



# CADY INITIATIVE

GUIDING COURTS TOWARD IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

## 2021 Judicial Education Offerings

### Strategic Planning and Strong Leadership for the Family Court

The family court needs judges who exhibit strong leadership, advocate for ample training and resources, and lead improvement efforts. The Strategic Planning and Strong Leadership course provides a structure for court leaders and managers to assess what is needed to ensure that family law matters receive appropriate recognition, training, funding, and strong leadership. This course will help participants establish a vision and a strategic plan as a means to define priorities and allocate limited court resources.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Assess family court performance issues from a principle-based perspective.
- Identify strengths and opportunities with regards to problem-solving techniques, trauma-responsive practices, case management and services such as Self-Help and Alternative Dispute Resolution.
- Understand the leadership, case management teams, and organizational foundations required to create and implement a strong family court.
- Draft a plan for implementing a successful change effort in their own family court.

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### Triage & Caseflow Management

All courts, to varying degrees, engage in assessment to determine case management needs, but this assessment usually occurs several months into the life of the case. Approaching triage in a passive or non-standardized way can contribute to delay and lead to other negative case outcomes.

This course examines emerging and proven elements of family triage and caseflow management that contribute to improved timeliness of case processing and satisfaction of parties. Triageing a case at the first opportunity means screening a case at filing to determine case complexity, level of conflict, and services needed to resolve the case. Participants will analyze the effectiveness of their court's current caseflow management system and practices and learn how to apply emerging practices of triage and caseflow management. The course provides practical decision-making tools to improve their court's caseflow and discusses automation possibilities.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Assess the effectiveness of their court's caseload management data and processes.
- Identify steps to reduce the size and age of their court's pending case inventory and streamline caseload processes.
- Establish characteristics for handling cases based on conflict and complexity.
- Identify challenges that influence the ability to manage family cases effectively.
- Develop processes that in collaboration with stakeholders that assist with effective resolution of cases.

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## Simplification of Processes

In today's environment of heavy calendars and self-represented parties, courts must look for opportunities to simplify processes. [CCJ/COSCA Resolution 4, In Support of a Call to Action to Redesign Justice Processes for Families](#), calls upon courts to "simplify court procedures so that self-represented parties know what to expect, understand how to navigate the process, can meaningfully engage in the justice system, and are treated fairly."

This course will allow participants to engage in a simplification exercise in order to determine what processes may be slowing things down, and what practices can be implemented to lead to more effective resolution of cases.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Examine various examples of simplification of court procedures, including Informal Domestic Relations Trials processes.
- Conduct a business process mapping to identify unnecessary steps, procedures or complications.
- Implement strategies to simplify family court processes and assist parties in meaningfully engaging in the justice system.

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## Self-Help Services & Management

[The Landscape of Domestic Relations Cases in State Courts](#) study found that 72% or more family cases involved at least one self-represented party. Because most state court civil and family parties are navigating a system designed for attorneys without an attorney, self-help is a critical court service. This course will review the practices of courts who support access to justice for self-represented parties by providing information and forms both in-person at the courthouse as well as online. The course will also consider how to optimize information provided on court websites to assist parties.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify sound self-help services, policies, procedures, and practices for the family court.
- Identify and apply effective outreach activities with community partners.
- Consider effective Self Help management techniques, including performance management, workforce development and mentoring.

## Directing an Approach that Focuses on Problem-Solving

Some cases require substantial court or community services to reach resolutions. In this course, participants will examine mediation and other non-adversarial, alternative dispute resolution processes that can assist parties to solve problems collaboratively. Other cases may include serious issues such as domestic violence, substance use or behavioral health. This course will discuss the types of services that should be made available and how to apply a Pathways approach to determine case needs for the best outcome.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Consider problem-solving approaches including triage, mediation, parent education, and legal decision-making/parenting time evaluation.
- Discuss how to apply a Pathways approach to determine the services that will most support resolution.
- Identify ways to collaborate with stakeholder to improve the availability of dispute resolution processes in the community.

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## Promoting Well-Being as a Primary Case Outcome – AVAILABLE SPRING 2022

Beyond assuring the timeliness of cases, how can courts actually promote the well-being of families throughout the life of their case and as a primary desired case outcome? Calling upon the recommendations of a multidisciplinary national think tank, this course sets forth court policies, procedures and services that are trauma-responsive, protect families from violence and promote access to behavioral health supports.

As a result of participating in this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify how judicial system responses may exacerbate or contribute to mental health issues and consider improved processes to mitigate unintended outcomes.
- Consider model rules, protocols, development of best practices, service array and referral mechanisms.
- Apply skills and techniques that can be used to promote the well-being of families throughout the life of their case and beyond.

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[The Cady Initiative for Family Justice Reform](#) (formerly “Family Justice Initiative”) was launched in 2017 with funding by the State Justice Institute (SJI) and represents a partnership between National Center for State Courts (NCSC); IAALS, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System; the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC); and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ).

These virtual courses are offered by the Cady Initiative partner organizations as part of their commitment to help courts realize change. Other educational opportunities are available. For more information, or to discuss the individual needs of your jurisdiction, please contact Alicia Davis ([adavis@ncsc.org](mailto:adavis@ncsc.org)).

