



The ABA Center on Children and the Law

A Program of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2005 CENTER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Celebrating its 27th anniversary, the Center remains a strong and visible resource for the nation on issues related to protection of children. The following illustrates the continuing innovation and vitality of Center work, as well as the dedication and vision of its superb staff:

- **Most Recent Publications**– *“Improving Foster Care Outcomes for Older Youth: What Judges and Attorneys Need to Know”*; *“Advanced Courtroom Skills Curriculum for Child Welfare Caseworkers”*; *“Legal Resource Manual and Curriculum for Foster Parents”*; Participation in drafting *“National Curriculum for Caseflow Management in Juvenile Dependency Cases Involving Foster Care”* and co-writing companion paper, *“Improving Outcomes Together”* (on child welfare agency-court collaborations)
- **Our “Resource Center” Staff’s Child Welfare Law Training and Technical Assistance Has Lately Been Provided in**– Alaska; Arkansas; California; District of Columbia; Florida; Georgia; Idaho; Iowa; Kansas; Louisiana; Maryland; Missouri; North Carolina; Puerto Rico; Rhode Island; South Carolina; Texas; Virginia; West Virginia
- **Special Statewide Center Projects Are Focused on Expediting Permanent Legal Placements for Children in Foster Care**– Kentucky; Pennsylvania; Wyoming
- **State Court System Evaluations of Child Welfare Case Handling, Completed in**– Maryland; Michigan; New Hampshire
- **Work on Development of Important Policy Reforms**– *“Representation of Children in Abuse and Neglect and Custody Proceedings Act”*, for the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws; *“Revised Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children,”* through an American Public Human Services Association workgroup; Presentation to U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services on legal responses to statutory rape and the tension between mandatory reporting of statutory rape by health care providers and the impact on adolescents' access to confidential health care services; Presentations and facilitation at national conference on improving the work of state child protection system citizen oversight panels
- **New Center Projects**– Collaborative five-year project with Zero-To-Three and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges on *Improving Legal Responses to Court-Involved Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers* (federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau); *Advanced Trainings on the Impact of Domestic Violence on Children and Its Legal Implications* (federal Office on Violence Against Women)

- **Current Funded Center Projects–**
 - *“National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues”*
 - *Pennsylvania Overcoming Permanency Barriers for Foster Children Project*
 - *Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts in America / Court Caseload and Workload Measurement Projects (both with the National Center for State Courts and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges)*
 - *“Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health”*
 - *Trainings and Materials on Children Exposed to Violence (with Maine’s Muskie School of Public Service, Institute for Child & Family Policy)*
 - *Research on How Parental Substance Abuse is Addressed Under the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act*
 - *Developing a Publication on Legal Permanency for Adolescents in Foster Care*
 - *Evaluating How States & Localities Use Closed-Circuit Television and Videotape Technology in Child Victim/Witness Cases*
 - *Improving Educational Access for Children in Foster Care*
 - *Enhancing Permanency Outcomes for Children of Incarcerated Parents (with the Child Welfare League of America)*
 - *Child Protection Legal Reform Project, for the Ohio Supreme Court (50-state analysis of exemplary state legislation; production of materials to help parents better understand the child protection administrative and legal process)*

- **New Center Listserv (Our 5th)–** To spur information sharing and exchange of ideas among advocates on education access issues for children who are homeless or in foster care (the five Center listservs have several thousand subscribers)

- **Input on the ABA’s Development of a New Model Code of Judicial Conduct–** Our comments have focused on practices and ethics related to judicial collaboration and coordination with state/local child welfare agencies to improve child protection systems

- **Development of New ABA Standards of Practice for Attorneys Representing Parents in Abuse and Neglect Cases–** Have convened a working group of experts to help in the drafting, including public defenders and judges

- **Helping Draft ABA Policy Resolution on Improving Court Outcomes for Abused and Neglected Children–** (with L.A. County Bar; for Aug. 2005 House of Delegates)

- **ABA 2005 Annual Meeting Program on Legal Issues Related to Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Grandchildren–** Sunday, August 7, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Hyatt Regency Chicago, Gold Coast Room, Bronze Level, West Tower