8, 2017).

22. See *infra* Appendix A.
23. Amy Holtzworth-Munroe et al., *The Mediator's Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns (MASIC): A Screening Interview for Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse Available in the Public Domain*, 48 FAM. CT. REV. 646 (2010); Viktoria Pokman et al., *Mediator's Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns (MASIC): Reliability and Validity of a New Intimate Partner Violence Screen*, 21 ASSESSMENT 529 (2014).
24. See *infra* Appendix B (describing the services offered by the Center).
25. See Calvin Lee, *May Mediators Draft Settlement Agreements?*, 54 FAM. CT. REV. 501 (2016).
26. See COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 14-10-106 (West 2012).
27. Substantive topics included: Colorado divorce law and procedure, family issues in separation and divorce, ethics, working with and interviewing children, parenting plan development, legal drafting, cultural issues, family violence, crisis management and safety, and RCSDF processes and policies.
28. Logan Cornett et al., *Out-of-Court and in Collaboration: Evaluating an Interdisciplinary Model for Separation and Divorce in a University Campus Setting*, IAALS (June 2016), [http://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/rcsdf\\_out\\_of\\_court\\_and\\_in\\_collaboration.pdf](http://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/rcsdf_out_of_court_and_in_collaboration.pdf) (evaluation was designed by Marsha Kline Pruett along with Corina Gerety, then IAALS Director of Research and Logan Cornett, IAALS Research Analyst).
29. Andrew Shepard et al., *The Family Law Bar, The Interdisciplinary Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Parents, and the "Spark to Kindle the White Flame of Progress"*, 55 FAM. CT. REV. 84 (2017).
30. *Id.*; the chart and accompanying information are reproduced from Cornett et al., *supra* note 30.
31. Shepard et al., *supra* note 29.
32. The students and supervisors of the Center described their experiences in a previous article, which confirms in a more subjective way the important educational value for professionals who aspire to serve families of being part of an interdisciplinary team. Melinda Taylor et al., *The Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on a Collaborative and Child-Focused Approach to Alternative Dispute Resolution*, 53 FAM. CT. REV. 7 (2015).
33. While we recognize that it would be ideal to have an additional follow-up self-evaluation at an interval of six months or a year following the internship, determining whether any changes in the students' self-appraisals after their internship were due to their experiences at the Center or some other factor (e.g., additional coursework, further experiential learning, etc.) would not be possible without a control group. We also had limited financial resources to conduct a follow-up. For these reasons, we did not collect data for a longer term follow-up after the student internship was completed.
34. Due to the difficulties in detecting significant changes within a small group of students, significance at  $p < .10$  is reported for all student measures.
35.  $n = 13$  for the Year One Pre-Training and Post-Training means for the item "Colorado Dispute Resolution Act."
36.  $n = 8$  for the Year Two Pre-training and Post-training means for the item "Self-represented litigants."
37.  $n = 22$  for the Combined Pre-training and Post-training means for the items "Colorado Dispute Resolution Act" and "Self-represented litigants."
38.  $n = 8$  for the Law students' Combined Pre-training and Post-training means for the item "Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances."
39.  $n = 12$  for the Pre-training and Post-internship means for the item "Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances."
40.  $n = 4$  for the Law students' Pre-training and Post-internship means for the item "Adapt your recommendations to a client's changing circumstances."
41. Peter Salem & Michael Saini, *A Survey of Beliefs and Priorities About Access to Justice of Family Law: The Search for a Multidisciplinary Perspective*, 17 CARDOZO J. CONFLICT RESOL. 661 (2016).

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