

## Research on children and divorce: current knowledge and future directions



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## Relationships, relationships, relationships

- Importance
- Variability
- Quality (and quantity)?
- Absence
- And emotion: pain, loss, rejection, grief, anger ...



## What facilitates child wellbeing?

- Non-dualistic approach
- Specificity and interaction of risk/resilience factors, especially within child characteristics
- Direction of effects?



## Universal and particular

- Psychological processes and outcomes – attachment, conflict, separation etc
- Dominant child welfare discourses (e.g. paramountcy, anti conflict, pro contact)
- Outcomes: 85% mother resident, 10% litigate, standard contact package
- Within and cross-national cultural specificity
- Social policy
- Research streams?



## Whole system approach

- Theory
- Design/data collection
- Analysis
- E.g. Contact determinants, patterns and outcomes
- Boundaries subjective and variable
- Recruitment, representativeness and retention
- Technical limitations



## Divorce and relationships as process



- Lisa Strohschein's prospective longitudinal study
- Tracking coparental relationship over time – Penn State



## Interventions – what works?

- What are the common ingredients that work/don't work with (a) low conflict, (b) high conflict?
- Diagnostic tools?
- How can courts & 'soc/psychs' coparent together?
- Reason & emotion interventions work with hard cases
- Near universal goodwill
- Resource redirection/development



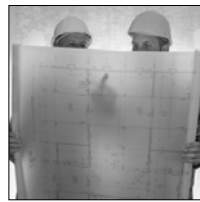
## Childrens participation

- Need to be involved and heard
- By whom and how?
- And why
  
- Respecting children's unique identity, perspectives and autonomy rights, and
- Children as relational beings/children's relationships



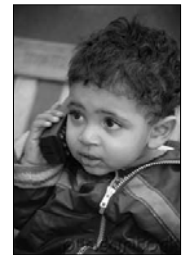
## Methodological issues

- Bridging psychological and sociological methodologies?
- Need for ISO on core concepts (e.g. contact quantity)
- Dynamic and relational system-capturing methodologies?



## Dissemination

- Should we be more proactive setting the agenda?
- Supporting RM relationships, RM parenting capacity as well as?



## Where next?

- Publishing papers
- Loading all presentations on the web or CD-ROM?
  
- Keeping and building this network of researchers?



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- Presenters
- And all delegates
- MCW: structure + DRF

