

NACC

National Association
of Counsel for Children

**COUNSEL
FOR
KIDS** 

2019-2023

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT REPORT

**Promoting Excellence
Building Community
Advancing Justice**

National
Association
of Counsel
for Children



FOUNDED IN 1977, THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF COUNSEL FOR CHILDREN
LED THE EVOLUTION OF
CHILDREN'S LAW **FROM
A CAUSE TO A
PROFESSION**
BY ESTABLISHING CHILD
WELFARE AS A SPECIALTY
PRACTICE REQUIRING
DISTINCTIVE TRAINING,
SKILLS, AND SUPPORT.

THE COMPLETION OF
NACC'S 2019–2023
STRATEGIC PLAN MARKS
A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE
IN THE ADVANCEMENT
AND THE ACTIVATION OF
THE FIELD **FROM A
PROFESSION TO
A MOVEMENT.**

NACC helps lawyers provide quality legal representation to children, parents, and agencies, and advances policies that protect the rights of children, youth, and parents impacted by the child welfare system. Accredited by the American Bar Association to certify attorneys as Child Welfare Law Specialists (CWLS), NACC is nationally renowned in the legal community and the child welfare sector.

In 2017, NACC's board, staff, and community members embarked on an extensive strategic planning process with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The organization was at a pivotal moment in its 40-year history, necessitating examination of NACC's identity, its unique value to the field, and its role leading and influencing policy and practice reform.

As a result, NACC developed its **THREE-PART STRATEGY** to

PROMOTE EXCELLENCE in Legal Representation,

BUILD COMMUNITY among Legal Practitioners, and

ADVANCE JUSTICE for Children and Families.

After early achievement of many five-year goals and active participation in race equity learning, NACC updated its plan. NACC's 2019–2023 Strategic Plan was refreshed with new mission, vision, and goal statements to explicitly reflect the organization's commitment to race equity, parents' rights, and co-designing practice and policy solutions with people with lived experience in the child welfare system.

NACC's 2019–2023 Strategic Plan ushered the successful launch of several initiatives, including the ground-breaking Counsel for Kids campaign. To provide timely guidance to the field, NACC updated every major publication and set forth a new policy framework. As the plan was implemented, NACC tripled its budget and staff, recruited new board members, and engaged lived experience experts across its programs.

Throughout the five-year period, NACC faced challenges that tested its plan, including the COVID-19 pandemic, rising inflation, and field-wide reckoning around the purpose of the child protection system. NACC's strong commitment to its vision, strategic partnerships, and innovative approaches helped the organization navigate obstacles and lead with mission. NACC is grateful for the dedication of our team, Board of Directors, Emeritus Board, National Advisory Council on Children's Legal Representation, state coordinators, donors, members, committee volunteers, and local, state, and national partners.

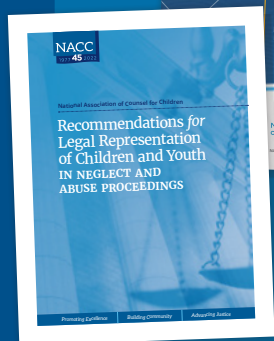
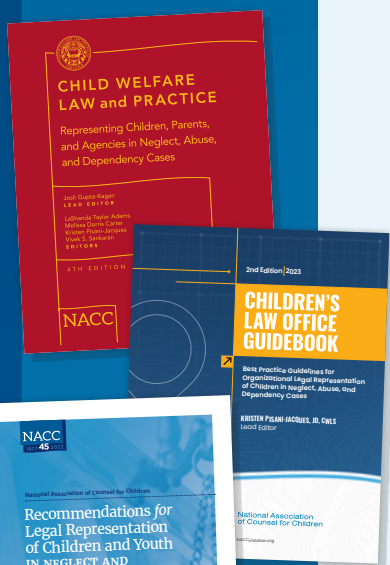
STRATEGY

1 PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Courts play an integral role in the child welfare system, where the decisions judges make about families are serious and consequential. For judges to make the best possible determinations, they need accurate and complete information. Lawyers provide this information as they advocate on behalf of children, parents, agencies, kin, and tribes. Legal professionals must know the law, understand the needs of families, and provide zealous advocacy in and out of the courts. NACC sets standards of practice and trains lawyers to provide high-quality legal representation.

FROM 2019–2023, NACC PRODUCED THE FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

- 4th Edition **CHILD WELFARE LAW AND PRACTICE**
- 2nd Edition **CHILDREN'S LAW OFFICE GUIDEBOOK**
- 2nd Edition **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
- Red Book **TRAINING COURSE**, a webinar series on child welfare law and practice
- **15 CUSTOM TRAININGS** to meet the needs of individual states and localities
- Inaugural **RACE EQUITY TRAINING SERIES**
- Inaugural **REPRESENTING INFANTS & TODDLERS TRAINING**
- **OPENED CWLS CERTIFICATION** in Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Ohio
- **NEW WEBSITE AND RESOURCE HUBS:** COVID-19, Race Equity, Students, Youth Engagement



277,000
Website
Visitors

25,000
Attorneys
Trained



STRATEGY 2 BUILDING COMMUNITY AMONG PRACTITIONERS

NACC builds a sense of community among child welfare legal professionals by hosting conferences, networking opportunities, and an open forum for discussion and exchange. As legal professionals become members, they join a national network of advocates, sharing information and resources, and building connections to support their practice. NACC's signature national conference brings together thousands of attorneys, in person and online, to continue their legal education, improve their skills, and find inspiration and renewed commitment to their work. NACC also engages students in community building to recruit the next generation of child law advocates.



40 State Coordinators



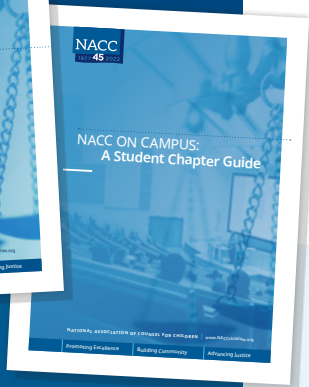
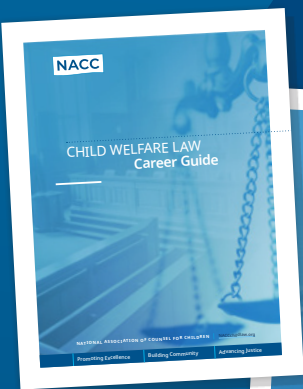
72 Organizational Members



5,000 Conference Attendees

FROM 2019–2023, NACC INITIATED THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

- **CHILDREN'S LAW OFFICE PROJECT**, pre-conference convening, and monthly meetings to support the leaders and senior staff
- **STATE COORDINATOR PROGRAM** to build community and support practitioners at the local level
- **ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS** to increase access to benefits
- **NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE LAW CONFERENCES**, virtual conference in 2020, and continued in-person and online conferences
- **CHILD WELFARE LAW CAREER FAIR** as a pre-conference event
- **CHILD WELFARE LAW CAREER GUIDE** published
- **NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL STUDENT ORGANIZER** position, launching *Student Chapter Guide* and *Child Welfare Law Career Guide*
- **FIVE NEW STUDENT CHAPTERS** created

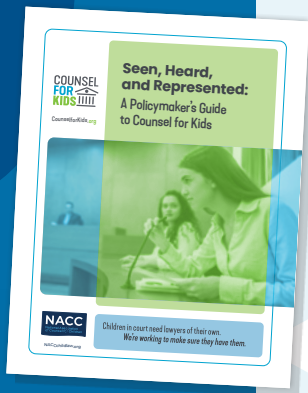


5 Student Chapters



STRATEGY

3 ADVANCING JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



NACC advances the rights of children and parents by advocating for equitable, anti-racist solutions co-designed by people with lived experience in the child welfare system. NACC provides a national policy voice through amicus briefs, state and federal legislative advocacy, and policy statements. NACC also supports the implementation of new policies by providing technical assistance to child welfare stakeholders and publishing tip sheets and policy papers. Engaging lived experience experts, NACC co-designs policy proposals and practice recommendations with a council of young professionals and staff who experienced foster care.

FROM 2019-2023, NACC TOOK ACTION TO ADVANCE JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- Launched national **COUNSEL FOR KIDS** campaign and website
- Testified at **30 LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS** and championed **8 NEW COUNSEL FOR KIDS LAWS**
- Published the **LANDMARK POLICY PAPER** *Seen, Heard, and Represented: A Policymakers Guide to Counsel for Kids*
- Launched **NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON CHILDREN'S LEGAL REPRESENTATION**
- Developed a new **POLICY FRAMEWORK** with key principles, advocacy topics, and areas where NACC will lead efforts and serve as a strong ally to partners aligned with our work
- Provided **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** on Family First, Title IV-E funding for Legal Representation, reasonable efforts, and other high-quality legal representation topics
- Lent **NATIONAL EXPERTISE** to numerous coalitions and media inquiries, further advancing the breadth and depth of our impact
- Filed **20 AMICUS BRIEFS** in the US Supreme Court, federal court, and state supreme courts



8 New Counsel for Kids Laws

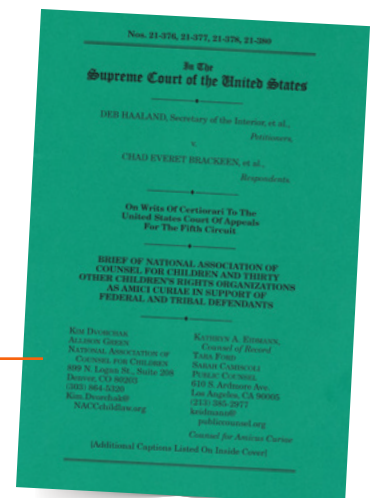


30 Legislative Hearings



24 National Advisory Council Members

Haaland v. Brackeen



COMMUNITY ACTION — NATIONAL IMPACT

NACC provides resources to attorneys, builds a community of support around zealous advocacy, and engages practitioners in systemic policy reform. This is the impact model NACC will continue to scale up in a 50-state strategy to transform legal advocacy for children and families.

Counsel for Kids Advocacy
AK, AZ, CO, CT, FL, GA, ID, HI, IL, IN, KS, ME, MO, MN, MS, MT, ND, NH, SC, TX, WA

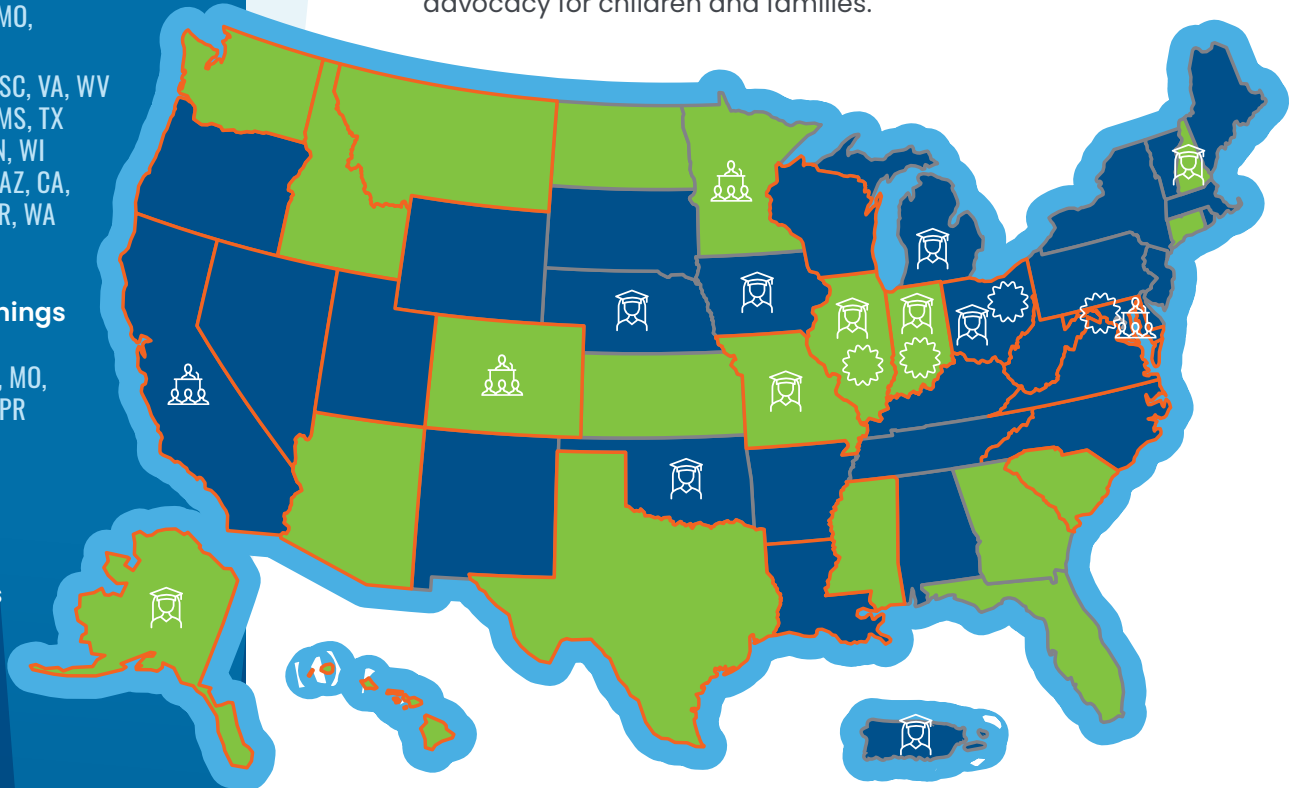
Amicus Briefs Filed
AK, CO, HI, MD, MO, NV, OH, TX, UT
4th Circuit: NC, SC, VA, WV
5th Circuit: LA, MS, TX
7th Circuit: IL, IN, WI
9th Circuit: AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, MT, OR, WA

 SCOTUS

Custom Trainings Provided
AK, IA, IN, IL, MI, MO, NE, NH, OH, OK, PR

Certification Expanded
IL, IN, MD, OH

Conferences Held
CA, CO, MD, MN



NACC IN THE NEWS

The Washington Post

Letter to the Editor re: *Brackeen v. Haaland* JAN 11, 2022

PROPUBLICA | 

Police Need Warrants to Search Homes.
Child Welfare Agents Almost Never Get One. OCT 13, 2022

THE HILL

Op-Ed: Congress Must Strengthen the Legal Rights of Foster Children DEC 2, 2022

Bloomberg Law

Op-Ed: The Supreme Court Kept Children's and Tribal Rights Top of Mind JUN 22, 2023

THE NEW YORKER

When Foster Parents Don't Want to Give Back the Baby OCT 16, 2023

The Imprint

Most States Now Access Federal Funds for Family Court Lawyers FEB 27, 2024
The Imprint Weekly Podcast: Seen, Heard and Represented OCT 30, 2023

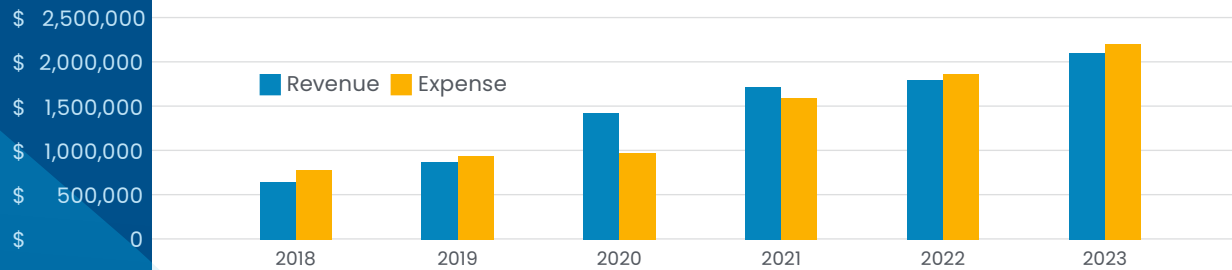
The New York Times

'Yo Soy la Mamá': A Migrant Mother's Struggle to Get Back Her Son. MAR 25, 2024

FINANCIAL REPORT

NACC's 2019–2023 Strategic Plan set an ambitious course to grow the knowledge, skills, diversity, and leadership of a national community of child welfare professionals. To achieve those goals, NACC revised its business model and fundraising targets to expand capacity and meet the needs of public service lawyers, children, and families.

NACC set ambitious targets for year-over-year growth in both categories. In the process, NACC eliminated debt, tripled its budget and staff, and re-invested revenue gains by developing new products, a new website, and expanded team capacity.



WAYS TO SUPPORT

The successful implementation of NACC's 2019–2023 Strategic Plan demonstrated the organization's ability to lead, to meet the needs of the field, and to mobilize the legal community in practice and policy reform. Your support is necessary to continue the momentum generated and increase NACC's impact. There are several ways to give:

- Donate on NACC's **WEBSITE**: NACCchildlaw.org/donate
- Become a **PLATINUM OR SAPPHIRE MEMBER**: NACCchildlaw.org/nacc-individual-memberships
- Contribute through **DONOR ADVISED FUNDS**
- Contribute **FROM YOUR IRA** to meet minimum required distributions
- Contribute **SECURITIES**
- Charitable bequest through a **WILL OR TRUST**
- Send a **CHECK** payable to NACC and mail to:
National Association of Counsel for Children
899 N Logan Street, Suite 208
Denver, CO 80203

Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.

GIVE with Confidence

WE ARE NACC

TOGETHER WE ARE
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE
BUILDING COMMUNITY
ADVANCING JUSTICE

OUR MISSION

NACC advances children's and parents' rights by supporting a diverse, inclusive community of child welfare lawyers to provide zealous legal representation and by advocating for equitable, anti-racist solutions co-designed by people with lived experience.

OUR VISION

Every child, parent, and family is well-supported in their community and has equitable access to justice through culturally responsive, client-centered legal representation.

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National Association
of Counsel for Children

NACCchildlaw.org

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