

Family court issues

Mimi Graham PhD. & Andrew Derry PhD

Mimi Graham is Director of the Florida State University Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy specializing in policy, training and special projects for vulnerable infants and toddlers including: Early Childhood Coordinating Systems project on Trauma & Toxic Stress; The Harris Infant Mental Health Training Institute. She is active in the statewide Trauma Informed Care Workgroup and is spearheading statewide “baby” court teams to address the trauma of young children. She is past president and co-founder of the Florida Association for Infant Mental Health and fellow of Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families.

Andrew Derry started working as a Clinical Psychologist in Forensic Mental Health in South London. During this time he specialised in developing treatment programmes for substance misuse for mentally and personality disordered patients. Dr Derry trained at the Portman Clinic in psychodynamic approaches to working with forensic behavior which led him to think about early developmental experiences. Subsequently he worked for the family courts as an independent expert applying the understanding of forensic ideas to family risk assessments. He is also trained as a family therapist and has worked with families within Child and Adolescent Mental Health teams and for the Local Authority. Dr Derry currently runs a busy independent expert company providing parental risk assessments for the family courts across the UK.

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This presentation will showcase Florida’s efforts to enhance outcomes for families in dependency court by implementing “baby court”. This specialized program builds on the science of early childhood, implements trauma informed practices and provides attachment based parenting interventions. Preliminary outcomes are promising.

Objectives

1. Explain how Baby Courts are instrumental in providing developmental guidance in response to maladaptive parenting strategies and exposure to trauma.
2. Examine four evidence-based attachment interventions currently utilized by Baby Court teams.
3. Contrast State/Baby Court preliminary data.