

**2010 Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development: The Agenda**  
Pre- and Post- Conference Skills Training Workshop –

**“Capturing Children’s Response to Parental Conflicts and Making Use of It”**

**A One-day Workshop with Wai-Yung Lee, Ph.D.**

**Date:** 9 June 2010  
**Time:** 10:00am to 5:00pm  
**Venue:** HKU Family Institute, 5/F, Tsan Yuk Hospital, 30 Hospital Road, Hong Kong  
**Fee:** US\$100 / HK\$800

The work with children in the family context has been much ignored in the current mental health practice. While a vast body of established literature has connected children’s development to family dynamics, specifically to unresolved parental conflicts, children in distress are often diagnosed with individual pathology and overly treated by medication. Using research and clinical data as illustration, this one-day workshop aims to rejuvenate the importance of addressing both children’s emotional and behavioral problems in relation to family harmony. Our research that measured the children’s physiological arousals when exposed to parental conflict suggested that children were largely aroused by their parents’ own interpersonal issues, whether the parental conflict was expressed verbally or nonverbally. This interpersonal nature of connection between children and parents is a crucial consideration in working with children.

The content of the workshop involves the introduction of 1) a family assessment protocol, which focuses on assessing whether the problem child is reacting to parental discourse; and 2) a debriefing process, which utilizes the data obtained from the family assessment to provide evidence of the linkage between the child’s presenting problems and the parental relationship. Interestingly, the child in question often provides surprising feedbacks to the parental relationship during this process, bringing powerful awareness to the parents, who may otherwise be conflict avoidant. Research that supports this procedure has been published in the March 2010 issue of the Family Process. Some of the related DVD segments have also been presented in Dr. Salvador Minuchin’s keynote speech at the Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference 2009 due to its innovation.

The objective of this workshop is also to equip mental health professionals who are working with children and youth with the skills and knowledge to apply or utilize this protocol clinically.

**About the trainer:**

*Wai-Yung LEE, Ph.D., an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, is the Associate Professor and Founding Director of the HKU Family Institute, University of Hong Kong, as well as Faculty Member of the Minuchin Center for the Family in New York, USA. She has delivered keynotes and conducted workshops in America and Europe. Much of her work had been on dispersing the many myths about Asian Chinese families, while developing a framework for culturally relevant approach in different contexts. In addition to journal publications, Dr. Lee has also co-authored three books with Salvador Minuchin, including the first and second editions of “Mastering family therapy – Journeys of growth and transformation” and “Assessing families and couples – From symptom to system,” together with Michael Nichols. These books have been translated into many different languages.*