



May 2023 | Spring Edition

Florida Counseling Association

GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER

The Official Publication of the
Florida Counseling Association

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President's Address

Luisairis Soto, LMHC-QS, LPC, NCC



Dear FCA Members,

I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for your commitment to being a member of our organization. We would not be able to thrive without YOU! As I reflect, I am so thankful for the opportunity to serve as your president this year. For this spring newsletter, I am writing my final President's letter. At the beginning of my presidency, I established five goals that I have outlined below and shared the progress we have made.

(1) Improve and grow our membership—

I am proud to share that our membership has increased and compared to the last fiscal year, we have experienced approximately an 8.9% overall growth in membership! Thank you for your dedication, commitment, and belief in FCA's mission and vision.

(2) Assess and support our Counselors' needs—

We kicked off this fiscal year with our Human Rights and Development Committee presenting "The Negative Effects of Discrimination" in July of 2022; a much-needed topic and discussion for National BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month. As for this year's convention, *Bridging the Gap in the Counseling Profession: A Call to Action!*, this centered on the progress the counseling profession has made thus far and is still working towards, such as in areas of tele-mental health, social change, and advocacy when it comes to working with clients across (and outside of) the state of Florida.

President's Address

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(3) Continue social justice and advocacy efforts within our counseling profession—

FCA's division, SAIGE-FL, has done tremendous work in promoting advocacy efforts to combat anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation occurring throughout the state of Florida by creating "Advocacy Chats"; a bi-weekly event focused on bringing clinicians together to organize, brainstorm, and commit to creating change and supporting our LGBTQIA+ communities.

(4) Provide and enhance our delivery of professional development and trainings—

I am excited for our upcoming Leadership Development Institute (LDI); an annual training that is held to welcome emerging leaders and foster relationships between new and seasoned leaders. We are excited to offer both in-person and virtual options for our leaders to promote accessibility. In addition, we also have our one-day virtual Traumatology Symposium to be held on June 16th. We are excited to be bringing this back since COVID started and offering it virtually to increase accessibility for counselors who live throughout the state of Florida!

(5) Promote creative ways for members to engage in self-care—

FCA has an upcoming free virtual event, "Self-Care and Connection", coming up on May 24th, for members to come together, share their self-care tips, while enjoying their favorite snacks, drinks, and music. FCA hopes to create more events like this to uplift the importance of slowing down and engaging in self-care.

As I conclude this letter, I want to share how grateful I am for the opportunity to have serve as your President. Thank you for your compassion and passion as we continue doing this work and advocate for our counseling profession.

Sincerely,

Luisairis Soto, LMHC-QS, LPC, NCC
Florida Counseling Association, President 2022-2023



President-Elect's Letter to FCA
Raul Machuca, Ph.D.

As your President-Elect and the Chair of the 74th Florida Counseling Association Convention, I would like to invite all our members to attend our in-person event on September 28 to September 30, 2023, in Tampa, Florida. The theme for this year's conference is "Resilience Amidst the Storm". A topic we hope would inspire professionals to share their experience, research, and scholarship with all our members. We are accepting proposals for both educational sessions and poster presentation. The deadline for submitting proposals is May 31, 2023. We will be sending a call for reviewers soon, so please respond to it if you have the opportunity. I also want to invite all members to be involved in making our organization a strong, supportive, and inclusive organization that effectively respond to the challenges placed by those fail to recognize the value of diversity in our state and our country. I would also like to invite everyone, and specially our upcoming FCA leaders, to attend our Leadership Development Institute in-person at the Barry University campus in Orlando or via Zoom on June 2-3, 2023.

Given that our FCA Convention is an ideal place for the presentation of new and innovative knowledge, I would like to highlight the importance of recognizing and supporting diverse scholarship, research, and practice in the counseling field. By doing so, we can encourage new perspectives and ideas that can help us better understand the complex issues faced by our students, supervisees, and clients, and therefore advance the practice of counseling. One way to do this is by providing encouragement and support for scholars, researchers, supervisors, and counseling practitioners who are working in diverse areas of counseling. This can include those who are focusing on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as those who are exploring innovative approaches to counseling practice or conducting research on new and emerging topics.

President-Elect's Letter to FCA

Raul Machuca, Ph.D.

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Another important aspect of recognizing diverse scholarship in counseling is to acknowledge the contributions of those who are working in underrepresented areas of research and scholarship. This includes scholars and researchers who are working in smaller or lesser-known areas of counseling, as well as those who are conducting research that challenges the status quo or addresses issues that are often overlooked or ignored in mainstream counseling discourse.

As members of the counseling community, we can all play a role in supporting and recognizing diverse scholarship, research, and practice. This can include actively seeking out and engaging with scholarship and training from a range of sources, including those that may be less well-known or mainstream. It can also involve participating in conversations and events that highlight the work of diverse scholars, researchers, and practitioners, as well as advocating for greater support and funding for their important work. For those of us who are counselor educators and supervisors, and who work with underrepresented students, it is important that we open the learning experience to include examples, illustrations, authors, and topics that better represent those whom we are educating.

Ultimately, by embracing and celebrating diversity in scholarship and research, we can help to ensure that the practice of counseling continues to evolve and grow in ways that are responsive to the changing needs and challenges faced by our clients and communities. So, let's continue to encourage and support those who are working to broaden our understanding of counseling, and let's recognize the important contributions that diverse scholarship, research and practice can make to our field.

Sincerely,

Raul Machuca, Ph.D.
President-Elect, Florida Counseling Association

FCA Elections

Please join me in welcoming our new Board Members!

FCA President-Elect, 2023-2024



Lourdes Araujo, Ed.D, LMHC

My name is Dr. Lourdes Araujo, and I am the Immediate Past President of the Florida Association for Counselor Education & Supervision (FACES). During my extraordinary experience through FACES, I have gained knowledge, leadership growth, and professional development, inspiring me to pursue serving as the FCA President-Elect. In addition, my collaborative work with FACES and communities has been an instrument for cross-cultural validations. As President-Elect, I will lead by example and support our board and members while cultivating an identity through leadership that empowers our future counselors, educators, and supervisors to be inclusive and diverse and offer equality for those different than ourselves.

FCA Treasurer, 2023-2025



Leo Balseiro, MS, LMHC,
NCC, BC-TMH

Leo Balseiro is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, National Certified Counselor, and a Board Certified Telemental Health Provider. Leo is a doctoral candidate studying Counseling, with an emphasis on Marriage and Family Therapy, at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. Leo currently serves as the owner of Better Selves Counseling Services Inc. in Pompano Beach, as well as an adjunct professor at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. Leo has served as a counselor for over seven years and has accumulated experience from clinical mental health, community mental health, and dual-diagnosis treatment settings. Leo has served various leadership positions over his career, including the Graduate Student Representative of the Florida Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, the President of the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, and has been an overall contributing member to multiple counseling organizations.

FCA Fall Convention 2023

FLORIDA COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

74TH ANNUAL CONVENTION



Resilience Amidst the Storm



SAVE THE DATE | SEPTEMBER 28-30, 2023 | TAMPA, FL

The 2023 Florida Counseling Association Convention seeks proposals for presentations on clinical interventions, professional development, building skills, interventions, and research related to the conference theme of “Resilience Amidst the Storm.”

This conference aims to provide an opportunity for professional counselors and mental health professionals to come together and share their expertise, insights, and research on how to support individuals and communities in developing resilience amidst challenging and uncertain times.

FCA Fall Convention 2023: Call for Proposals

PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Primary Presenter must be an FCA member at the time of submission and at the time of their presentation. In addition, they must also hold at least a Masters' degree.

Prior to submitting the form, please have the following information available:

Each presenter's name, credentials, email address, and daytime phone number.

Presentation Title (Please keep the title to 10 words or less)

Presentation Description (75 words or less) - A brief description of the presentation content that applies to the convention theme, best practices for counselors and mental health practitioners and relevant and timely to the convention topic areas for publication in the Convention Program.

Presentation Area/Topic. Please note all presentations are 60 minutes. Are you interested in presenting on. . . .

- Clinical interventions and strategies for building resilience in individuals and communities
- Professional development and skill-building for mental health professionals working with individuals and communities impacted by adverse life events and trauma
- Building skills and interventions for enhancing resilience in diverse populations and communities
- Research related to resilience, including both qualitative and quantitative studies

Learning Objectives - please provide three (3) to five (5) learning objectives (the participants will learn. . . .)

Research-Based References - provide three (3) references supporting your presentation in APA format. For example: Jones, A (2007). Emotional Abuse. Journal of Counseling and Development. Keep submissions in stated format. Presentations will not be considered unless they are research-based or evidence-based topics that have corresponding references.

Presenter Bio and Resume/Vitae Required - please provide a brief bio on each presenter which provides their education background, their licensure/credentialing, their background and experience with the topics, and their current employment (title and employer).

Each presenter(s)' resume/vitae in PDF or Word format must be emailed to the FCA Office.

Presentation Submission: <https://forms.office.com/r/D2PbWaQzVB>

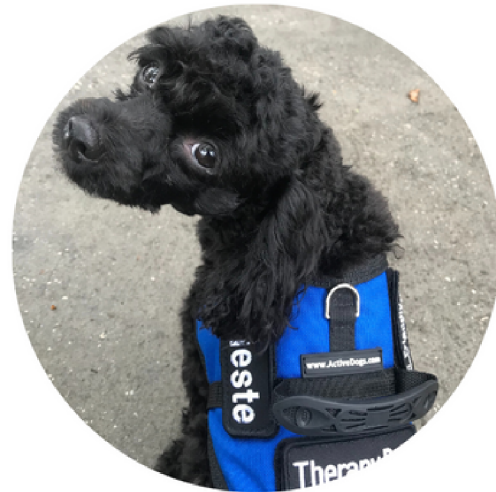
FCA Week of Service (May 1-5, 2023)

During FCA's Week of Service (May 1-5), FCA wanted to recognize counselors for their dedication and advocacy efforts in making our communities a better place to be in.

About Me



My name is Natasha D'Arcangelo (she/her). I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) in the states of Florida, Oregon and Washington, a Florida Qualified Supervisor, a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC), a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional (CCTP), a Certified Compassion Fatigue Professional (CCFP), a Compassion Fatigue Educator and a Certified Forward Facing Professional Resilience Coach and Consultant.



What I have done in the community is serve Orlando by doing therapy dog visits with Celeste, the therapy dog to local schools, nursing homes and hospitals. I also recently served as the team captain for Team Veggies for the NAMI Walk and as a team we raised over \$2,000 for NAMIGO. I was the April speaker for the NAMIGO series trying to educate people on different therapy modalities and understanding compassion fatigue. I have tried to bring awareness to mental health topics and have volunteered as a speaker for the Florida Counseling Association, The Mental Health Counselors of Central Florida, The Florida Mental Health Counseling Association and the Suncoast Mental Health Counselors Association. I have spoken on podcasts such as the Victim Service Center of Central Florida trying to destigmatize mental health care.

FCA Week of Service (May 1-5, 2023)

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About Me



Katheryne Puentes is a Florida board-certified Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Registered Marriage and Family Therapist, certified in Traumatic Incident Reduction (TIR) and certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TFCBT). Katheryne completed her Master's in Counseling with a concentration in Mental Health and her Ph.D. in Family Therapy at Nova Southeastern University.

Katheryne specializes with clients suffering from anxiety, depression, trauma, and an extensive range of challenges, including but not limited to crisis, adjustment concerns, addiction, family relationships, a wide range of diagnoses, and grief/loss. She has guided many families with parenting, teen, and children's behavioral concerns and relationship/communication building.

Katheryne is a professor at Yorkville University. She loves providing a collaborative environment within her classrooms and insight into what it will look like to provide services to their future clients.

Katheryne provides coaching services (1:1 and group) to help women set healthier boundaries within their relationships (family, partner and friends) so that they can achieve the confidence to speak up and finally be heard.

FCA Week of Service

(May 1-5, 2023)

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About Me



Dr. Eugenia Agard is a mental health provider and founder of Healing Understanding Guiding and Supportive Services (HUGS) Therapy Services.

Dr. Agard's organization, HUGS, is very engaged in community events; always organizing and or partnering with community providers and hosting outreach events for populations underserved.

HUGS provides mental health counseling, resources for services, host seminars on health care and prevention for such health issues as mental health and physical health. HUGS also holds a clothing drive several times a year where the organization donates to the homeless or those in need of clothing.

Dr. Agard has an upcoming MH women's empowerment collaboration coming up where she will be speaking on MH and the need for self-care in May. Her organization has also adopted the domestic violence center in Osceola and will be providing services to the women and children there and giving them hope while they are displaced. At the end of the year, HUGS will be hosting a Health and Wellness Event on December 1 at the Civic Center.

Dr. Agard is also raising awareness and has a go fund me drive to raise money to install water wells in Africa for the families and children and sends medical supplies to Africa for a "portal clinic" in regions without medical care.



After School Programs for Children of Divorce

Cristina Chi
Barry University

After School Programs for Children of Divorce

Divorce is one of the most remarkable changes in American family life over the past century. Currently, more than fifty percent of marriages terminate in divorce, negatively affecting over one million children annually (Pedro-Carroll, 2005). A divorce is a traumatic event that can impact every family member and lead to emotional and physical problems as a result of the grief experienced by all. The second most prevalent adverse childhood event is parental divorce or separation (Wolchik et al., 2021). Since the 1970s, approximately one million children have experienced parental divorce annually, and many more have experienced the separation of parents who were never married (Wolchik et al., 2021). Divorce is rated as one of the most stressful life changes by divorcing parents and their offspring (Pedro-Carroll, 2005). Divorce-related emotional issues can manifest as melancholy, aggression, somatic complaints, and anxiety.

Divorce can also increase a child's susceptibility to substance abuse, academic difficulties, and increased rates of divorce and mortality in adulthood (Wolchik et al., 2021). Adults with divorced parents have a lower level of psychological well-being and less success in intimate relationships than adults who grew up in two-parent homes, according to preliminary research (Gilman et al., 2005). Adjustment to a parent's divorce may be influenced by changes in living conditions, family dynamics, and economic status. According to research, feelings of sorrow and vulnerability are the primary reasons why children of divorced parents have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and interpersonal problems (Pedro-Carroll, 2005). Children coping with the aftermath of their parents' divorce frequently question how they will survive in the world. Almost all adolescents will experience confusion and anxiety regarding their future (Clark, 2013). Their familiar nuclear family unit no longer exists in the context they are accustomed to, and the unfamiliar and unknown become frightening. Higher levels of post-divorce stress, such as parental conflict, instability, changes in family ties, time spent apart, relocation, and economic decline, are associated with an increase in children's mental health issues (Wolchik et al., 2021).

After School Programs for Children of Divorce

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After-school programs for children of divorced parents dating back to the 1970s, when the divorce rate in the United States began to rise. Initially, these groups were frequently guided by volunteers and focused on assisting children with the emotional and practical challenges of their new family dynamic. Decades of research have demonstrated the efficacy of after-school programs for children of divorced parents. Children who participated in after-school groups had higher self-esteem and were less likely to feel isolated or stigmatized than children who did not participate in these groups, according to a study published in the *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* (Kelly & Emery, 2003). Another study published in the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Group Therapy* discovered that children who participated in after-school groups had improved academic performance and improved school attendance (Kelly & Wallerstein, 2000). These results demonstrate the significance of after-school programs for children of divorced parents.

After-school groups that provide a supportive environment where children can connect with others going through comparable experiences can help children develop resilience and emotional management skills. This can have a positive effect on their academic performance and well-being as a whole. In recent years, the demand for after-school groups for children of divorced parents has increased. Numerous institutions and community organizations currently offer these groups as part of their services for divorcing families. With continued investment and support for after-school programs, we can ensure that children of divorced parents have the resources they need to flourish in their new family structure.

Program Goals

Overall, the objective is to implement a system that is tailored to the needs of children going through a divorce; where resilience is developed, effective and healthy coping skills are learned, social and emotional health is bolstered, and children have a safe environment to foster positive growth and development. A child-focused program seeks to provide psychoeducation to children in order to assist them in adjusting to their family circumstances. This will provide children with the opportunity to discuss their personal divorce experiences and receive feedback and support from trained counselors.

After School Programs for Children of Divorce

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The program will pursue three objectives. The first objective would be to educate children on the topic of divorce by eradicating the confusion and stigma associated with it and assisting them in developing a more positive outlook on divorce. By normalizing the term divorce and removing the negative connotations associated with it, children can begin to reimagine their situations and form more optimistic expectations about the future of their families. Changing how they perceive divorce can aid in altering their future behaviors and, presumably, reduce their future risk of mental health problems. Reframing techniques can also assist in altering their perspective on divorce and aiding them in focusing on the positive changes occurring in their lives.

The second objective would be to strengthen parent-child relationships by teaching children and their parents problem-solving and communication skills that will aid them during the separation process. By learning to moderate conflict, parent effectively, and cultivate warm and loving relationships with their children, parents have the capacity to alter the course of their children's lives (Clark, 2013). Following a separation or divorce, parent-child relationships marked by warmth, supportiveness, effective problem-solving skills, positive communication, and low levels of conflict and negativity are consistently related to fewer negative mental health outcomes and more positive social adaptation outcomes (Clark, 2013). Warm and nurturing parenting, coupled with effective limit-setting and discipline, is a significant protective and resilience-promoting factor for children experiencing parental separation or divorce, according to research (Clark, 2013).

Parents must have open channels of communication with their children and adolescents in which they express their love and devotion frequently and effectively (Clark, 2013). The quality of parent-child relationships is an essential protective factor when predicting the long-term effects of separation and divorce on children (Clark, 2013). Warm, supportive, problem-solving, communicative, and conflict- and negativity-free relationships between parents and children are consistently associated with lower negative mental health outcomes and improved social adaptation after a separation or divorce. (Clark, 2013).

After School Programs for Children of Divorce

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Parents must learn to listen without judging, demonstrate understanding, permit silence, and respond with understanding. Establishing family routines, doing activities together, and spending more one-on-one time with each child can help strengthen the bonds between parents and children, reinforcing the most important message that parents can send their children: that they will always adore them, regardless of the circumstances.

The third objective is to teach children adaptive coping strategies. Effective coping mechanisms play a crucial role in mitigating family-related stressors, according to Pedro-Carroll (2005). According to research and theory, coping generally refers to cognitive, behavioral, and affective strategies used by individuals to self-regulate internal or external demands deemed to exceed their resources or capacities (Miller et al., 2005). In analyses of children's and adolescents coping with interparental conflict, techniques involving informational or emotional support, support seeking, problem resolution, cognitive restructuring and reframing, and emotional self-regulation were associated with better adjustment (Miller et al., 2005).

Learning coping strategies was associated with lower levels of anxiety, depression, and aggression among adolescents contending with divorce-related stressors such as economic strain and family conflict (Pedro-Carroll, 2005). Similarly, active coping strategies involving problem-solving and optimistic thinking boosted children's confidence in their ability to cope with stressful home situations (Pedro-Carroll, 2005).

**After School Programs for
Children of Divorce**
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Upcoming Events!

"FROM AMATEUR TO ARTIST: LEARNING THE ART OF ETHICAL SPIRITUAL INTEGRATION" WEBINAR

HOSTED BY FCA AND FASERVIC

Presented by

MELISSA J. OSTRANDER, Ph.D., LCMHC, LMHC, NCC

FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2023

12:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m.

1.5 Hours of continuing education for
Florida Board of CSW, M&FT, and MHC and NBCC

Research shows counselors perceive spiritual and religious training as an after-thought in their multicultural competencies and report low competence in integrating clients spiritual and religious values. Integration of client's beliefs is less of a skill and more of an art that the counselor sculpts into the treatment plan and therapeutic relationship. This session will provide tools for counselors to be attentive to their client's beliefs to ethically integrate them in the counseling process.

Learning Objectives:

- Attendees will analyze the importance of spiritual and religious integration in the counseling process, broadening their understanding of holistic health.
- Attendees will evaluate the ethical mandate to incorporate client's spiritual and religious beliefs into counseling, formulating an ethical plan for spiritual integration.
- Attendees will practice ethical spiritual and religious integration as an art form, strengthening their perceived competence in integration.

Registration Fees

FCA Members (includes CEs as requested): \$5.00

Non-FCA Members (not seeking CEs): \$15.00

Non-FCA Members (seeking CEs): \$25.00

Presentation Submission Form: <https://tinyurl.com/bdz9ewh4>



Upcoming Events!



"FCA's Self-Care and Connection!"

Join us for an evening of relaxation and connection. Let us share our self-care tips while enjoying our favorite snacks, mocktails, and music.

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

7:00 p.m. until 8:15 p.m.

Via Zoom

FREE Event!

When we tend to our own needs,
Our hearts and minds are free to feed,
On joy and love and simple grace,
And we can find our happy place.

Register at www.flacounseling.org/upcoming-trainings



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Newsletter Submissions

As an FCA Member, you are welcomed and encouraged to submit an article, announcement, and/or professional celebration in the newsletter.

Please contact Dr. Cherise Murphy, FCA Secretary at fcasecretary1@gmail.com for more information regarding submissions.

If submitting articles, please submit articles for the FCA Guidelines Newsletter to fcaguidelines@gmail.com