Executive Director’s Message

Over the past 30 years, I have witnessed firsthand the enormity of the struggles faced by children entangled in New York City’s foster care system. When children and youth come to Lawyers For Children, they are suffering from the trauma of shattered families, emotional and physical neglect, and disrupted community support systems. While our role is to provide them with the highest-quality legal and social work services during their time in foster care, we end up giving them so much more.

Our clients have told us time and again that when the impact of a foster care placement hits, we become the most consistent and supportive force in their lives. No matter what they face while

LFC Breaks the Cycle of Abuse

Noah was removed from his mother’s care when he entered kindergarten. His teachers saw bruises on his body and discovered that he was not being fed or bathed at home. Noah was so traumatized by the time he entered foster care that he began to have night terrors. His new foster mother complained to the agency about Noah’s “behavior,” and he was placed on a powerful sedative medication.

When LFC was assigned to the case, our social worker met with Noah, his foster mother, and his teachers. When his teachers reported that Noah spent most of the school day sleeping with his head on his desk, Noah’s LFC social worker was outraged. She understood that Noah’s normal reaction to the trauma of being abused and neglected was being treated as a mental illness, with medication that was far too powerful for such a young child.

Noah’s LFC team consulted on the case, and that afternoon, Noah’s LFC attorney went to court and demanded that the foster care agency provide Noah with therapy, cease sedating him immediately, and find him a supportive and loving therapeutic foster home. Now, three months later, Noah is thriving in a preadoptive foster home, receiving biweekly therapy, and excelling in school.
in foster care, they know that they are always here, ready to listen, to respond, and to achieve life-changing results on their behalf. They come to us when they are in crisis and have nowhere to turn. But they also come to us to celebrate their achievements and milestones, from graduations to sibling reunions to adoptions. And in this way, we are able to help our clients heal the fractures of the past and move toward a future built on trust, respect, and safety.

I am so proud of the work that our staff does every day, and I look forward to sharing just a few of our accomplishments from the past year through the stories you will find in this newsletter. Without you, our supporters, none of these successes would be possible.

Karen J. Freedman, Esq.

LFC Announces Selection of New Housing Specialist

After interning at Lawyers For Children in 2010, Tara Shoran-Khamov joined our staff as a Judge Gertrud Mainzer Fellow in 2012. Throughout her time at LFC, Tara has felt drawn to work with our older clients as they seek to establish safe and permanent housing for themselves before they turn 21 and age out of foster care. Cuts to funding for both public and supportive housing mean that there are a limited number of apartments available for youth aging out of care, and those who are able to secure public housing often risk living in poor or unsafe conditions.

As LFC’s new Housing Specialist, Tara is a key member of our Adolescents Confronting Transition (ACT) Project. Tara is charged with the task of helping all of our clients find safe, permanent housing before they leave foster care and ensuring that young people who cannot find such housing will never be discharged from foster care to homelessness. We are thrilled that Tara has taken on this new role, and we look forward to celebrating her accomplishments in and out of the courtroom!

LFC Welcomes 2015 Youth Ambassadors

Building upon the incredible success of our inaugural class of Youth Ambassadors, we have welcomed five new ambassadors this year. These young people are current and former LFC clients who want to share their LFC experiences with our supporters and with a variety of community advocates. Our new Youth Ambassadors have received training in public speaking and have already made a full presentation to our board. Their life stories are tremendously compelling, and their impact as they share our mission with others is unparalleled.

LFC Advocates for the Rights of All Children

LFC’s critical role in protecting the rights and changing the lives of children in foster care is of growing importance. The cocktail party, generously hosted by Leadership Council Chair Allison Stillman and her husband Michael Stillman, introduced LFC to over 100 new supporters and raised $20,000. We look forward to sharing our work and our successes with these new friends and supporters!
Each summer, LFC offers an intensive internship opportunity to highly qualified law and college students. These students develop an understanding of the child welfare system in New York City and the vital role that our interdisciplinary teams play in effectively advocating for children in foster care. We are proud of the broad range of experiences that our extraordinary interns bring to their work at LFC, and we thank them for sharing their many talents with us and with the children we represent.

**Social Work Interns**
- Nusrat Ahmed  
  Princeton University  
- Renata Horowitz  
  University of Chicago  
- Phoebe Howe  
  Wesleyan University  
- Rachel Huebner  
  Harvard University  
- Rebecca Kahn  
  Princeton University  
- Lea Kassa  
  Cornell University  
- Kamla Kumar  
  Wesleyan University  
- Caitlin Larsen  
  Macaulay Honors College at Baruch College  
- Lydia McCaleb  
  Brandeis University  
- Miranda Santillo  
  Cornell University  
- Anne Smith  
  Dartmouth College

**Legal Interns**
- Rebecca Azhdani  
  Columbia Law School  
- Bianca Bamgbade  
  Yale Law School  
- Donna Chornyai  
  Suffolk University Law School  
- Ruth Chung  
  CUNY School of Law  
- Safiya Edwards  
  Howard University School of Law  
- Mia Falzarano  
  Wake Forest School of Law

**LFC Welcomes 2015 Summer Interns**

- Sam Koplewicz  
  Harvard Law School  
- Neelu Pathiyil  
  Fordham Law School  
- Shira Wisotsky  
  Cardozo School of Law  
- Masha Zilberman  
  Boston University School Law

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