



The Public's Health and the Law in the 21st Century
The Private Bar: Partner for Healthy Communities

Health Law Partnership
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HeLP: An Interdisciplinary Community Collaboration

- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
- Georgia State University College of Law
- The Atlanta Legal Aid Society

The Medical Legal Partnership for Children
RAISING THE BAR FOR CHILD HEALTH



National Medical-Legal Collaboration Sites - April 2006



Mission

To improve the health and social well-being of Georgia's low-income children.



Change Theory

By combining the health care expertise of health care professionals with the legal expertise of attorneys, a comprehensive set of services can be provided to address the multiple determinants of children's health and well-being.



HeLP's Goals

- To be a model for interdisciplinary community collaboration delivering comprehensive legal and advocacy services and educational programs.
- To improve the physical, social or economic environment in which many children live, resulting in their improved health and quality of life.
- To create a culture that encourages coordination, collaboration, cooperation, and excellence.



Essential Support

- Advisory Council
- Partner Contributions
 - Value of Good Will
- Funders
- Pro Bono Network



HeLP's Advisory Council

- Non-profit and private legal firms and organizations
- Academia
- Healthcare
- Social Work
- Education



The Four Components of HeLP

- Legal Services
- Education
- Advocacy
- Evaluation and Research

Legal Services

- **Addressing the legal needs affecting children's health:**
 - Civil legal cases up to 200% FPL
 - Improving poor housing conditions
 - Accessing state and federal benefits programs
 - Obtaining educational accommodations and special services
 - Ensuring freedom from neglect or violence
 - Establishing and preserving family income streams
 - 3 to 5 legal problems per referral

Scope of the Legal Work

- Public benefits
- Private health insurance
- Family law
- Permanency planning
- Housing
- Education
- Employment
- Consumer

Home
counties of
clients
served in
2005-2006





Issues Referred in 2005

Disability/SS/SSDI	31
Domestic Violence	21
Education	19
Employment	10
Family Law	62
Health Insurance	13
Housing	20
Hunger	6
Immigration	5
Medicaid/Peachcare/EPSDT	48
Other, including Advanced Directives, Child Abuse, Consumer, etc.	20
Public Benefits	11
Utilities	43
<u>Includes all issues in cases, inquiries</u>	<u>309</u>



Issues Referred Jan-May 2006

Disability/SS/SSDI	12
Domestic Violence	8
Education	13
Employment	5
Family Law	56
Health Insurance	6
Housing	14
Hunger	3
Immigration	9
Medicaid/Peachcare/EPSDT	64
Other, including Advanced directives, Child Abuse, Consumer, etc.	29
Public Benefits	1
Utilities	4
<u>Includes all issues in cases, inquiries</u>	<u>224</u>



Legal Cases Not Handled

- Any case placing the patients or their families in an adversarial position with the hospital
- Medical malpractice
- Involuntary commitment
- Prisoner's issues—conditions issues
- Withdrawal or de-escalation of care
- Termination of parental rights



Educational Component

Interdisciplinary educational program about the legal, policy, and ethical issues that affect children's health.

- In-service training and education:
 - health professionals
 - attorneys
 - medical residents
 - professional students
- Informal educational opportunities
- Legal Education Externship/Clinic
- Health Legislation and Advocacy Course



Goals of Education

- To develop constructive, collaborative relationships among legal and health care professionals working together to improve children's health.
- To foster respect, understanding, and a cooperative spirit between the health care and legal professions.



Advocacy Component

- Addresses the systemic legal, policy, and social issues that affect the health and well-being of low-income children and their families.
- Focuses on legislative and policy-making activities:
 - Medicaid, PeachCare for Kids
 - Private health insurance issues
 - Other changes in law and regulations designed to improve overall health and well-being of children



Evaluation and Research

- Evaluating quality and effectiveness
 - Internal quality assurance
 - Management
 - Fundraising
 - Volunteer recruitment
 - Client referrals
 - Organizational change
- External publication of program quality, efficacy & outcomes
- Research on specific issues affecting health & well-being



Sample Cases

- Ms. J and her two children lived in a Section 8 house in which the landlord refused to clean up significant amounts of mold. Ms. J's 10 year old daughter landed in the ICU with a severe asthma attack. When the child was released from the hospital, the family could not return home. Through our efforts, Ms. J and her children were able to terminate their Section 8 lease, get a new voucher and move into a new, clean home. We secured a private attorney to assist Ms. J in her claims for damages and to get her deposit back from the landlord.
- Ms. W. was referred to us for assistance with her son. Her 10 year old son developed end stage renal disease 3 years ago following an illness. He subsequently had a stroke, and as a result, has very limited vision, brain damage and compromised mobility. He is not receiving the educational assistance that he needs to maximize his potential. HeLP is representing Mrs. W. regarding the special education issues.
