



GEORGIA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE RELEASES LABOR TRAFFICKING ROUNDTABLE REPORT

The **Labor Trafficking Roundtable Report** is the first of its kind in Georgia and marks a renewed commitment to end all forms of human trafficking in the state. Focused on labor trafficking, Work Group 6 of Georgia's Human Trafficking Task Force held several roundtables with stakeholders throughout the state to have cross sectional and collaborative conversations centered on areas of raising awareness about labor trafficking, victim care and services, data collection and measurement, and state level action needed to combat this form of trafficking in Georgia. The report includes specific recommendations and action steps to guide the state in its effort to combat labor trafficking and support survivors. Work Group 6 is in the beginning stages of conducting a geo-mapping study to better highlight the labor trafficking situation in Georgia and identify potential areas that are at higher risk of labor exploitation and trafficking.

Work Group 6 has also developed resources for law enforcement, victim specialists and first responders. Planned tools include: a county-specific resource guide identifying organizations serving foreign-born adult victims of labor trafficking, and individualized process maps to help law enforcement and other first responders address the varying needs of trafficking victims. Click [here](#) to read the full report.



CHILD ADVOCACY AWARDS

Nominate a Deserving Professional for the Chief Justice P. Harris Hines 2021 Awards

Nominations are open for the 2021 Chief Justice P. Harris Hines Awards! The Supreme Court of Georgia's Committee on Justice for Children and the Office of the Child Advocate will honor one Georgia attorney with the Child Advocacy Award and one DFCS case manager with the Case Manager of the Year Award, both for dedicated services on behalf of children. The awards are named in honor of the late Chief Justice P. Harris Hines of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

The award is given based on an individual's personal achievement and commitment. It is not given to groups of people, organizations, or posthumously. Previous nominees not selected may be re-nominated. Click [here](#) to nominate a Georgia attorney and [here](#) to nominate a DFCS case manager. **Nominations must be submitted by February 28, 2021.** The award recipients will be recognized at the State Bar of Georgia's Annual Meeting in June 2021.

YOUTH VOICE

Highlighting How the Coronavirus Pandemic has Impacted Youth Throughout the Nation

FosterClub, a national network for youth with lived experience in foster care, conducted a poll from November 24, 2020 through December 5, 2020 to hear from 474 youth who shared how they are faring during this pandemic. FosterClub recently released the results and some of the comments from the participating youth. Click [here](#) for the full findings. Below are some of the comments shared from the youth:



"I only got \$46 a week which isn't enough to feed someone for a week."
— 20-year-old from Indiana

See [VOICE](#), Page 9



DFCS State Adoption Director Highlighted by “AdoptUSKids”



Deborah Burrus serves as Georgia’s state adoption director and has nearly three decades of experience in child welfare. The national organization AdoptUSKids recently highlighted her and her experience as a participant in the AdoptUSKids Minority Professional Leadership Development (MPLD) program. As further detailed in the article, Deborah learned a lot about the issues of disparity and disproportionality in foster care. As part of the fellowship, she completed an action research project addressing the following question: “In Georgia, why are there more black children in foster care, proportional to their percentage of the population, and why do they stay in care longer?” Click [here](#) to learn more about her project and lessons learned in the MPLD program. Click [here](#) to learn more about the MPLD program.

A Light that Shines Brightly and Powerfully



By Jansen Head,
OCA Deputy Director

“Where can we find light in this never-ending shade?” Amanda Gorman, a National Youth Poet Laureate, asked this question as part of her poem titled The Hill We Climb during the presidential inauguration ceremony. If you haven’t heard about the poem, I strongly encourage you to click [here](#) and take a moment to be moved. I read this poem several times, and it inspires me more each time I do.

I have asked myself this same question many times before: *Where is the light in all of this?* We all have endured and overcome challenges that tried to break us – as a nation, a state, a community, and an individual: the coronavirus pandemic; racial injustice; political polarization; mistrust in experts and leaders; loss of life, stability, and integrity; and all things that made the last year or so seem impossible to bear. Where is the light in that? How could Amanda ask us that question if we don’t know where to find it? “The Hill We Climb” told us what we already knew, but needed to hear.

See [LIGHT](#), Page 5

Being a Microphone for Others

Jerry Milner recently left his position as the Associate Commissioner of the federal Children’s Bureau, having left an indelible impact on the child welfare system during his tenure. He championed the idea of rethinking the system in such a way that focused on prevention so children and families could stay together more often. He championed quality legal representation for all parties in the child welfare system. And he championed the notion that we need to authentically engage with those whom we serve—parents and children alike—to ensure we are making positive and long-lasting improvements for the system, for communities, for families, and for individuals. We felt his impact here in Georgia and appreciate the time he shared with us in this role.

One of the many people who have expressed appreciation for his efforts was someone who directly experienced the system. In response to her appreciation of his efforts, he said, “It’s your voice that matters. I’m just the microphone.” May we all follow Dr. Milner’s example by ensuring we listen to the youth and families whom we serve and that we use our own microphones for their benefit.



Dr. Jerry Milner (center) and colleagues during Georgia’s 2019 Child Welfare Summit after meeting with a group of Georgia parents.



Capitol Hill Updates

Governor Kemp and First Lady Kemp Introduce Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives for 2021

Governor Brian Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp announced two legislative measures, along with a rule change within the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS), to combat human trafficking in the state. The first legislative measure proposes to amend Georgia's name change statute to protect the privacy and safety of survivors of human trafficking who wish to change their names. The second legislative measure proposes a civil cause of action by which a victim of human trafficking may sue any person who knowingly benefitted from any venture or scheme which that person knew or should have known involved human trafficking. The DDS rule change would require new and renewal applicants for commercial driver's licenses to take an anti-human trafficking course and provide proof of attendance in order to receive their license. Read more about these efforts [here](#).



GBI Director Reynolds, Governor Kemp, First Lady Kemp, State Senator Dixon, and State Representative Bonner.

Photo Credit: Office of the First Lady

"The State of the State is Resilient, and We Will Endure"

Governor Brian Kemp delivered his third State of the State Address to a joint session of the General Assembly on Thursday, January 14th, in which he reflected on the challenges brought upon the state in 2020 and inspired hope for the future: "Despite incredible loss and unprecedented challenges, Georgia is still standing. . . . You see, there is so much more that unites us than divides us. And working together, we can continue taking necessary, bipartisan action to champion the voices of the vulnerable in Georgia; protect our children; implement adoption reforms that make it easier to put them in safe, loving homes; and ultimately, secure the promise of Georgia for generations to come." To learn more, click [here](#) to watch the State of the State Address or click [here](#) to read it.



Governor Brian Kemp delivering his third State of the State Address. Photo Credit: Fox 5 Atlanta

Legislative Proposals

The governor recently announced his administration's adoption and foster care reform initiatives for the 2021 legislative session, introduced by Representative Bert Reeves and Senator Bo Hatchett:

HB 114—Increasing Georgia's Adoption Tax Credit: Increases the tax credit for families that adopt a child from foster care from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per year for 5 years.

HB 154—Lowering the Required Age to Adopt: The age at which an individual may petition the court to adopt a child will be lowered from age 25 to 21, making it easier for close relatives to adopt children out of foster care.

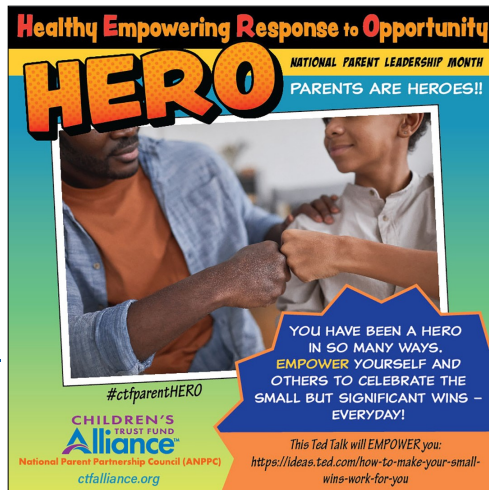
SB 28 - Streamlining the Juvenile Code to Protect Georgia's Children: Expands the resources available to juvenile courts to respond to the safety needs of children and ensures all reliable information is made available to the court in order to make decisions in a child's best interests.

View the bills [here](#).



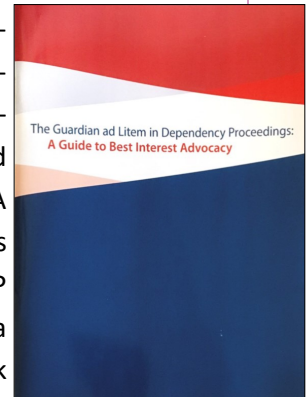
On the Horizon

February is recognized as **National Parent Leadership Month**—an opportunity to show appreciation for parents who work to improve the lives of their families, neighbors, and communities. Learn more about ways to honor and recognize parents as leaders [here](#) and parents as heroes [here](#).



Best Interest Advocacy Guide

A comprehensive guide focused on best interest advocacy in dependency proceedings is now available. This guide, titled “The Guardian ad Litem in Dependency Proceedings: A Guide to Best Interest Advocacy,” is authored by Jerry Bruce, Georgia’s CIP Director and Angela Tyner, Georgia CASA’s Advocacy Director. Please click [here](#) to access the guide.



Partnering to Fight Human Trafficking

Every Uber driver in Georgia has recently learned how to identify and report instances of human trafficking thanks to a partnership between Uber, Polaris, and Georgia’s Attorney General Chris Carr. The 20-minute training video helps drivers learn to look for signs of abuse, threats and intimidation, as well as clarify common myths and misconceptions about trafficking. Learn more about this partnership [here](#).



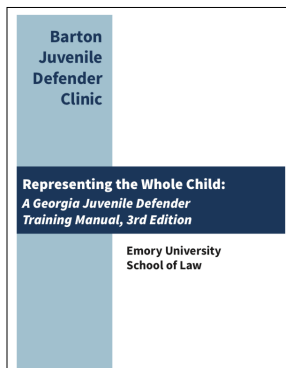
Professionalism in the Age of COVID

The State Bar of Georgia’s Child Advocacy and Protection Section recently conducted an annual meeting and hosted a CLE focused on Professionalism in the Age of COVID, presented by Juvenile Court Judge Carolyn Altman.



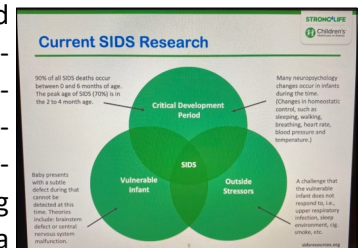
Judge Altman presenting via Zoom: “Professionalism in the Age of COVID”

Additional resources shared during the meeting include the [Barton Juvenile Defender Clinic’s Juvenile Defender Training Manual](#) and [Georgia Appleseed’s Peachcare and Medicaid Appeals Manual for Attorneys](#).



Child Fatality Review

Dr. Sarah Lazarus with CHOA discussed safe sleep recommendations during this month’s statewide Child Fatality Review meeting. Because 90% of all SIDS deaths occur between 0-6 months and because unsafe sleep practices can lead to such devastating outcomes, it is important that safe sleep practices, such as infants sleeping alone, on their backs, and in a crib, are practiced by all caregivers.



Slide from Dr. Lazarus’s presentation focused on current SIDS research



LET'S CELEBRATE!

A young man from DFCS Region 7 was recently awarded **Youth of the Year** by the Boys and Girls Club! He has worked at the club for over a year now and has grown a lot in that time. While he initially viewed the job as a way to “build his bank”, his adult supporters helped him to view it more as an opportunity for growth. He began to change his attitude and mindset as he enjoyed his time working with the children and realized that his presence made a difference! As a recipient of the award, he received a \$2500 check and a new computer! He also happens to be on track to graduate high school this May. We are grateful for the community that supports this young man as he achieves amazing things!



A young man who spent time in foster care and is now a sophomore and in the band at Jackson State University, performed in the “We Are One” virtual Presidential inauguration along with his band-mates this month. Check out the performance [here](#) and read more about it [here](#).

LIGHT, CONT'D...

Before the inauguration, I spent the weekend with family in the mountains. One night, I stepped outside hoping it would start snowing before we returned home in the next few days. The temperature dropped quickly below freezing. The locals called the area bear country so I didn't spend too much time wandering outside. To my disappointment, I didn't see any snow on the ground – not even a snow flurry in the air.

Yet, what I found was better, something I needed to see. I saw the most beautiful stars, the most stars in the sky I have seen in a long time. Some stars were very bright while others were not. Some stars appeared larger and closer to my reach, while others were not. Nonetheless, they were stars and they were shining. I wished others could have seen what I saw that night. Someone once told me that you need to be in a dark place – with no street lights or lights reflecting from buildings – to see all of the stars in the sky. They were right.

If stars could talk, I don't think one would say they would stop shining because there are brighter stars. I also don't believe stars would stop shining because they may not shine as long as other stars. And I truly believe stars would not refuse to shine because they shine differently than others.

“For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.”

When I think about that starry night and the words of Amanda Gorman, I remember that the light is within us. As the poem ends, “For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.” The light is you, and the light is me.

So often we look outwardly for hope, validation, change, and grace. We look outwardly to feel seen, understood, accepted, and supported. We hope others will do what we think we cannot do, or be what we think we cannot become. But why not us when we, too, have a light?

You and I have a light that burns so powerfully and brightly, that there are moments in life where we can't keep still, keep quiet, or keep the status quo. Like the stars, our internal light may shine differently – some may accept it, some may agree with it, and some may understand it, while others may not. But it's your light, and like the stars above, you will shine every single night and day.

When you find yourself in the dark – whether physically, mentally, or emotionally – look within yourself. Allow yourself to search for your light and to embrace it. This is your light and there's no other like it. And honestly, I believe the world could really use your light to see better, know better, and do better. You never know when someone in a shaded place needs to see it.



FAMILIES' ANCHOR

GEORGIA PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Parent/Caregiver Support Group:

Families' Anchor is excited to start back our parent/caregiver support group. Our group will be held virtually and welcome all parents/caregivers whose families are currently in the child welfare system through Family Preservation or Foster Care in Georgia.

Join us every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month (starting Feb 2, 2021) at 6PM via Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83174083157?pwd=dlcwaU1PNWE3T1Z3eEtKMgt6OENvQT09>

Our Goal: Provide a safe space for parents/caregivers to connect with other parents/caregivers that are currently walking through the child welfare system. And provide support and guidance through their journey. We will touch on the process of child welfare, court experiences, common terms, coping skills, the grieving process, resources and more.

Facilitators: Parent Navigator (A parent of leadership with lived experience through the child welfare system who successfully reunified with their children, received training to provide support and guidance for parents/caregivers that are currently walking through the system with their families.)

**Navigating
Parents
through the
Child Welfare
System**

**Where: Virtually
via Zoom**

**Meeting ID: 831
7408 3157
Passcode: 210677**

**When: 6PM Every
1st and 3rd Tuesday
of the month**

FAMILIES' ANCHOR

[www.facebook.com/families
anchor](https://www.facebook.com/familiesanchor)

familiesanchor@gmail.com



**FAMILIES'
ANCHOR**



24-Hour Trafficking Hotline: 1-866-END-HTGA (842-4842)

Effective October 1, 2020, the Children’s Advocacy Centers of Georgia (CACGA) CSEC Response Team Georgia began operating a new 24/7 trafficking hotline number: **1-866-END-HTGA**. The hotline provides information to those who might be victims, assistance to law enforcement on the rescue of a victim, and referrals for victim assistance. The hotline operators will assist the caller in coordinating emergency services at all hours of the day and night for youth who may be a victim of exploitation or trafficking. The CACGA CSEC Response Team presented additional information about the new hotline and their process in a webinar facilitated by PCA Georgia—click [here](#) to access the webinar recording and the presentation slides. Referrals can be made through the hotline, fax (678-401-5955), online (click [here](#) for online form), or email (referrals@cacga.org). For further information, visit [here](#).



**Human Trafficking
Awareness Month
with CACGA**

Check out a recent video shared by the Children’s Advocacy Centers of Georgia’s CSEC Response Team [here](#). Hear from the Team’s Statewide Coordinator, Naeshia McDowell, as she shares information about child sex trafficking, Georgia’s response to commercial sexual exploitation of children, how to make a report, what you can do, and how to support your local Children’s Advocacy Center.

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security Publishes Guide
on Talking to Youth about Human Trafficking**

As part of its “Blue Campaign” to increase trafficking awareness, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security published a guide titled “How to Talk to Youth About Human Trafficking: A Guide for Youth Caretakers and Individuals Working with Youth”. The guide — accessible by clicking [here](#) — includes information about what human trafficking is and how to recognize it among youth. Below is an excerpt from the guide on recommendations for how to talk about human trafficking in terms that may be more relatable to youth.

DO	DON'T
<p>Use empowering language. Use language that focuses on highlighting the strengths of the youth you work with and emphasize they are in control of their own decisions, especially when presented with opportunities that may seem too good to be true.</p>	<p>Use victimizing language. Using language that invokes fear and highlights weaknesses may discourage youth from taking any protective action.</p>
<p>Use language that resonates with youth. By interacting with youth regularly, you likely are familiar with the types of language they use in their everyday conversations. Use casual language that you’re comfortable with and that youth will connect with to keep them engaged.</p>	<p>Use “textbook” language. Using formal or “textbook” language that youth do not relate to may make it harder for your message to catch their attention.</p>
<p>Express that you care and are concerned about their safety. If youth shares information with you about an exploitative situation they may be experiencing, start by listening to them and letting them know you care about what they are going through.</p>	<p>Focus on questioning their situation. Let professionals who are trained in trauma response ask specific questions about their situation. Asking too many questions initially may also inadvertently place some blame on them and make them less receptive to help.</p>



Self-Care

Check out the Self-Care Starter KitSM. This bank of resources was initially created for the University of Buffalo's School of Social Work Students and professionals may also find it useful. Learn more [here](#).

Work Students and professionals may also find it useful. Learn more [here](#).

Grant Opportunities

- ◆ Springboard Prize for Child Welfare: Elevating Innovation in Child Welfare. **Deadline: March 12, 2021.** Learn more [here](#).
- ◆ The Literacy for Learning, Living and Leading in Georgia (L4GA) Grant. **Deadline to show intent to apply: February 1, 2021; deadline to apply: March 1, 2021.** Learn more [here](#).

PCA Georgia Helpline

Highlighted by Clarissa Seay, Helpline Coordinator

It takes parents, caregivers, and supportive **RESOURCES** to help children thrive. As family serving professionals you know parents are often in complex situations and need professional and community support. Here's how you can help:

1. Encourage families you serve to **call the 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Helpline** to talk to trained, bilingual professionals to connect them with supportive programs in their area.
2. Go online to use the 1-800-CHILDREN Resource Map, which contains over 3,000 local and statewide programs designed to assist and support families. See what services are available in the areas where you serve families. www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org

1-800-CHILDREN

Here to Listen. Here to Help.

1-800-244-5373 | PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org



-  **Readily Available**
Available online 24/7 and by phone Monday to Friday, 8 am to 6 pm
-  **Bilingual**
Connect with English and Spanish speaking resource navigators by phone
-  **Accessible Resources**
Connects parents and caregivers with state/regional resources
-  **Free**
Private and available statewide to families and professionals



Events: Available Now and Upcoming!

- ✓ J4C Webinar on GAL Advocacy. Access webinar [here](#). Use access passcode: **2Z@8+\$51**.
- ✓ Webinar on Protecting Children in a New Normal—Resources for School Personnel provided by PCA Georgia, GaDOE, DFCS, CHOA, GCCA, and ProSolutions. Access webinar [here](#).
- ✓ Webinar on Deepening Engagement—Keeping Kids in School during a Pandemic by Georgia Appleseed and Truancy Intervention Project. Access webinar [here](#).
- ✓ Webinar on Georgia's Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children provided by PCA Georgia and CACGA. Access webinar and materials [here](#).
- ✓ Feb. 18: PCA Georgia's Virtual Training on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and connections. More info [here](#).
- ✓ Mar. 21-24: National Conference on Juvenile Justice in Dallas, Texas. More info [here](#).
- ✓ April 30: Deadline for PBS Kids 2021 Writers Contest. More info [here](#).
- ✓ May 4-6: CWLA 2021 Virtual Conference, *Lessons Learned from 2020: Reaching New Heights for Children and Families*. More details coming soon [here](#).



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

**Celebrating a Successful Year of
Georgia's Human Trafficking Awareness Training**

A year ago, First Lady Marty Kemp, the GRACE Commission, and the Department of Administrative Services launched its statewide Human Trafficking Awareness Training. Since then, nearly 58,000 Georgians have participated in the training program, not including the executive branch employees who also participated. While the training recognizes that there are several forms of human trafficking, it focuses primarily on child sex trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

With awareness training, employees and others become better informed about how to identify signs of human trafficking; how to respond in cases where they suspect someone is a victim and how to protect children and others from this horrific crime. Everyone is encouraged to participate in and share this free training by clicking [here](#).

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

KNOW THE SIGNS

- Dressed inappropriately for the time or event
- Appears fearful, anxious, or nervous/paranoid
- Avoids eye contact
- Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse
- Does not or is not allowed to speak for themselves
- Does not respond when asked questions
- Appears malnourished
- Has few or no personal possessions

GET HELP

Call 911

Call the Georgia Statewide Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-866-ENDHTGA (1-866-363-4842)

Download the See Something, Send Something App



VOICE CONT'D...

"School is currently online, but the internet I have is slow, and doesn't allow for me to stay connected all the time." — 18-year-old from Missouri

"I am employed at the same place but no longer a server due to COVID. I am still constantly exposed to it as I work in a restaurant and I am forced to take to go bags to customers who won't wear their masks." — 19-year-old from Illinois

"I am currently getting by okay but have struggled with affording food during the pandemic." — 21-year-old in Massachusetts

"I've been going to food banks weekly." — 20-year-old in Texas

"I'm living with a previous foster family that I consider my family." — 21-year-old in Oregon

"I have family but they don't care if I'm homeless." — 21-year-old from Pennsylvania

"I'm having a hard time finding a therapist at this time." — 24-year-old from Iowa



TOP TEN THINGS YOU NEED

**Before You Leave Foster Care*



HEALTH INSURANCE

If you were in care on your 18th birthday, you are automatically enrolled in Amerigroup Georgia Families 360. **You can call their member line 24/7 at 1-855-661-2021**



PERSONAL DOCUMENTS

Per **OCGA 49-5-3**, you should have access to and copies of: Your birth certificate, your Social Security card, and any medical documents or your green card, if applicable.



WRITTEN TRANSITIONAL LIVING PLAN

You are entitled to a Written Transitional Living Plan (Form 391). If you're not sure what is in your plan, you can ask to review it. You have a right to help make decisions about your future after foster care.



DRIVER'S LICENSE

The following people can take you to get your license:

A DFCS or DJJ employee, your foster parent, a foster care agency or group home employee, or a designated official for a private agency or group home.



OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT

This program can match your savings with additional money towards adult purchases like a car, house, apartment, and more. For more info, **email IDA@maac4kids.org**.

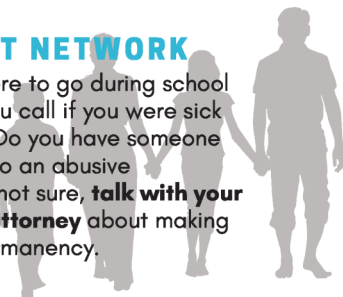


HOUSING

It's important to know where you plan to live after transitioning from care! **Make sure you know your options**, including support from ETV and Opportunity Passport!

YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Do you have somewhere to go during school breaks? Who would you call if you were sick or in a car accident? Do you have someone to talk to if you get into an abusive relationship? If you're not sure, **talk with your case manager and attorney** about making sure that you have permanency.



ETV/EMBARK

If you're planning to attend college or trade school in GA, **make sure you take advantage of your Educational Training Voucher to pay for it!** Contact your Independent Living Specialist for more information.



ILP GRIEVANCE PROCESS

If you have an issue, you have a right to use the grievance form! Download one at **www.garyse-ilp.org**



CONNECTED BY 21

You can stay in care until age 21, so you now have to elect to sign yourself out at 18.



Department of Driver Services
375-3-1-.34: Applications of Minors



Access to State IDs, Instruction Permit & Driver's License for Youth

DDS' "Signature on Application for Minor" rule will assist with the access to a state ID or driver's license for young people in foster care by creating new provisions to allow adults who work with young people to assist them in obtaining their state ID and work towards their driver's permit and license.

Who is a Responsible Adult?



A "responsible adult" is an individual that is eighteen (18) years of age or older, competent to verify the application, and has personal knowledge of the applicant. Such as:

1. DFCS or DJJ Employee
2. Private foster care agency or group home employee
3. A foster parent with private agency or group home
4. Designated official for private agency or group home

O.C.G.A. 49-5-3

DDS Customer Service Center: What to Do?

At the Customer Service Center (CSC), the responsible adult will (1) sign a Responsible Adult affidavit and include the relationship to the young person, (2) provide a state ID or letter from state agency to verify your identity AND (3) submit paperwork such as school documents, driver's license or identification card.





COVID-19 Economic Impact Payments: FAQs for Child Welfare Attorneys



The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, is a federal statute intended to help mitigate the significant economic consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic. Signed into law on March 27, 2020, the Act provides financial relief to individuals, organizations and businesses. The National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) published a FAQ sheet that summarizes NACC's current understanding of how the CARES Act (and related legislation) may impact youth and families in the child welfare system. It aims to provide child welfare practitioners with information that may be relevant to their clients and to raise awareness regarding eligibility for these payments. Click [here](#) to access NACC's FAQ sheet.

Tip Sheet: Advocacy and Child's Attorney-Client Relationships During COVID-19

In the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic, many aspects of life have dramatically changed — schools, court hearings, social events. What has not changed, however, are the critical and urgent needs of youth involved in the child welfare system. Many attorneys, and particularly those who represent young people, may be struggling with questions regarding their obligations in a moment of social distancing and widespread anxiety. Youth involved in the child welfare system need and deserve robust advocacy in this time period. The underlying needs of youth — the what — remains the same; it is the method of advocacy and service delivery — the how — that may need to be adjusted. Click [here](#) to access NACC's tip sheet.



Keeping Yourself and Your Kids Safe and Health in the Pandemic: Tips for Judges, Legal Professionals, and Court Personnel



Helping the kids that we serve stay safe and healthy can be a challenge under ordinary circumstances, but now with the health hazards of COVID-19, the various guidance around what is safe, and the stress associated with social distancing or not being able to socially distance, the challenge may feel insurmountable. The calming presence and steadying influence that you provide to youth, their families, and your co-workers is the single most powerful antidote to the fears, frustrations, confusion, and grief caused by these uncertain times that can escalate into a meltdown or crisis. To have that crucial positive influence, it's essential that you "put on your oxygen mask first" by monitoring how you are handling the stressors that we are all facing. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) published a fact sheet that offers helpful questions to think about it and provides basic steps to help youth navigate through their stress during the pandemic. Click [here](#) to access NCTSN's tip sheet.



Hotline Help: Connecting Your Needs to Resources

A Highlight of Many Free Resources Available to Assist You

**GA Crisis & Access Line
1-800-715-4225**

GCAL is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to help you or someone you care for in a crisis.

**1-855-GA-CHILD
(1-855-422-4453)**

Report concerns or suspected child abuse.

CRISIS TEXT LINE

Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor. Free support is available 24/7.

GA COVID-19

**Emotional Support Line
1-866-399-8938**

The Georgia COVID-19 Emotional Support Line provides 24/7 free and confidential assistance to callers needing emotional support or resource information as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Emotional Support Line is staffed by volunteers, including mental health professionals and others who have received training in crisis counseling.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255**

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

**National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233**

Highly trained expert advocates are available 24/7 to talk confidentially with anyone in the U.S. experiencing domestic violence, seeking resources or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of their relationship.

**CARES Warm Line
1-844-326-5400**

Call or text the CARES Warm Line for substance abuse challenges every day of the year from 8:30AM - 11:00PM.

**Peer2Peer Warm Line
1-888-945-1414**

The Warm Line provides Georgians the opportunity to receive peer support over the phone 24 hours a day.

**SAMHSA's National Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)**

Free, confidential, and available 24/7/365, this service from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) can help you find treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations in your area.

*Georgia Office of the Child Advocate
Rachel Davidson, Director
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