

Louisiana State Bar Association Children's Law Committee
October 3, 2018 - New Orleans, LA

In Attendance:

Karen Hallstrom, Chair	Danika Benjamin
Ariel Test, Chair	Mark Harris
Hon. Ernestine Grey	Angela Smith
Barbara Ferguson	Kellie Johnson
Michael Brown	Pam Crawford
Barry LaCour	Rebecca May Ricks
Hon. Kathleen Richey	Curtis Nelson
Jerry Deason	Martha Maher
Jessie George	LSBA Staff: Michael Schachtman and Joanna Laidler
Guy Lain	
Kristian Dobard	
Cherrilyne Thomas	

1. Welcome & Introductions

Committee chairs Karen Hallstrom and Ariel Test welcomed the committee and gave a brief overview of its mission and recent projects. Last year this committee became a "standing" committee of the LSBA. Karen introduced Curtis Nelson, Jr. as the new Deputy Judicial Administrator in the Division of Children and Families at the Louisiana Supreme Court.

2. Direct Service Providers Partnerships and Outreach

A committee goal for this year is to work with direct service providers, in addition to attorneys, to promote previous Committee projects, and identify legal resources the Committee can develop. In particular, the "Becoming an Adult" resource. Michael will email a .pdf version, and "bookmark" with the URL.

3. Committee Website

The [Committee website](#) contains a variety of committee news and resources, including links to "Becoming an Adult," and all of the articles written for the Children's law feature edition of the Louisiana Bar Journal. Several articles did were cut due to space, but available online. Committee members are invited to send announcements, articles, news, etc... In particular, it would great to have updates (including to Bar Journal

articles) on legislation including “Raise the Age” and juvenile expungement. Articles should be written to the general bar membership, judges, and/or the public. Training calendars and other resources for Children’s attorneys are available at clarola.org.

4. “Child Welfare Specialization”

Louisiana current recognizes “specialization” only for 1) “Appellate Practice,” 2) “Business Bankruptcy Law,” 3) “Consumer Bankruptcy Law,” 4) “Estate Planning and Administration,” 5) “Family Law,” and 6) Tax Law. Committee members have inquired as to whether it would be appropriate to add a “children’s law specialization” to ensure the highest quality of representation and recognize practitioners dedicated to this field. Many children’s attorneys in Louisiana already have accreditation from the National Association of Children’s Counsel, plus there are CINC qualification requirements, which could both serve as a template for qualification. Several national organizations (i.e. National Juvenile Defender Center) can also offer a guide. Karen and Curtis will speak about this with the Court and report back.

5. Legislative Update

This coming session is focused on fiscal issues, but there are several relevant substantive bills including potential revisions to the Children’s Code connected to the “Domestic Abuse Assistance Act,” and amendments to adoption articles. The Committee can ask the LSBA Board of Governors (via the Legislation Committee) to take a public stance on a bill, but cannot do so independently.

6. Pelican Center Report

CWLS: We presently have 28 Louisiana attorneys, certified as Child Welfare Law Specialists with the National Association of Counsel for Children. With funding support by the Pelican Center for Children and Families, these practitioners can remain certified if they maintain their annual renewal obligations. For more information on CWLS certification see www.naccchildlaw.org.

Training calendar 2018:

- Together We Can, (Lafayette) 10/15-10/17
- Mosaic Dimension 2.0 (Metairie) 11/09
- Child Welfare Basics, (Shreveport) 11/28
- Safety Decision Making-live (Metairie) 12/8
- Safety Decision Making webinar 12/11

Training calendar 2019: The training calendar for 2019 is complete. Locations are being secured. The catalog will be distributed shortly.

7. Upcoming Trainings

There are just a few events left in 2018, which include “Together We Can” and the “Louisiana Justice Community” conferences. Most training information is available via clarola.org. Committee members are invited to submit additional events to the Committee directly, or LSBA staff for distribution.

8. Law School Trainings

The Committee conducts outreach to law schools by providing “skills” courses, and hosting informal lunches to talk about careers in Children’s Law. We hope to host an event at each of the four LA law schools this year. Michael/Joanna will email the Committee with specific dates to sign up.

9. Other Business

Legal issues regarding education are frequently requested, but only a few agencies/attorneys in the state handle these claims. When IEPs aren’t followed, attorneys could potentially receive attorney fees for claims (which could be ideal for young attorneys). The committee approved the creation of an “education subcommittee” to work with the Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee on these issues. Committee members should contact the chairs or LSBA staff to sign up.

10. Adjournment