



Family Defense Council Newsletter

Empowering Families with High Quality Legal Representation

Advancing technology and resources to support zealous, client-centered, multi-disciplinary advocacy for all children and families.

Issue 2 – January 2026

FDC At A Glance

We're still in the early release of the Family Defense Council newsletter and would love your feedback. 🖱️ Tell us what you'd like to see in future issues — content, formats, spotlights, opportunities, and more.

⚖️ Family Defense Council Newsletter launches December 2025 Issue 1 (include link to issue #1 once available)

🔗 [Get connected](#) for updates.

📡 Resources — New + Newly Discovered

Title IV-E Community of Practice

- First meeting: January 28 (bi-monthly, virtual)
- Supports states and organizations in accessing IV-E funds

✉️ Contact [Allison Green](#) (NACC)

Recap: The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights Spotlight



- Kelly Albinak Kribs, Co-Director, Technical Assistance Program
- Shaina Simenas, Co-Director, Technical Assistance Program
- Monthly [Preventive Legal Advocacy / Pre-Petition Cohort](#) meeting
- Centered on prevention-focused advocacy for immigrant children and families, with attention to interdisciplinary practice at early points of system contact

💰 Family Defense In the News

📈 [Child Welfare Referrals Continue to Rise](#) New Child Trends analysis shows referrals for maltreatment increased in 2023, while substantiated cases declined, and "screened out" referrals outpaced investigations.

🔗 [Family Miranda Gains Attention as Due Process Reform](#) New analysis examines how informing parents of their rights during CPS investigations may reduce unnecessary intervention and improve fairness.

⚖️ [New York Court Affirms Right to Effective Counsel](#) New York's highest court ruled that parents facing termination of parental rights are entitled to effective assistance of counsel.

💰 [Blueprint for Child Welfare Financing Reform Released](#) A bipartisan working group released a framework recommending modernization of federal child welfare funding and accountability.

🏛️ [California Enacts New Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Laws](#) New 2026 laws expand transition planning for foster youth, strengthen mandated reporter training, and enhance parents' participation in dependency proceedings.

🏢 [New Federal Children's Bureau Leader Appointed](#) President Trump has selected Ryan Hanlon to lead the federal Children's Bureau, which oversees national child welfare policy, funding and oversight.

📡 Voices Shaping the Field

🔗 [Should CPS Intervene More?](#)

Soho Forum Debate

Marty Guggenheim vs. Naomi Schaefer Riley

Examining the resolution:

Government-run child protective services should intervene more in the lives of children.



🎧 Listen In

🔍 How to Be a Catalyst for Change

Guest: Aubrey Edwards-Luce

[Torn: A Podcast About Racial Disparities in the Child Welfare System](#)

Exploring how law, policy and lived experience can be leveraged to shift systems that separate families.



📅 Dates & Deadlines

2026 Conferences at a Glance

Jan 28–30: LSC Innovations in Tech Conference (San Antonio, TX)

Mar 15–18: NCJFCJ National Conference on Juvenile Justice (Minneapolis, MN)

Mar 19–20: NAPD Rise. Resist. Represent. (Virtual)

Apr 20–22: CWLA National Conference (Arlington, VA)

Apr 20–23: NAPD Changemakers Forum (Atlanta, GA)

May 6–8: Untethered 2026 (Washington, DC)

May 13–16: ABA/NLADA Equal Justice Conference (Charlotte, NC)

May 20: Partners for Justice (Baltimore, MD)

Jul 19–22: NCJFCJ Annual Conference (Nashville, TN)

Aug 11–14: NACC National (Portland, OR)

Oct 14–16: NACC Virtual (Virtual)

Do you have news, a podcast or an event to share ?

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👉 Feel free to share.