

Access to Justice Funding Improves Children's Health

Children's Law Center has relied on funding for our Healthy Together Medical-Legal Partnership through the Access to Justice program since its inception. Together with funding from private sources, the ATJ funding has allowed us to expand and then consistently maintain our presence in Southeast and Northeast DC.

Unsafe housing, inadequate education, exposure to violence, lack of good health care and other problems related to poverty, trauma and racism can harm children's physical and behavioral health. Through our Healthy Together program, Children's Law Center partners with pediatricians inside community health centers across DC to find and fix the root causes of a child's health problem.

This funding allows us to provide legal services to District children and families in Wards 5, 7 and 8 referred by our health clinic partners.

- Reach approximately **600 children and families** each year;
- **Resolve problems that impact children's health** related to housing conditions, housing security, special education, school choice, developmental issues for infants and toddlers, bullying, health care access, public benefits, guardianship and custody;
- **Meet families in their own neighborhoods** by putting lawyers onsite at THEARC, the Anacostia Clinic and Unity on Minnesota Avenue;
- Give **hundreds of parents and caregivers the information they need** to advocate for their own children;
- **Train 75+ pediatricians and other medical staff each year** to solve problems related to housing, school and public benefits that are impacting a child's health – and prevent the need for a lawyer;
- **Avoid \$14.1M in Medicaid costs** over a three-year period (for entire program).

Although the funding is for direct legal services provided by Children's Law Center, the expertise, experience and relationships developed have had important ripple effects:

- Hundreds of additional children and families helped each year by **volunteer lawyers** working in the District's major law firms;
- Allows Children's Law Center to **provide its expertise to the District government, the DC Council and the DC Courts** through participation on the Medical Care Advisory Committee, the Citizen's Review Panel, at DC Council hearings, Court committees and in other similar forums.