

automatically doing psych. evals. Everyone is doing a full evaluation these days; that was never the intent of the statute. CFI's have a responsibility to not do a full evaluation if one is not needed.

II. The moderator stated that there is a concern that CFI's get way too much power and their opinions get rubber stamped. He also commented on the lack of accountability. Mental health boards generally don't have jurisdiction to process complaints and grievances are usually dismissed.

III. Magistrate Dupree commenting on whether parenting would get restricted in a contempt for failure to pay the CFI; "Are we going to take the kids away for contempt to pay the CFI, of course not."* She also commented that judges tend to appoint the same CFI's over and over.

IV. An audience member Attorney/CFI commented that CFI's lie about their record of recommendations on cases when pressed on gender or relocation issues. Unless you are inside the circle you don't know which CFI's are father friendly or mother friendly.

V. Les Katz stated that psych evals are done way too often. "We need to be asking ourselves, why are we doing psych testing?" Psych evals in CFI reports should include a caveat that they are not fact, but only an hypothesis.

VI. Theresa Spahn commented that there are groups of parents who are complaining about CFI bias and lack of accountability, and "knocking on the door" of Justice Mullarkey. [editorial note: She's obviously talking about the group petitions, which can be viewed by clicking the "relevant memoranda" link on [this page](#).]

VII. Gina Weitzenkorn and Theresa Spahn stated that the purpose of discovery regarding the CFI report is to prepare for litigation. Parents and lawyers shouldn't be calling up after issues have been resolved to dig in to the report and discover the evidence that was used to formulate the report.

VIII. In CFI reports 1st hand observation of parent/child interaction is far more valuable to the judge than collateral contacts. The way CFI's are held accountable is through cross examination, the judge, and supplemental evaluations. If a follow up evaluation is needed for a post-decree issue judges usually use the original CFI. The question arose as to whether a parent can make installment payments to the CFI, and the judge response was, 'that would be up to the CFI'. A contempt hearing was a last resort regarding outstanding payment to a CFI. Judges want CFI's to educate the court on relevant parenting issues, child development, communication between the parties etc. Judges want to know what CFI fees and retainer are before they assign them; if a CFI doesn't list their fees, the judge will keep going down the list. Judges want an analysis from the CFI; i.e. what is the CFI rationale behind the recommendations?

* This is exactly what happened in the [Stadnyck transcript](#).