

NYU students and alumni do a wide variety of work on behalf of children and families, including: direct legal services such as representing victims of domestic violence or alleged juvenile delinquents, or helping children and families with their other legal needs such as immigration or special education matters; representing families in the child welfare and foster care systems; international children's rights work; and policy advocacy and impact litigation for reforming systems such as the Department of Education or child welfare agencies.

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS TO CONSIDER

Research opportunities by reading PILC Reports available at <https://its.law.nyu.edu/pilc/reports/search.cfm> and searching PSJD (www.psjd.org).

• **Child Welfare Law (Child Protection/Family Defense)**

- Generally speaking, child welfare law refers to the law governing the process by which the government may monitor a child's home or even remove a child from his or her parents or caregivers following a report that the child is neglected or abused. This area of the law is ripe with opportunities to gain considerable litigation experience and responsibility early in one's career, as many organizations specializing in child welfare law will hire directly out of law school. Child protective proceedings usually involve at least three lawyers: one for the child, for the parent/caregiver, and for the government. The lawyer for the child advocates for the child's position in such proceedings; organizations in New York City that provide children's attorneys in child protective cases include Legal Aid Society-Juvenile Rights Practice and Lawyers for Children. Family defense attorneys represent the parents/caregivers with the goal of keeping children home with their families. In New York City, these organizations include the Brooklyn Family Defense Practice, the Bronx Defenders Family Defense Practice, and the Center for Family Representation. Lastly, the government is also represented by a lawyer; in New York City, that lawyer works for the Administration for Children's Services; in New Jersey, that lawyer works for the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS).

• **Juvenile Justice**

- When a young person commits an act which would constitute a crime if he or she were an adult, the child can become the subject of a juvenile delinquency case in court. In New York City, juvenile delinquency cases are heard in Family Court. Children in such proceedings are often represented by a lawyer from the Legal Aid Society-Juvenile Rights Practice. In addition, many public defender offices have divisions that provide representation to alleged juvenile delinquents, such as the Youth Law Project at Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem. In New York City, the family court division of the New York City Law Department prosecutes juveniles in Family Court; in other jurisdictions, the prosecution of juvenile offenders may be handled by the DA's office or by other agencies.

• **Direct Services Providers (Other)**

- There are many organizations that directly represent children and families in a wide range of legal matters such as special education, emancipation, domestic violence, public benefits, and immigration. Examples include Partnership for Children's Rights, The Door, Sanctuary for Families, Legal Services for Children (San Francisco), and Safe Horizon. In addition, many legal services offices have units/divisions dedicated to children's/families' issues—e.g., Bay Area Legal Aid (Youth Justice Project), Queens Legal Services (Family Law Unit), and South Brooklyn Legal Services (Family Law/Domestic Violence Unit).

• **Government Agencies**

- Certain government agencies work to protect children's rights. Some examples include the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the Department of Education (local, state, or federal), the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Justice's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (criminal division). In addition, nearly every federal agency has units related to children and youth—e.g., the Department of Labor works on child labor issues and the Administration for Children and Families, which sits under the Department of Health and Human

Intern Reports

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Services, is responsible for federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities.

- **Impact Litigation Organizations**

- These organizations use litigation to enact broad-scale changes to improve the lives of children by, for example, filing a class action lawsuit aimed at reforming a state's child welfare agency or changing a practice by the Department of Education. Examples include Children's Rights, Inc., Advocates for Children of New York, Campaign for Fiscal Equality, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, The Juvenile Law Center (Philadelphia), and the Education Law Center (Newark).

- **International**

- There are also international organizations that work on children's issues from a global perspective (either from within the U.S. or abroad). Some examples include Human Rights Watch – Children's Rights Division, UNICEF, and local non-governmental organizations in many countries.

GET INVOLVED

Join a Student Group: Education Law & Policy Society (learn about public education reform), Suspension Representation Project (represent students in superintendent's suspension hearings), High School Law Institute (teach law to NYC high school students), Domestic Violence Advocacy Project (help people obtain orders of protection in Family Court), and more!

SELECTED SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS

Be sure to look at Appendix 7 of PILC's 1L and 2L handbooks, and also search funding resources and paid internships on **PSJD** to find opportunities with extra funding and/or mentorship. In particular, check out the **Emory Summer Child Advocacy Program** (<http://www.bartoncenter.net/about/student-opportunities/internshipsinfo.html>) and the **Bergstrom Child Welfare Law Summer Fellowship** (<http://www.law.umich.edu/clinical/calc/Bergstrom/Pages/summerfellowship.aspx>).

SELECTED POST-GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

Equal Justice Works Fellowship: <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/post-grad/equal-justice-works-fellowships>

Skadden Fellowship: <http://www.skaddenfellowships.org/>

Chadbourne Fellowship at The Door: <http://www.chadbourne.com/thedoor/>

Partnership for Children's Rights, Sinsheimer Children's Rights Fellowship: <http://pfc.org/fellowships-pfcr/sinsheimer-fellowship>

Emory University School of Law, Robin Nash Fellowship <http://bartoncenter.net/about/fellowships.html>

Juvenile Law Center, Zubrow Fellowship: <http://jlc.org/about-us/who-we-are/working-at-jlc/zubrow-fellowship-childrens-law>

Some organizations that represent children and families regularly hire entry level attorneys, such as **The Legal Aid Society-Juvenile Rights Practice**, the **Bronx Defenders Family Defense Practice**, the **Brooklyn Family Defense Practice**, the **Center for Family Representation**, **Committee for Public Counsel Services** and the **NYC Law Department, Family Court Division**.

TERM TIME INTERNSHIPS

Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) awards students funding for term-time internships every semester. PILC posts term-time internship opportunities on **Simplicity/CSM**. Also, be sure to check out **PSJD**.

LEARN ABOUT CLINICS

Relevant clinics include the Family Defense Clinic, the Juvenile Defender Clinic, and the Children's Rights Clinic. Detailed information about clinics, including descriptions and how to apply, can be found at <http://www.lawF.nyu.edu/academics/clinics/index.htm>.

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NYU FACULTY

Below are some NYU School of Law Professors who focus on Children, Family, and Education issues.

| | |
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ALUMNI

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|---------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Hannah Baker '13 | hannah.elizabeth.baker@gmail.com | Committee for Public Counsel Services, Children and Family Law Division (MA) |
| Elyssa Caplan '13 | ecaplan@door.org | The Door Legal Services |
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| Semuteh Freeman '13 | semuteh@lsc-sf.org | Legal Services for Children (San Francisco) |
| Latoya Herring '12 | latoya.herring@law.nyu.edu | Legal Aid Society – Juvenile Rights Practice (Bronx) |
| Julia Hiatt '09 | jhiatt@bfdp.bds.org | Brooklyn Family Defense Practice |
| Randi Levine '08 | rlevine@advocatesforchildren.org | Advocates for Children |
| Diana Newmark '13 | dnewmark@legal-aid.org | Legal Aid Society, Education Advocacy Project |
| Dalit Paradis '08 | dparadis@pfc.org | Partnership for Children's Rights |

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EDUCATION LAW & POLICY ORGANIZATIONS

| DIRECT SERVICE | |
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| Advocates For Children (NYC) | www.advocatesforchildren.org |
| Legal Aid Society, Education Advocacy Project (NYC) | www.legal-aid.org |
| Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago | www.lafchicago.org |
| Make the Road New York | www.maketheroad.org |
| New York Lawyers for the Public Interest | www.nylpi.org |
| New York Legal Assistance Group | www.nylag.org |
| Partnership for Children's Rights (NYC) | www.pfcr.org |
| Team Child (Seattle) | www.teamchild.org |
| Alliance for Children's Rights (LA) | www.kids-alliance.org |
| Center for Children's Advocacy (CT) | www.kidscounsel.org |
| Legal Services for Children (San Francisco) | www.lsc-sf.org |
| Advocates for Children of New Jersey | www.acnj.org |
| Legal Services NYC (Education Law Project) | www.legalservicesnyc.org |
| IMPACT LITIGATION | |
| Campaign for Fiscal Equity (NYC) | www.cfequity.org |
| Campaign for Educational Equity (NYC) | www.tc.columbia.edu/equitycampaign |
| Education Law Center (NJ) | www.edlawcenter.org |
| NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (DC) | www.naacpldf.org |
| Juvenile Law Center (PA) | www.jlc.org |
| ACLU of Southern California | www.aclu-sc.org |
| Advancement Project (CA, DC) | www.advanceproj.com |
| POLICY | |
| Center for Law and Education (DC, MA) | www.cleweb.org |
| National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, Dignity in Schools Project (PA, NYC) | www.nesri.org |
| NYC Department of Education | http://schools.nyc.gov/ |
| Children's Defense Fund (DC, Nationally) | www.childrensdefense.org |
| StudentsFirst (Sacramento) | www.studentsfirst.org |
| GOVERNMENT | |
| U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Civil Rights (DC, NY, San Francisco) | www2.ed.gov/ocr |
| NYC Department of Education | http://schools.nyc.gov |

EDUCATION PIONEERS is a fellowship organization. For more information, contact Brence Pernell (bp956@nyu.edu) or Nicholas Melvoin (nicholas.melvoin@gmail.com).

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