

## **Myths & Excuses in Drug Testing & Substance Abuse Treatment**

The Parenting Capacity Assessors Group gathered on February 6, 2015 at the Toronto CAS to hear two speakers present on the topic, **"Myths & Excuses in Drug Testing & Substance Abuse Treatment"**.

The meeting was introduced by local family law counsel, Mr. Anthony Macri who shared the information about AFCC – Parent and Ontario Chapter membership benefits and reminded the audience of about 30 participants of the upcoming international AFCC conference in New Orleans in May 2015. The audience also heard the PCA working group was supported in their efforts to build capacity and share knowledge by financial support from the Ontario Chapter of AFCC.

The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Jay McGrory and Dr. Dan Ashbourne, co-chairs of the PCA working group and currently members of the AFCC – Ontario Chapter Board of Directors. The first well known speaker was Dr. Joey Gareri, who we all know comes from Motherisk, at The Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto. He reported on drug testing procedures, challenges and cautions while helping to educate the group about the various substance use/abuse dynamics and how parenting may be compromised. This article is provided on our website.

Another presentation on "Family Therapy & Problem Alcohol Use: Opportunities and Cautions when working systemically" was made by Ms. Brenda Spitzer. Brenda highlighted the importance in looking at the contextual factors in situations from a systemic framework. Brenda draws her knowledge and experience from working as a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist, and is also a Clinical Fellow and Approved Supervisor with the American and Ontario Associations for Marriage and Family Therapy. Brenda noted that she has recently taken on the position of Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and maintains a private practice in Toronto. Brenda provided the slides from her talk and they are also available on our website. Both speakers weaved their discussions nicely together and were thanked for the depth of their knowledge that they shared..

**Thank you all for those that attended the February 6, 2015 event and for generating the excellent discussion.**