

MCFR  
2008 Fall Conference

# Contemporary Families - Formation, Function, and the Future

Thursday  
December 4, 2008

Continuing Education and  
Conference Center  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, Minnesota

# MCFR

Minnesota Council on Family Relations

651-407-0950 [www.mcfr.net](http://www.mcfr.net)



## Keynote Presenter Stephanie Coontz

Stephanie Coontz teaches history and family studies at Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA and is Director of Research and Public Education for the Council on Contemporary Families, which she chaired from 2001-04. She is the author of numerous books including **Marriage, A History: How Love Conquered Marriage** (2005) and **The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap** (1992, 2000).

## Agenda

- 7:45 am Registration, Continental Breakfast, Exhibits and Silent Auction
- 8:30 am MCFR Annual Meeting and Awards
- 9:00 am Keynote Address: Stephanie Coontz
- 10:30 am Break - Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 10:45 am Small Group Discussions  
Preparing questions and comments
- 11:15 am Q & A with Stephanie Coontz
- 12:00 pm Lunch & Networking,  
Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 12:45 pm Student Poster Session
- 1:15 pm Breakout Session I (1-6) (Workshop  
descriptions included)
- 2:15 pm Break, Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 2:30 pm Breakout Session II (7-12)  
(Workshop descriptions included)
- 3:30 pm Reconvene: A Call to Action  
Invited Discussants: Ada Alden, CFLE  
and Pat Crumley, JD  
  
Silent Auction Winners announced.  
Winners pay for and pick up items.
- 4:00 pm Conclude  
  
Turn in evaluations and pick up  
certificates of attendance.

# Breakout Sessions

## Session I (1:15 - 2:15 pm)

### 1) Transition to adulthood

From “Failure to Launch” to “Helicopter Parents,” research on young adults reveals that media messages do not tell the whole story. Developmental psychologists, sociologists, demographers and public policy professionals are helping all of us understand the special needs of this important developmental stage. In this session, we will discuss such questions as: What are the unique concerns of emerging adults? What does the latest research show? How does public policy meet—or fail to meet—their needs? How can family professionals help families through this transition?

*Nancy Gonzalez, M.Ed. CFLE, MN Licensed Parent and Family Educator, NCFR Program Director of Public Affairs and Media Relations*

### 2) Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Relative Children

Many grandparents and other relatives are stepping in to raise grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. What may surprise many is that most often this is done on an informal basis without any involvement of county child protection. What are the challenges, adjustments, and resources available to these families? Find out the answers to these questions as they pertain to Minnesota families and to families in the U.S. generally.

*Linda Hammersten, MSW, LGSW, Program Manager, Lutheran Social Service of MN GrandFamily Connection*

### 3) Economic Issues of Families

This workshop will focus on how the current economy is affecting families and provide information on resources available to help families with parenting, family finances, and food.

*TBD, University of MN Extension Family Development Educators*

### 4) The Fragile Families and Child Well Being Study: A Research Brief

This workshop will address the key findings of the Fragile Family and Child Well Being Study and will explore how this body of research can inform our work with unmarried parents.

*Karen Shirer, PhD, Associate Dean, Center for Family Development, University of MN Extension*

### 5) Helping Families of Color Cope with Crisis in Everyday Life using the Building Cultural Connections Curriculum

This workshop will focus on the importance of culture in the health of all children as well as addressing many of the concepts that are common to working with children and their families around differences in culture and ability. This workshop is designed to help participants have fun while exploring sensitive and challenging topics.

*Maryann Robinson, Early Childhood Resource & Training Center (ECRTC)*

### 6) Building Family Connections with Nature

A variety of research supports the importance of direct exposure to nature for the physical and emotional health of children and adults. Nature engagement at the family level can provide an important setting to help children develop meaningful connections with nature that inspire, excite, educate and become a source for defining themselves and their place in society. This session will provide ideas, guidance and tools on how to engage in nature-related activities as a family. It will also provide resources for parents and family practitioners.

*Kathleen A. Olson, M.S. – Family Relations Educator and Extension Professor*

*Sherry Boyce, Extension Educator, Youth Work Institute*

*Andrea Lorek Strauss, Extension Educator, Environmental Science Education*

# Breakout Sessions

## Session II (2:30 - 3:30 pm)

### 7) LGBT Families: Another Face of Diversity

A panel of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) parents will share their perspectives on the lives of LGBT families. Topics to be addressed will include the diversity among LGBT families, issues and challenges unique to LGBT families, and concrete strategies for working effectively with LGBT families.

*Rainbow Families Panel*

### 8) Together We Can

Family life educators are paying closer attention to the strengths and needs of unmarried parents. This session will briefly highlight training resources for practitioners and educational materials and resources for unmarried families on co-parenting, father involvement and couples communication.

*Karen Shirer, PhD, Associate Dean, Center for Family Development, University of MN Extension*

### 9) How Family Formation Affects Legal Access and Rights

This presentation will explain how the family's status (divorced, married/separated, cohabiting, never married, relative caregiver, GLBT) may affect the parents' (or parties') legal access and rights, including updates on recent court decisions and legislation in Minnesota.

*Melissa Froehle, Esq., Minnesota Fathers & Families Network*

### 10) Creating Community Parent Support Groups Using the Circle of Parents® Model

In this workshop, participants will learn the key principles that are essential for Circle of Parents® support groups to be effective. We will explore the correlation between community-based support groups and the promotion of five protective factors. Participants will learn where these groups are and how to develop groups in one's own community.

*Trina Levin, MSW, LICSW, Director of Family Support Services, Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota*

### 11) Are You Ready? The College Transition - a program to help parents/caregivers and high school students plan for the challenges of the college transition

College students have one in two chances of becoming depressed, one in two will binge drink on a regular basis, and one in ten students will consider suicide (Harvard University Health Services). Learn how this University of Wisconsin Extension College Transition program helps students and parents/caregivers manage the transition by recognizing the normal emotions and conflicts that result, increasing communication and problem solving skills, and creating a plan to utilize when faced with specific issues.

*Lori Zierl, Family Living Educator, University of Wisconsin Extension, Pierce Co.*

*Joan Sprain, Family Living Educator, University of Wisconsin Extension, St. Croix Co.*

### 12) Using the How Much Is Enough? Leader's Guide

The How Much Is Enough? Leader's Guide is a six-meeting research based curriculum that presents the causes and effects of childhood overindulgence and offers ways for parents to avoid overindulging. The Developmental Parenting Highway is an exciting, new family system-based method of teaching parenting skills and child development simultaneously.

*Jean Illsley Clarke, Parent Educator, Author*

### Questions?

Please call 651-407-0950, email  
l.vukelich@comcast.net or go to [www.mcfr.net](http://www.mcfr.net)

