

Kara R. Finck
University of Pennsylvania Law School
3501 Sansom Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 746-2455 / kfinck@law.upenn.edu

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

University of Pennsylvania Law School, *Practice Professor of Law* **4/12 to present**
Direct the Interdisciplinary Child Advocacy Clinic where law students and master level social work students represent adolescents and youth in civil matters including dependency, immigration, and education issues. Created a medical-legal partnership with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia collaborating with the Gender and Sexuality Development Clinic to address legal issues for transgender youth, and Nephrology Unit for pediatric patients on dialysis. Teach the seminar component of the clinic addressing current issues in child advocacy from a range of disciplines including legal, medical, psychiatry and social work. Supervise externship students on their legal research in child welfare law.

The Bronx Defenders, *Managing Attorney, Family Defense Practice* Bronx, NY 1/04 to 3/12
Created holistic, team-based practice for representation of parents facing abuse and neglect cases in Bronx Family Court. Expanded practice from a small, grant funded project with two staff into the first institutional parent representation provider in Bronx Family Court, serving approximately 1,000 clients per year. Lead more than 30 attorneys, social workers, and parent advocates and supervise on direct services and substantive law. Coordinate concurrent representation of clients with criminal, civil and family law cases. Develop and facilitate special projects for advocates. Manage multi-million dollar city contract and multiple private grants for program services. Assist in the development of practice specific data systems, reports and evaluations. Participate in citywide taskforces and committees aimed at reforming the child welfare and Family Court systems. Meet regularly with stakeholders, including Family Court judges, other parent representation providers and ACS.

Fordham University School of Law, *Adjunct Professor of Law* New York, NY 1/08 to present
Co-taught "Interdisciplinary Responses to Child Abuse and Neglect," a seminar for Law School and School of Social Work students focusing on the intersection of law and social work in child welfare systems and services. Developed syllabus and taught "Interdisciplinary Externship Seminar" for the past two years focusing on ethics, substantive law and best practice in direct services for law students working in legal services office.

The Door's Legal Services Center, *Skadden Fellow/ Staff Attorney* New York, NY 9/02 – 1/04
Represented young people in foster care who were planning for discharge from the child welfare system. Conducted legal rights trainings for young people in group homes and maternity shelters. Represented teen mothers whose children have been illegally removed from their care. Advocated for reforms in ACS's handling of undocumented youth in foster care, who were seeking Special Immigrant Juvenile Status relief.

Honorable Reginald Lindsay, U.S. District Court, *Law Clerk* Boston, MA 8/01 – 8/02
Wrote memoranda and drafted judicial opinions on motions for summary judgment and motions to dismiss. Drafted jury instructions in federal civil and criminal trials.

The Bronx Defenders, *Project Planner* Bronx, NY 9/97 – 7/98
Coordinated outreach to local community and social service providers for new public defender organization in South Bronx. Created and developed the Criminal Justice Internship Program for Bronx high school

students, an art exchange program with local Bronx elementary schools, a brochure for clients explaining the criminal court process, an annual community reception, and a database of 200+ New York City social service agencies.

The Vera Institute of Justice

Associate Planner

New York, NY **1/97 – 8/97**

Planned the Overlap Project addressing the needs of foster care adolescents involved in the juvenile justice system. Designed and oversaw a research study of the degree of foster children's representation at detention facilities. Conducted focus groups with child welfare caseworkers and young people in foster care. Surveyed group home staff and residents and supervised two law school interns conducting field research. Wrote a proposal for funding to the Criminal Justice Coordinator's Office.

Project Assistant

New York, NY **5/96 – 12/96**

Developed a research design for the Family Court Improvement Study that evaluated the handling of abuse and neglect cases in five New York counties. Wrote an addendum to the *Family Court Improvement Project* report on the voluntary foster care placement system in New York City. Supervised five research interns and made presentations on Vera's youth projects to government and foundation representatives.

BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Faculty Director, Field Center for Children's Policy, Practice & Research (UPenn) (2012)

President, Board of Directors, Lutheran Settlement House (2013)

Member, Clinical Legal Education Association Board of Directors (2017)

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Social Work Practice and the Law, co-author with Dr. Lyn K. Slater (Springer Publishing, NY) (2011)

Articles and Chapters

Applying the Principles of Rebellious Lawyering to Envision Family Defense, 23 *Clinical L. Rev.* 83 (2017)

Extra-Judicial Conferences in Child Welfare Cases: Reassessing their Role and Implications for Policy and Practice, 68 *Juv. & Fam. Crt J.* 49 (2017).

A Robust Defense: The Critical Components for a Reimagined Family Defense Practice, 20 *CUNY L. Rev.* (2016)

Representing Parents in Neglect, Abuse, Dependency and Termination of Parental Rights Proceedings, "Negotiating for Services for the Family in Court; Admissions to the Petition" (Chapter contribution)

"Case Assessment and Theory" in *Child Welfare Law and Practice: Representing Children, Parents and State Agencies in Abuse, Neglect and Dependency Cases* (Chapter contribution)

"Child Welfare and Poverty: The American Paradox" Penn Top 10: Social Justice & Policy Issues for the 2016 Presidential Election (co-authored with Debra Schilling Wolfe, MEd., Cindy W. Christian, MD, and Cynthia Connolly, PhD, RN, PAP, FAAN)

PRESENTATIONS

Panelist, "Client-Clinic Collaborations: How to Incorporate Meaningful Partnerships with Your Clients into Representation, Reform and Response" AALS National Clinical Conference (Chicago, IL) (May 2018)

Speaker, "Medical-Legal Partnerships: A Child Welfare Initiative" *Widener Law Review* Symposium on Children in the Courts (Harrisburg, PA) (March 2018)

Participant, Family Defense Leadership Workshop, University of Michigan Law School and Child Advocacy Clinic (Ann Arbor, MI) (December 2017)

Presenter, “Issues in Family Law and Child Advocacy” Training for Nurse Family Partnership Program, Philadelphia (November 2016).

Presenter, “Social Determinants of Health and Medical Legal Partnerships” CHOP Family Services and Social Work Division (November 2016).

Presenter, “2016 Convening on Improving State Outcomes for Special Immigrant Juveniles” HIAS and Ballard Spahr (September 2016).

Presenter, “Working with Families and the Law: Preventive Legal Advocacy and the Social Determinants of Health” CHOP (September 2016).

Speaker and Moderator, “Rethinking Foster Care” University of Michigan Law School (May 2016).

Speaker, “Rebellious Lawyering for Families: Challenging our Notions of Public Defense, Community Engagement and Interdisciplinary Client Centered Practice” *Clinical Law Review* Symposium on *Rebellious Lawyering* at Twenty-Five” at AALS National Clinical Conference (May 2016).

Plenary Speaker, “Reimagining Family Defense” *CUNY Law Review* Symposium (April 2016).

Invited Panelist, “Court-Involved Youth in the 21st Century: Empowerment vs. Protection” sponsored by *Temple Law Review* and Juvenile Law Center in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Juvenile Law Center (October 2015).

Panelist, “It's Not All Bad: Examining the Delivery of Legal Services and the Administration of Justice to Low Income Communities from a Strengths-Based Perspective” Philadelphia Bench Bar Conference (September 2015).

Plenary Panel Moderator, “From Child Welfare to Child Trafficking” One Child Many Hands: A Multidisciplinary Conference on Child Welfare, University of Pennsylvania (June 2015).

Faculty Presenter, “Assessing the Needs of LGBTQ Youth in Juvenile Court” Current Issues for Child Advocates sponsored by the Pennsylvania Bar Institute (April 2015).

Presenter, “Reading, Writing & Arrest: Issues at the Crossroads of Access to Education, Justice & Criminal Law” sponsored by Penn Law BLSA, ABA Section of Litigation, LALSA, Toll Public Interest Center and Quattrone Center (October 2014).

Presenter, “Special Immigrant Juvenile Status: Representing Unaccompanied Children in Immigration and Family Courts” sponsored by HIAS-PA and Dechert, LLP (October 2014).

Presenter, “Increasing Opportunities for Young People in Foster Care: Working Collaboratively with Lawyers, Social Workers and Young People Through a Client-Centered and Trauma-Informed Legal Partnership” 2014 National Pathways to Adulthood Conference sponsored by HHS and National Resource Center for Youth Development, Philadelphia, PA (August 2014).

Presenter, “The Legal Framework of Child Abuse in the United States” as part of Child Welfare and the United States program for visiting faculty and students from Namseoul University (July 2014).

Facilitator, Child and Family Advocacy Working Group at the AALS National Clinical Conference, Chicago, IL (April 2014).

Moderator, “Parental Representation in Dependency Proceedings: Best Practices from a Multi-Disciplinary Perspective”, Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice and Research Fall Community Symposium at Penn Law (Fall 2013).

Presenter, “A Domestic Violence Lawyer’s Role: The Child Welfare System in Cases Involving Domestic Violence,” ABA Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence and the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (October 29, 2013).

Co-presenter on “Best Practices in Advocating for Child Victims” of Trauma with Dr. Steve Berkowitz from the Penn Center for Youth and Family Trauma Response and Recovery, Field Center National Conference (June 2013).

Panelist for “How Well Do Our Laws Protect Children?” as part of the University of Pennsylvania’s Year of Proof Reading Project (Spring 2013).

Faculty Presenter, “Resumption of Dependency Jurisdiction Best Practice and Challenges” Current Issues for Child Advocates Conference for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute (April 2013).

Speaker at the Second Annual National Parent’s Attorney Conference on the collateral consequences of family court and criminal court cases and the intersection on immigration, child welfare and the criminal justice system (July 2011)

Panelist, ABA Conference on Parent Representation presenting on interdisciplinary representation for parents in child welfare and dependency proceedings (July 2009)

Panelist, National Legal Aid and Defender Association Annual Conference on integrating family law into traditional public defender offices (Spring 2009)

Panelist at Applied Research Center’s “Facing Race” national conference on the intersection of the child welfare system and immigration policy (2008)

Speaker at “The Racial Geography of the Child Welfare System: Community Impact and Response” conference sponsored by Professor Dorothy Roberts, Fordham Law School (April 2006)

Speaker at conference on child welfare and Family Courts sponsored by the New York State Family Court Judges Association (September 2006).

Testimony to New York State Assembly on issues related to parents’ rights in the child welfare and Family Court system (February 2006).

Continuing Legal Education courses on representing parents in Article 10 proceedings, client counseling and advocacy skills, and the family law consequences of criminal cases (2004-2011).

Presentations on parental and youth rights in the child welfare and Family Court system organized by, among others, Highbridge Community Life Center, Child Welfare Organizing Project, foster care agencies, schoolboards, and community youth organizations (2004-2011).

EDUCATION

Columbia University School of Law, New York, NY, *Juris Doctor* 2001

Honors: Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar (1998-2001)
Samuel I. Rosenman Academic Prize (May 2001)
Sidley & Austin Public Interest Fellowship (Summer 2000)
Human Rights Fellow (Summer 1999)

Activities: Executive Articles Editor, *Columbia Law Review*

Columbia College, New York, NY, *Bachelor of Arts* 1996

Honors: *Cum Laude* with Departmental Honors, Political Science
Harry S. Truman National Scholar (1995)
Solomon and Seymour Fisher Civil Liberties Summer Fellowship (1995)