



FAMILY DEFENSE COUNCIL

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 3 – February 2026

FDC At A Glance

We'd love your feedback as this newsletter continues to evolve. 👉 Tell us what you'd like to see in future issues — content, formats, spotlights, opportunities, and more.

We are advancing plans to activate the Family Defense Council as an advocacy organization to support family defense practitioners nationwide. More information coming soon.

🔗 [Get connected](#) for updates.

📢 Resources — New + Newly Discovered

Title IV-E Community of Practice

Supports states and organizations in accessing IV-E funds

Next meeting: March 2026 (virtual)

✉️ Contact [Allison Green](#) (NACC)

Missing in Action: How Low Appearance Rates Impact Courts

National Center for State Courts | January 2026

📄 Read the [report](#)

👥 [Webinar](#): February 25, 2026

Covering Family Policing: A Guide for Journalists

Created by Center for Just Journalism, Movement for Family Power, Civil Rights Corps, and University of Miami School of Law Children & Youth Law Clinic

➡️ [Explore](#) and share

Recap: Prenatal Cannabis Exposure & Maltreatment Spotlight 💡

- Joseph Ryan, University of Michigan
- Monthly [Preventive Legal Advocacy / Pre-Petition Cohort](#) meeting
- Examines racial disparities in newborn drug testing, highlighting implications for pre-petition advocacy and investigation-stage defense

📰 Family Defense In the News

🌱 [Oklahoma Addresses Attorney Deserts in Child Welfare](#);

New reporting highlights efforts to expand access to qualified legal representation through compensation and structural reforms.

👤 [Kinship Caregivers Still Struggle for a Voice](#); Investigation finds relatives caring for children often lack standing in court proceedings, shaping family outcomes.

🏛️ [New Mexico Names Independent Child Welfare Watchdog](#);

Governor appoints Dawn Walters to lead the state's new Office of the Child Advocate.

📢 Voices Shaping the Field

🤖 [What Lawyers Need to Understand About AI](#)

Author: Bridgette Carr

Explores professional responsibility and how lawyers can use AI without compromising client trust.



📅 Dates & Deadlines

2026 Conferences Snapshot

Mar 4–6: NACC Professionalism & Ethics Symposium (virtual)

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)

Jun 14–17: APHSA National Human Services Summit (Arlington, VA)

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 event to share?

📧 valerie@yourcaseplan.com

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