

25th Anniversary

Legal Services for **Children, Inc.**



Annual Report 2000



Our Mission

The mission of Legal Services For Children, Inc. (LSC) is to help at-risk children resolve unstable and unsafe conditions in their day-to-day lives.



Our Agency

LSC was founded in 1975 as the first non-profit law firm for children in the country. This year, LSC celebrates its 25th anniversary of providing free direct legal and social services to over 50,000 children whose poverty compounds the challenges they face. LSC remains one of the few sources of comprehensive direct legal advocacy for children in the United States. The agency's unique practice of providing clients with an attorney and a social worker demonstrates LSC's commitment to providing holistic services.

LSC Staff



Clockwise from top left: David, Sarah, Judy, Liz, Abigail, Kristen, Greg, Leslie, Ava, Dylan, Adetunji, Vanessa, Molly, Ron, Kayniee, Leslie, and Lisa.

Molly Blair, Office Manager

B.A., University of Oregon

Molly is responsible for managing the office and assisting with various office projects. She is proficient in Spanish.

Vanessa Carter, Intake Coordinator

B.A., Swarthmore College

Vanessa coordinates the intake hotline, serving as a liaison between LSC staff and potential clients. She is fluent in Spanish.

Gregory Zhong Tian Chen, Staff Attorney

B.A., Harvard College; J.D., New York University

Greg coordinates legal outreach and community education focusing on the needs of Asian/Pacific Islander (API) youth. He specializes in matters pertaining to youth of API and immigrant backgrounds and has written publications in the areas of immigration and juvenile law. He is fluent in Mandarin.

Sarah Colby, Staff Attorney

B.A., Princeton University; J.D., Hastings College of Law

Sarah provides outreach, education and legal services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersexed, queer and questioning youth.

Ron Gutierrez, Social Worker

B.A., Wesleyan University; M.S.W., Columbia University

Ron has been practicing social work at LSC since 1996. He received his license as a clinical social worker (LCSW) in 1999. From 1992 to 1994, he served as a foster care caseworker with Episcopal Social Services in New York City.

Judy Lin, Acting Managing Attorney

B.A., UCLA; J.D., Hastings College of the Law

Judy represents youth involved in or at risk of entering the foster care and juvenile justice systems. As Acting Managing Attorney, she supervises LSC's legal staff.

Kayniee Lopez, Social Worker

B.A., University of Michigan; M.S.W., Boston University

Kayniee coordinates the HOPE project and provides direct social work services to HIV-affected families. She is fluent in Tagalog.

David Onek, Skadden Fellow

B.A., Brown University; J.D., Stanford Law School

David provides civil legal services to youth involved in the juvenile justice system or at risk of juvenile justice involvement.

Elizabeth Butler Steyer, Acting Executive Director

B.A., and J.D., Stanford University

Liz has been with LSC for ten years in a variety of legal capacities. Formerly the Managing Attorney, she works primarily on guardianships and representation of youth in the foster care system. As the Acting Executive Director, she has focused on Board Development, fundraising and on coordinating LSC's annual benefit.

Abigail Trillin, Staff Attorney

B.A., Yale University; J.D., New York University

Abigail coordinates our education law project. She is a former elementary school teacher and is fluent in Spanish.

Kristen Weber, Staff Attorney

B.A., Yale University; J.D., University of California, Berkeley

Kristen provides legal permanency planning for children and youth whose families are affected by HIV/AIDS. She also represents children and youth at risk or already involved with the foster care system.

Lisa Westrich, Clinical Director

B.A., University of California, Berkeley; M.S.W., Columbia University

Lisa oversees the agency's social work services and is a member of LSC's management team. She provides services to a small caseload of clients and manages our pro bono panel of guardianship attorneys.

Leslie Weichi Zeitler, Social Worker

B.A., University of Virginia; M.S.W., University of California, Berkeley

Leslie coordinates the Conflict Resolution and Youth Support Project. Leslie provides crisis intervention, case management, advocacy and short-term counseling services to at-risk youth.



Our Programs

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Access Project

This new project addresses the language and cultural barriers that often prevent Asian Pacific Islander (API) youth from obtaining LSC's advocacy services. While more than half of San Francisco's youth are of API backgrounds, these youth are severely under-served by government and private agencies. The API Legal Access Project provides education and training to local agencies that serve API youth and conducts "know-your-rights" workshops directly to youth in public school classrooms, youth centers, and other community sites. The API Legal Access Project is part of a broader effort to implement a multilingual and multicultural service model that will enable LSC to serve the Bay Area's diverse populations. Finally, this project has expanded the agency's capacity to serve the immigration needs of youth, particularly in the area of Special Immigrant Juvenile law.

Conflict Resolution & Youth Support Project

The goal of the Conflict Resolution & Youth Support Project (CRYSP) is to provide youth with non-adversarial alternatives to managing conflict. This goal was founded on the premise that the professional social work staff at LSC is in a unique position to provide conflict management tools to youth who perceive a need for some form of legal (and possibly adversarial) assistance. Youth and families who are experiencing familial conflict, or conflict with their schools, and who are willing to try non-adversarial means of resolving conflict are eligible for CRYSP services. This project serves San Francisco and Alameda County youth, ages 12-17.

The Education Project

This project assists families to improve their children's educational experiences. LSC provides workshops and phone advice about school issues, represents students in school discipline cases, and works in coalitions with community groups to advocate for school district policies that benefit at-risk youth.

*Being smart is not easy,
but I am getting used to it.*

– Reflections from a HOPE support group session.



Guardianship Project

LSC's Guardianship Project provides legal representation to children and youth who are unable to live with their biological parents. The project's aim is to prevent children and youth from entering the overburdened foster care system by helping them secure safe and stable homes with caring adults, often extended family members or family friends. LSC provides direct legal representation and social service support to these minors with the goal of ensuring that their voices are heard during what is typically a traumatic time in their lives. A panel of approximately 50 pro bono attorneys in the community assists LSC in handling these guardianship cases throughout the Bay Area.

The HOPE Project

LSC's HOPE Project provides comprehensive legal and social work services to HIV/AIDS-affected families with the goal of attaining long term permanency plans for children whose parents are HIV/AIDS infected. Legal staff assist in obtaining legal guardianships and providing advocacy in SSI benefit disputes and on school issues. Social work services available through the HOPE project include crisis intervention, long-term case management, peer support and activities to assist families in their efforts to stabilize and effectively plan for the future care of their children.

Partners for Prevention

Since its inception in 1997, Partners for Prevention (PFP) has provided direct legal and social work services to over 80 clients within San Francisco with a grant from the Mayor's Criminal Justice Council. The children and youth served by this program have either been involved in the Juvenile Justice System or are at risk of entering the system. LSC staff work to improve these clients' living situations, gain access to enhanced educational services, gain access to appropriate mental health services, prevent involuntary out of home placement by the Juvenile Court, and assist clients in remaining engaged with their family and agency support networks.

Youth Access Project

The Youth Access Project (YAP) seeks to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed and questioning (LGBTIQ) youth, ages 12-17, in the San Francisco Bay Area, by providing outreach, education and legal advocacy. YAP conducts free "know-your-rights" training for youth and their allies and provides legal services that positively impact the needs of LGBTIQ youth for shelter, education, and support.



November 29, 2000

Dear Friends of LSC,

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of Legal Services for Children – a year full of reasons to celebrate and be thankful. LSC has weathered the storms of the past 25 years to remain one of the only law offices in the country providing holistic services to children and youth free of charge. Since 1975, we have served over 50,000 minors in the San Francisco Bay Area. With the dramatic increase in families moving to the Bay Area, we expect our services to be in higher demand than ever in the coming years.

As most of you know, our mission is to assist at risk and low income children and youth in the Bay Area who need to use the legal system to stabilize or improve their lives. Our clients benefit from the interdisciplinary teamwork of staff attorneys and social workers who are committed to ensuring the safety, stability and empowerment of the youth we serve.

The following is just one example of a young person helped by Legal Services for Children this year:

Seventeen-year-old Elena had been subject to her family's emotional and physical abuse all of her life. She witnessed domestic violence in the Florida home of her mother and step-father and found still more abuse when she was sent to live with her father and step-mother in Los Angeles. As Elena had already watched her older sister be forced to leave home, she was not surprised to be kicked out from her father's house this fall. Elena found her way to her grandmother's San Francisco home and called LSC's Warmline for advice.

An LSC attorney and social worker team worked with Elena and her grandmother to secure a temporary guardianship within days of our initial contact. This enabled Elena to focus on her new life in San Francisco without the fear of being forced to return to either of her family's abusive residences. The permanent legal guardianship was granted by San Francisco courts within a month.

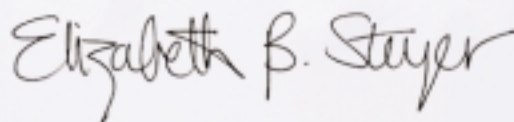
An LSC social worker is currently working with the Elena and her relatives to stabilize the new family structure. In order to support the continued viability of the guardianship, the social worker serves as a liaison between the family and various community referrals which provide family counseling for relative caregivers.

Elena is attending school regularly after years of sporadic attendance and plans to receive her high school diploma by 2002. Working in retail after school, Elena has expressed and demonstrated a strong desire to "get her life together." Her grandmother and cousin provide Elena with the support network of love, safety and role models that she lacked throughout her childhood. Though Elena was quiet, nervous and incredibly distraught when she first contacted LSC, we have witnessed a tremendous change in her demeanor over the last few months. Elena's new-found stability and familial commitment has facilitated a positive change that allows her to greet LSC staff and the world with a confident, glowing smile.

Elena is not alone. This past year, LSC received calls from over 2,270 callers: youth and concerned adults seeking assistance for a young person. Of those calls, 189 were opened as new cases in the office, resulting in over 440 open cases in the office during the past year. Those for whom cases were not opened were helped in other ways. Of the youth needing assistance, 20% were Latino, 34% were African American, 25% were White and 10% were Asian. About 28% needed assistance related to a legal guardianship, 16% sought help related to custody matters, 12% were seeking help related to emancipation, and about 11% had needs related to education. Most children, in addition to the issues mentioned above, were struggling with some of the following complications: abuse and neglect, homelessness, parental substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, and discrimination. Without comprehensive and effective support and advocacy, these youth frequently do not have the resources to develop into healthy, productive adults.

Finally, this year is a year to be thankful. The staff, Board and clients of Legal Services for Children would like to express our heartfelt thanks for all of your past support which has allowed us to provide ongoing and comprehensive services for the past 25 years. We are truly grateful to our long-time supporters as well as the new friends and institutions that have joined to help during the past year. On behalf of LSC, we thank you and wish you and your families a happy and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

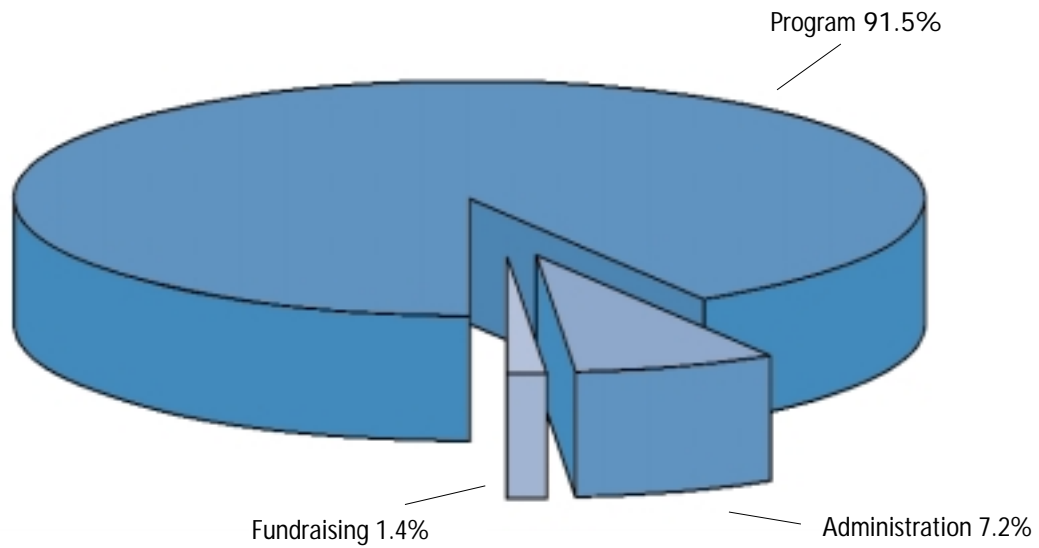
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth B. Steyer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned centrally below the word "Sincerely,".

Elizabeth Butler Steyer
Acting Executive Director

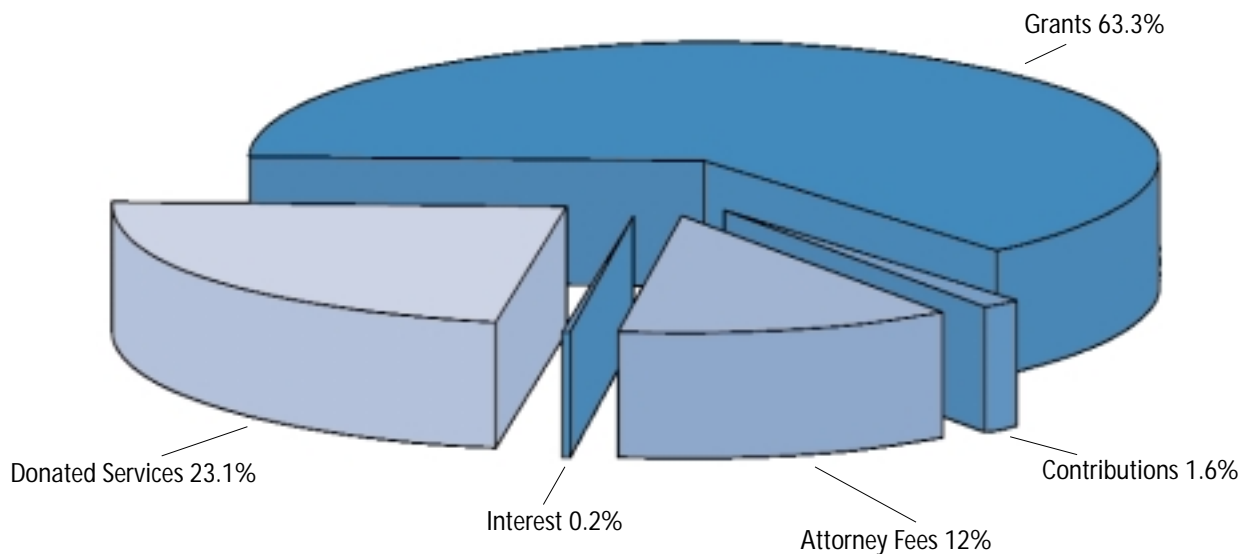
Statement of Financial Activities 1999-2000

Note: The information contained in the accompanying charts has been derived from the audited financial statements reported upon by Bertorelli & Company, our outside audit firm. This information is presented as a summary. Interested parties can obtain a complete copy of the fiscal year 1999-2000 audited financial statements by contacting LSC.

PROGRAM EXPENSES



PROGRAM REVENUE



I just want to express my deepest gratitude for all you have done for me. Many children could benefit from your services and I hope you spread nationwide. Without your help I would not be here anymore, because of my household, you and suicide were my only escapes. You saved my life.

-16 year old runaway female



How to support Legal Services for Children, Inc.

There are many ways to support LSC. Every gift provides direct legal and social support for San Francisco Bay Area children.

Cash

Cash is the most popular way to make a charitable gift. Your donation is fully tax-deductible.

Securities

Gifts of appreciated securities or stock can be one of the most advantageous ways of giving. If your gift of stock is one you have held for more than one year, you may deduct the full fair market value of the stock as a charitable contribution, while bypassing all capital gains taxes.

Real Estate

Gifts of appreciated real estate enjoy the same tax advantages as gifts of appreciated stock.

Naming LSC as One of Your Life Insurance Beneficiaries

Life insurance is a unique way to give to charities such as LSC.

United Way

Donor designated gifts through United Way may be made to LSC through payroll deductions.

Bequests Through Your Will or Living Trust

Primary or residual gifts may be made to LSC by donating a fixed amount or percentage in your will or living trust. You may also designate LSC as a beneficiary of your 401K or IRA.

Personal Property

Gifts of tangible personal property related to LSC's exempt purposes are fully tax deductible at fair market value. Gifts of tangible personal property given to LSC which are not related to its tax-exempt purposes are limited to cost basis for determining your tax deduction.

thank you

Thanks to all of our donors for their invaluable support

Donations for Fiscal Year 1999-2000.

Please note that LSC did not host a benefit in Fiscal Year 1999-2000.

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United Way of the Bay Area
Legal Services Trust Fund of the
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\$20,000 to \$39,000

San Francisco Foundation

\$10,000 to \$19,000

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We would also like to thank those who donated in the new Fiscal Year, beginning July 1, 2000, including those who supported our 25th Anniversary Celebration on November 8, 2000.

\$20,000 and Above

Legal Services Trust Fund of
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Calvin Trillin
Tracey Quintero
San Francisco Magazine

LSC would also like to thank all of our pro bono panel attorneys and other volunteer attorneys, including those listed below:

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Christopher Wu



* Retired from the Board in June, 2000 after ten years of service to LSC.

** Joined the LSC Board in Fiscal Year 2000-2001.

Current Publications

Emancipation Manual

An emancipation "how to" manual for youth.

Guardianship Manual

A training manual for attorneys on legal guardianships.

Guardianship Pamphlet

A guide for youth and adults (English, Spanish and Chinese).

Getting the Health Care You Need

A guide to minor consent laws.

Legal Rights and Options for Runaway Teens

A guide for runaway youth.

Parent's Bill of Rights

A guide to parents' and students' rights in school (English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Tagalog).

Safety First

A survival guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth and their allies.

Legal Services for **Children, Inc.**

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