Due Process and Justice for...Kids Connecting the Dots

The Call to Justice. Access to education is extraordinarily important for all children. As the school to prison pipeline phenomenon attests, when a child is denied an education due to school suspension for minor infractions, the ramifications can be long-lasting.

Georgia Appleseed's Keeping Kids in Class Toolkit is a pro-active resource, but what happens to a student who is actively being forced out of school? Under Georgia law, the student is entitled to a disciplinary hearing, often called a tribunal. Rarely do students have legal representation at the hearing, contributing to due process violations.

Exempting the fairness of the tribunal process led Georgia Appleseed to create... Student Tribunals: An Assessment of the Disciplinary Process in Georgia Public Schools.

The Report. Georgia Appleseed's newest report, "Student Tribunals: An Assessment of the Disciplinary Process in Georgia Public Schools," examines the "due process" rights of students facing a tribunal. Based on the pro bono legal research of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, the report recommends systematic changes to better ensure school discipline is just and fair. The recommendations note "that effective representation of students in these proceedings involves negotiating alternative disciplinary options that address behavioral issues in a way that will not subject the child to potentially crippling loss of educational time. Representation in these proceedings can change or save a child's life."

This recommendation led to...

The CLE. Georgia Appleseed's Young Professionals Council responded to the call and created a training manual for non-education attorneys representing students pro bono in hearings. This popular continuing legal education course has been presented in several communities, where participants have given high marks to its written materials, experience-based strategies, real world practical tips and process pointers.

These CLEs led to a...

Pro-Bono Opportunity. Georgia Appleseed has teamed with the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) and Fulton County DFCS to identify tribunal-trained attorneys willing to represent foster children in disciplinary tribunals. Too often the foster care parents attending the hearing alone. Outcomes can result not only in suspension from school but loss of their home placement when a foster parent cannot provide supervision during the suspension and requests the child be moved. CLE participants may opt into a volunteer list maintained by the OCA, in collaboration with DFCS. Many have done so.

Which has led to...

Successes for Foster Kids. To date, half a dozen foster children have been represented pro bono at their hearings with positive results. Most had the charges dismissed due to lack of evidence. The presence of a lawyer advocate made a real difference in the lives of these children and best of all, kept them in class.

Next Student Tribunal Training CLE opportunity...November 20th, 9 am, State Bar of Georgia. Register here.

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Due Process and Justice for Kids

Connecting the Dots
The Call to Justice
Access to education is extraordinarily important for all children. As the school to prison pipeline phenomenon attests, when a child is denied an education due to school suspension for minor infractions, the ramifications can be long-lasting.

Georgia Appleseed’s Keeping Kids in Class Toolkit is a pro-active resource, but what happens to a student re-actively when facing more than ten days of out of school suspension? Under Georgia law, the student is entitled to a disciplinary hearing, often called a tribunal. Rarely do students have legal representation at the hearing, contributing to due process violations.

Examining the fairness of the tribunal process led Georgia Appleseed to create... The Report.

Georgia Appleseed’s newest report, "Student Tribunals: An Assessment of the Disciplinary Process in Georgia Public Schools," examines the ‘due process’ rights of students facing a tribunal. Based on the pro bono legal research of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, the report recommends systemic changes to better ensure school discipline is just and fair. The recommendations note "that effective representation of students in these proceedings... involves negotiating alternative disciplinary options that will address behavioral issues in a way that will not subject the child to potentially crippling loss of educational time. Representation in these proceedings can change or save a child’s life."

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The CLE. Georgia Appleseed & Young Professionals Recent YPC-led CLE at Kilpatrick Townsend Council responded to the call and created a training manual for non-education attorneys representing students pro bono in hearings. This popular continuing legal education course has been presented in several communities, where participants have given high marks to its written materials, experience-based strategies, real world practical tips and process pointers. These CLEs led to a... Pro-Bono Opportunity.

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