



OKLAHOMA
GUARDIAN AD LITEM
INSTITUTE

**3RD ANNUAL CHAMPIONS FOR
CHILDREN CONFERENCE**

INVESTIGATE. REPORT. PROTECT.

3401 NORTHWEST 63RD STREET
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73116

DECEMBER 9 & 10, 2021

This course has been approved by the Oklahoma Bar Association Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Commission for 12 hours of CLE credit, including 2 hours of ethics credit. This course will also provide 2 hours of training towards the 16 hours of domestic violence training required by 43 O.S. §120.7(D)

WWW.OKGALINSTITUTE.ORG

CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY 1, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 8:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. | REGISTRATION |
| 9:00 A.M. – 9:15 A.M. | WELCOME
Sharon Byers, Executive Director, OKGALI |
| 9:15 A.M. – 10:05 A.M. | GETTING STARTED: PREPARATIONS BEFORE
ACCEPTING YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT

Before accepting your first case, you need to get organized. Learn best practices for billing, forms procedures, and more.

Presented by Michelle Smith, Attorney at Law |
| 10:05 A.M. – 10:15 A.M. | BREAK |
| 10:15 A.M. – 12:05 A.M. | ETHICS: AUTHORITY, ROLE AND ETHICAL PRACTICES
OF THE GAL

Define the role of the GAL and gain awareness to avoid ethical pitfalls. From confidentiality to conflicts of interests and the GAL manual, this presentation will get you started on the right (ethical) foot.

Presented by Sharon Byers, Executive Director, OKGALI |
| 12:05 A.M. – 12:20 P.M. | BREAK |

CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY 1, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

12:20 P.M. – 2:20 P.M.

WORKING LUNCH

FILM SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION

RESILIENCE: THE BIOLOGY OF STRESS & THE SCIENCE OF HOPE

This is a 2-part session.

Part 1: The Film

Researchers have discovered a dangerous biological syndrome caused by abuse and neglect during childhood. As the documentary “Resilience” reveals, toxic stress can trigger hormones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, putting them at a greater risk for disease, homelessness, prison time, and early death. It also chronicles the movement that is determined to fight back. Trailblazers are using cutting-edge science and field-tested therapies to protect children from the insidious effects of toxic stress – and the dark legacy of a childhood that no child would choose.

Part 2: Panel Discussion with panelists:

Honorable James Siderias, Special Judge, Oklahoma County District Court

Dr. Deb Shropshire, Director Child Welfare, OKDHS and a pediatrician

Dr. Lana Beasley, child psychologist, qualitative researcher and associate professor at OSU

2:20 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

BREAK

CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY 1, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

2:30 P.M. – 3:20 P.M.

GAL REPORTS: WRITING AND DEFENDING AN ACCURATE, INFORMATIVE, EFFECTIVE REPORT

The format and content of GAL reports vary. This session will provide an overview of different report writing techniques, including organization, content, as well as provide guidance for writing effective reports that you can defend when you are on the witness stand.

Presented by Kristin Box Lindsey, Attorney at Law

3:20 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

BREAK

3:30 P.M. – 4:20 P.M.

GAL INVESTIGATIONS: INTERVIEWS AND SITE VISITS

Interviews are one of the most important tools in your GAL toolbox. Receive guidance on who to interview (or not), learn effective interviewing techniques, and the dos and don'ts of interviewing. Also, a GAL is often required to conduct meetings outside the office. This session also explores the who, what, when, where, why and how of conducting safe site visits and interviews.

Presented by Allyson Dow, Attorney at Law

4:20 P.M.

ADJOURN FOR THE DAY!

SEE YOU TOMORROW!

CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY 2, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021

- 8:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. SIGN IN
- 9:00 A.M. – 9:50 A.M. GAL INVESTIGATIONS: OBTAINING RECORDS
Obtaining records from DHS, law enforcement, medical providers, BIP providers, Smart Start, forensic interviews, and other can be a daunting task. Learn how to navigate these bureaucratic waters to obtain the information you need.

Presented by Sharon Byers, Executive Director, OKGALI
- 9:50 A.M. – 10:00 A.M. BREAK
- 10:00 A.M. – 10:50 A.M. THE GAL'S ROLE IN LITIGATION
Understanding your role in the litigation process is imperative. From motion practice to mediation, a GAL is an important contributor at every stage. Learn how to effectively participate in the process to protect children.

Presented by Kelli Kelso, Attorney at Law
- 10:50 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. BREAK
- 11:00 A.M. – 11:50 A.M. RESOURCES
No matter how much training you receive, you will need resources to effectively advocate for the children in your cases. Luckily, experienced GALs are willing to share valuable resources with you.

Presented by Noni Hawkins, Christine Gronlund, Sharon Byers, Michelle Smith, Regan Barham, Kendall Sykes, Michelle Greene
- 11:50 A.M. – 1:30 P.M. LUNCH – ON YOUR OWN

CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY 2, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021

1:30 P.M. – 2:20 P.M.

PREPARING FOR AND CROSS-EXAMINING MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS

Assessing the credibility of mental health evaluations of parents is vitally important to the work of a GAL. Learn how to assess evaluations and how to cross-examine the expert.

Presented by Heather Cline, Attorney at Law

2:20 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

BREAK

2:30 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

KNOW YOUR JUDGE: JUDICIAL EXPECTATIONS AND PREFERENCES FROM THE JUDGES THEMSELVES

Understanding what family law judges expect from a GAL is essential to effective advocacy. This panel of judges from multiple counties from across the state will tell you what they expect from a GAL.

Honorable Lynne McGuire

Oklahoma County Special Judge

Honorable Barry Hafar

Oklahoma County Special Judge

Honorable Elizabeth Kerr

Oklahoma County Special Judge

Honorable Gregory Ryan

Oklahoma County Special Judge

Honorable Charles Gass

Canadian County Special Judge

Honorable Khristan Strubhar

Canadian County Special Judge

Honorable Beth Stanley

Cleveland County Associate District Judge

3:30 P.M.

ADJOURN!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING TO OUR ANNUAL CLE!