



CENTER FOR JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE

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## **Family Law Experts Gather to Expose Problems**

***New documentary film footage to expose problems and explore solutions,  
November 14<sup>th</sup> from 7-9pm at the Lark Theater in Larkspur***

SAN RAFAEL, CA – The *Center for Judicial Excellence* will address the serious and systemic shortcomings of the Family Law system in Marin – and nationwide – as part of its ongoing series of public forums this Wednesday. The event will include a dynamic panel of experts and an exclusive pre-screening of footage from a new documentary on our ailing family law system, featuring expert testimony about the deep-seated problems in our family courts and real-life stories of families torn apart by this broken system.

“I would say we’re seeing an emergency here,” says **Dr. Angela Browne-Miller**, Corte Madera-based psychotherapist and author of the new book, *To Have and To Hurt: Seeing, Changing or Escaping Patterns of Abuse in Relationships*. “These children are being damaged - they’re being treated like throwaway kids.”

Dr. Browne-Miller and the other forum panelists will shed light on the pitfalls that parents and children often face when they enter the family court system, as well as share insights about how community members might protect themselves and help bring about systemic change. Topics of discussion will include parental alienation syndrome, custody switching, a lack of accountability for the myriad ancillary professionals profiting from “high-conflict” cases, and the lack of enforcement of state laws.

“Special interests have turned family law into a mechanism for enforcing their own social agendas,” says **Robert Cleek**, Marin County family law attorney and forum panelist. “Folks look to courts for decisive resolutions. Now they find themselves trapped by a cottage industry of costly court ordered therapists, mediators, supervisors and attorneys dictating how they are to live their lives and employing the power of the state to coerce compliance. Courts are triers of fact, not social workers. A system that tries to be both, does neither well.”

Following the film screening, these issues and others will be addressed in a structured Panel Discussion and Question & Answer Session **moderated by broadcast journalist Peter B. Collins**. In addition to Dr. Angela Browne-Miller and Robert Cleek esq., other confirmed

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panelists include **Connie Valentine**, President of the California Protective Parents Association, **Meera Fox**, Executive Director of Child Abuse Solutions, Inc., and family law attorney **Barbara Kauffman**. Two members of the Marin bench were invited to participate in the Forum, but failed to respond.

With this Forum and other events like it, CJE continues its commitment to fostering a constructive, ongoing dialogue between Marin residents, legal and community organizations, and the Superior Court of California, County of Marin.

Supporters of this event include **State Senator Carole Migden, State Assemblymember Jared Huffman, State Assemblymember Mark Leno, State Assemblymember Fiona Ma, San Rafael City Councilmember-Elect Greg Brockbank, Marin County Human Rights Commissioner Kerry Peirson, Marin County Human Rights Commissioner Cesar Lagleva, and Marin County Human Rights Commissioner Maureen McManus.**

Forum co-sponsors include the **National Organization for Women – CA State Chapter, California Protective Parents Association, Marin Peace & Justice Coalition, ISOJI, Women Helping All People and Marin Gray Panthers.**

*The Forum is open to the general public. All ages are welcome. Admission is free but donations are welcome. The event site is fully accessible.*

#### **About the Center for Judicial Excellence**

The Center for Judicial Excellence is a community-based organization established to improve the judiciary's public accountability and strengthen and maintain the integrity of Marin County courts. CJE's 5-Point Plan of Action includes: 1) Information Gathering, 2) Education, 3) Collaboration 4) Implementation and 5) Citizen Review.

For more information, visit [www.centerforjudicialexcellence.org](http://www.centerforjudicialexcellence.org).

#### DIRECTIONS

##### **The Lark Theater**

549 Magnolia Avenue  
Larkspur, CA 94939

**From 101 S**, take Lucky Drive Exit  
Slight Right onto Fifer Avenue  
Left onto Lucky Drive  
Lucky Drive becomes Doherty Drive  
Turn Left onto Magnolia Avenue

**From 101 N**, take Tamalpais Drive Exit toward Paradise Drive  
Turn Left onto Tamalpais Drive  
Turn Left onto Redwood Avenue  
Turn Right onto Corte Madera Avenue  
Corte Madera Avenue becomes Magnolia Avenue

\*\*Street parking is available around the theater\*\*

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