**Katz, Carmit (PS2-A)**

**Welfare and Legal Practitioners' Perceptions and Views on High-intensity Parental Conflict as a Form of Emotional Abuse of Children**

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In recent years the phenomenon of high-intensity parental conflict within divorce cases has received growing attention from practitioners, policymakers and researchers, especially with regard to issues of children's well-being. One of the major consequences of high-conflict divorce is detriment to the relationship between the child and one or both parents. These cases are best known as parental alienation syndrome. Some argue that children who are exposed to parental alienation actually suffer from emotional abuse. Experience on the ground shows that practitioners in these cases are often preoccupied with the question of whether cases of high-intensity parental conflict can and should be viewed as a form of emotional abuse. The proposed presentation wishes to spotlight the perceptions and experiences of social workers and guardianship lawyers who deal with these kinds of cases on a daily basis. The sample includes four focus groups that were carried out with individuals who work in these fields. A qualitative analysis will be conducted on all of the practitioners' narratives with the aim of spotlighting their perceptions, experiences, and views regarding best practice when intervening with children in these challenging situations. The main conclusions will address the urgent need to develop an empirical base for practitioners' evaluations and decision-making processes in these multifaceted cases.

Key words: high-intensity parental conflict; welfare system; law system; decision- making; parental alienation.

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