

Advancing the rights of youth since 1975



2003 - 2004 Annual Report



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Your contribution gives our children the best gift of all: **A Future**

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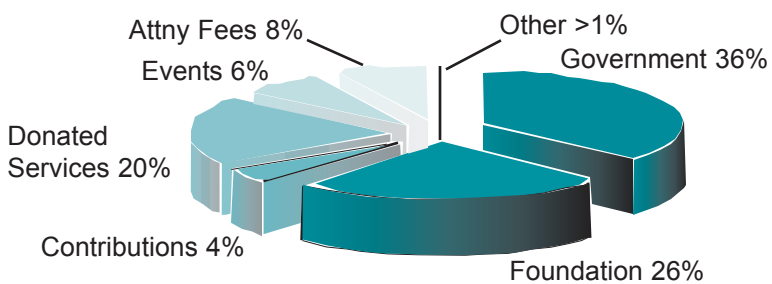
Every day many San Francisco Bay Area children are witnesses and victims of violence, poverty, neglect, and exploitation in their families, schools and communities. Despite these obstacles, they can survive and thrive if even one person provides a helping hand. Since 1975, Legal Services for Children (LSC) has been that support for countless children. We provide free, holistic legal and social services to children and youth who need help to stabilize their lives and realize their full potential.

This year, LSC made significant strides in providing targeted resources and assistance to some of our most vulnerable youth. Through our newest program - the Young Women's Empowerment Project -- we provide gender-specific advocacy to young women whose health and well-being is threatened by violence, exploitation, substance abuse, untreated health or mental health disorders, pregnancy, or unhealthy relationships. Through the Detained Immigrant Children's Project, we protect the basic human rights of unaccompanied detained immigrant children by counseling them on their legal options and representing them in deportation proceedings. Finally, through our national Model Standards Project, we are developing model professional standards for services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in out-of-home care.

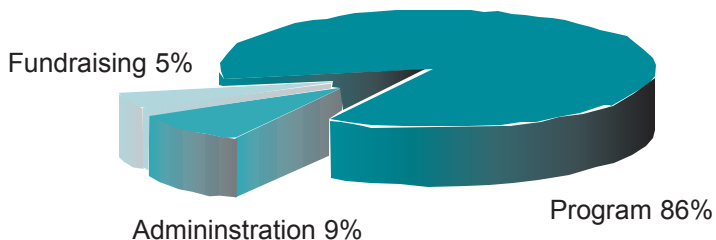
In the coming year, LSC will continue to learn from our clients and develop better ways to serve them. Our partnership with the Bar Association of San Francisco and our newly consolidated guardianship, immigration and education pro bono panels assure that more children will have access to quality, free legal services.

LSC is able to provide excellent services, in part, because of the continued support of the City of San Francisco, foundations, law firms, corporations, and caring individuals. Despite the overwhelming odds against our children, they are given hope and a brighter future through your continued support. With your help, we will continue to give our best to those who have the least.

Program Revenue



Program Expenses



LSC's 2003-04 Audited Financial Report

Public Support & Revenue

Government Contracts & Grants	\$440,585
Foundation Grants	308,750
Contributions	45,775
Donated Services & Materials	240,611
Special Events	77,735
Attorney Fees	91,391
Interest & Other Income	23
Total public support & revenue	\$1,204,870

Expenses

Program Services	\$1,076,820
Administration	113,909
Fundraising	62,310
Total Expenses	\$1,253,039

Change in net assets	(\$48,169)
Net assets, end of fiscal year	\$189,535

Please contact LSC for a complete audited statement

www.lsc-sf.org

Programs & Services

Advancing the rights of youth since 1975

Legal Services for Children (LSC) provides free legal and social services to children and youth in order to stabilize their lives and help them realize their full potential. Depending upon their specific needs, clients may receive services from any of the following programs. Our in-house attorneys and social workers, as well as our pro bono attorneys provide every client with comprehensive, holistic services to enable them to live healthy, productive, and meaningful lives.



Provide children and youth with an opportunity to receive a meaningful education.

Guardianship Project

LSC assists children in obtaining legal guardianship with a family member or other committed adult when they are unable to continue living with a parent.

HOPE Project

LSC assists families in which a parent, guardian or child is HIV infected by providing case management and legal assistance with joint guardianships.

Education Project

LSC represents students facing expulsion, and provides workshops for parents and youth on school discipline, special education, and bilingual education to help parents make more informed decisions about their child's education.

Partners for Prevention

LSC provides legal and social work assistance for youth at risk of entering, or already involved in, the juvenile justice system with the goal of deterring juvenile court involvement.

Dependency Project

Appointed by the Juvenile Court, LSC represents children in the foster care system, and helps them with education, immigration, public benefits and placement issues.

Young Women's Empowerment Project

LSC provides gender-sensitive advocacy and support to high-risk young women and girls to help ensure their safety, stability, and self-determination.

Detained Immigrant Children Project

LSC represents unaccompanied immigrant children and youth detained by the Department of Homeland Security and facing deportation proceedings.

Model Standards Project

LSC is working with the National Center for Lesbian Rights to develop and publish professional standards governing the care of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in out-of-home care.

Pacific Juvenile Defender Center

As a regional affiliate of the National Juvenile Defender Center, LSC works with the San Francisco Public Defender's Office to promote and ensure excellent representation of all children in the juvenile justice systems of California and Hawaii.

Youth Task Force

The Youth Task Force is a joint project of LSC and San Francisco's Children's Systems of Care (CSOC). As consumers of the foster care, special education, juvenile justice, and mental health systems, these members dialogue with professionals who provide services to youth.



Client Success Stories

Prevent
children from entering
the over-burdened foster
care and juvenile justice
systems.

Safety & stability

Tessa is a fourteen-year-old girl whose mother has a long history of substance abuse and mental health issues. After she suffered years of mental and physical abuse and neglect, Tessa's grades began to fall and she became increasingly aggressive with her peers at school. Threatened with expulsion, Tessa called LSC for help.

LSC represented Tessa at the expulsion hearing, and successfully advocated for her right to stay in school and receive special education services. An LSC Social Worker helped Tessa develop a plan to keep her safe. Having identified the core problem of abuse at home, LSC helped Tessa obtain a legal guardianship with grandparents she trusts. Today, Tessa remains at her grandparents' home where she is safe and her emotional and educational needs can be addressed. As a result of LSC's advocacy on her behalf, Tessa also receives tutoring and support from her school counselor.

Legal Services for Children supports youth, like Tessa, who have been seriously abused or neglected by a parent and need a legal advocate to help keep them safe. We provide holistic services through our multidisciplinary teams. Our goal is to ensure that every child has a safe place to live, meaningful educational opportunities, and the services he or she needs to thrive. We represent children in dependency, guardianship, emancipation, school discipline, special education, public benefits, and immigration cases.



Ensure
that every child
lives in a safe
and nurturing
environment.

Alone in a Foreign Land

LSC staff met sixteen-year-old Juan at a facility run by the Department of Homeland Security, where he was detained after he fled his native country, Guatemala. Juan was very reticent at first, and divulged little about his experiences. An attorney and social worker team - both of whom speak Spanish - spent the time necessary to slowly gain his trust. Finally, he told us that he left Guatemala after prolonged physical and emotional abuse by his father.

LSC successfully petitioned for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), and Juan was placed in foster care and received his green card. An LSC social worker helped him obtain mental health treatment to address his long history of abuse and continues to monitor his progress.

Juan is flourishing in his new life in the US and obtains straight A's at his current high school.

Each year, approximately 100 unaccompanied immigrant children are detained in Northern California. They are alone, imprisoned in a foreign land, and have no understanding of their legal rights. Many have been subjected to unspeakable violence and exploitation in their native countries. LSC provides culturally sensitive legal and social work services for this severely vulnerable population.

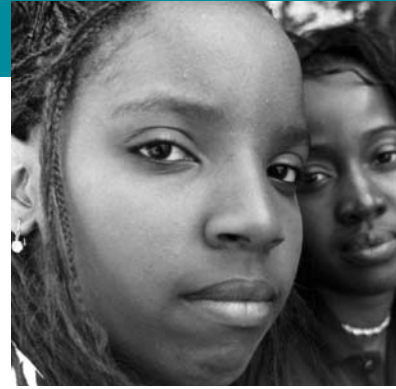
Last year, we provided full representation and services to every detained child in Northern California seeking assistance. LSC works closely with the Department of Homeland Security, the Office of Refugee Resettlement and community organizations to advocate for systemic change and improved procedures relating to detained immigrant children. Partnering with a panel of pro bono attorneys, LSC ensures each child receives proper representation and appropriate relief.

Back on track

Sarah is a bright, engaging young woman who was kicked out of her house when she was fourteen. Without structure, stability, or support, she entered into a series of harmful relationships and living situations that provided temporarily relief but greater long term difficulties. A victim of teen dating violence and a high school drop out, Sarah became pregnant at age 15. She had no financial support, no place to live, and no health care. She came to LSC because she wanted to create a safe and healthy life for herself and her child.

With the support of an attorney and social worker, Sarah obtained a restraining order against her abuser, completed an independent study high school program, and obtained vital health care benefits. She recently completed a vocational training program and is working full time. She rents her own apartment that she shares with her healthy newborn son. The baby is in subsidized child care while Sarah works. Sarah keeps in touch with LSC and credits the staff for helping her "get back on track."

Through LSC's Young Women's Empowerment Project, LSC provides free gender-sensitive legal and social work advocacy to young women to help them stabilize their lives, ensure their safety, develop safe and stable living arrangements, succeed at school, achieve independence and fulfill their potential.



Advocate
for children and youth
so they receive the
basic services necessary
to reach their
full potential.

Pro Bono Support

Last year, LSC's clients received over \$200,000 of free legal assistance through our guardianship, immigration and education *pro bono* panels. Thank you to all of our volunteer attorneys for your continued support and commitment!

Allison Akers

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Guardianship Panel

Immigration Panel

Education Panel



Founded in 1975, Legal Services for Children (LSC) is dedicated to advancing the rights of youth by providing direct legal representation and social work services. LSC's goal is to ensure that every child in the San Francisco Bay Area has an opportunity to be raised in a safe environment with equal access to a meaningful education and the services they need to become healthy and productive young adults.

LSC's interdisciplinary approach to legal representation is unique in its employment of social workers and attorneys in an effort to meet the greater needs of our clients, and avoid any unnecessary placement in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Through this holistic approach, LSC endeavors to empower clients and actively involve them in critical decisions about their lives. Our services are provided to children and youth in cases that include legal guardianship, dependency, school discipline, immigration, and emancipation.

Each year, LSC serves over 2,500 children and provides comprehensive representation to approximately 450 youth annually.

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LSC's Mission:

To provide free legal and social services to children and youth in order to stabilize their lives and help them realize their full potential.



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