

MFY Legal Services Expanding Court-Based Clinics For Kinship Caregivers

In June 2006, MFY Legal Services, Inc. launched the Kinship Caregiver Law Project, an initiative to help bring greater permanency to the lives of children who are being raised by their grandparents or other relatives by connecting families that provide kinship care with pro bono private attorneys who represent them in custody, guardianship and adoption matters in all five boroughs of New York City. To date over twenty-six law firms are involved in the project and we've trained approximately 200 attorneys to assist in these cases. Currently approximately 75 attorneys are assisting 72 children gain permanency in over 60 cases.

In 2007, the Project began offering advice and counsel to kinship caregivers at Brooklyn Family Court on a monthly basis. In May 2008, we expanded these clinics to the Manhattan Family Court and we now offer three clinics per month in each county. At the clinics, an attorney generally spends about an hour with a family discussing their situation and explaining their rights and options. We provide information on our program for families that are interested in pursuing custody, guardianship, or adoption. These clinics are generally staffed by MFY Legal Services, Inc. in Brooklyn on the first three Mondays of every month from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. and in Manhattan on the first three Tuesdays of every month from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Any kinship caregiver petitioning the court is welcome to consult with an attorney during these times.

For more information about the Kinship Caregiver Law Project, please contact Ramonita Cordero at 212-417-3774. Also, please contact our intake hotline, 212-417-3850, Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. to consult with an attorney.