

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Annual Report 2015

Our Funders

Legal Aid Ontario (LAO)

We are a Specialty Community Legal Clinic, our core funding is provided by Legal Aid Ontario. In addition to the core funding for staff, office and services, LAO has provided some new funding this year.

- ◆ Specialty Clinic Modernization. LAO has been supporting a majority of the Specialty Community Legal Clinics in their Modernization Project. The project will see eight Specialty Community clinics and the Association of Community Legal Clinics move into co-located office space, where we will find both efficiencies and opportunities to work together in new and creative ways.
- ◆ New financial eligibility levels for provision of Legal Aid services. JFCY was one of the clinics who received additional funding to assist us in meeting the increased demands on our services that will be an inevitable result of the increased financial eligibility levels for those seeking legally aided services in Ontario. In October 2014, the provincial government announced that, "Ontario will raise the income level -- also known as the eligibility threshold -- at which people can qualify for legal aid assistance. Once fully implemented, an additional one million low-income people will have access to legal aid services -- more than double the number of people eligible for legal aid services today." This was the first increase to income eligibility since 1996.
- ◆ LAO's French Language Services funding has made it possible for us to ensure that all of our public legal education materials are available in French, and most significantly that our website is fully functional in English and in French.

Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO)

The Law Foundation of Ontario provides the majority of the funding for our *Street Youth Legal Services* (SYLS), detailed on pages 10-11 of this report. Our work providing legal services and support for homeless young people is the only program of its kind in Canada. We currently have no stable funding for this work, and have been dependent on the LFO for the majority of the funding required. The LFO funds a related project that SYLS works on jointly with Sketch Working Arts called, *Acting Out! Street Law Smarts*.

The LFO also funds a project called Connecting Communities through a sister clinic, Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO). We have been able to participate in the Connecting Communities project in a number of different ways.

Social Venture Partners - Toronto (SVP)

We had the incredible fortune of being selected as an "Investee" of SVP - Toronto in 2013. We are entering the 3rd of a 3 year relationship with SVP. We have had the benefit of some funding, but more significantly of access to professionals who have supported growth and development in management and human resources, in Board development and governance, financial management, fundraising, and communications.



Justice for Children and Youth is a non-profit community legal aid clinic that specializes in protecting the rights of young people facing conflicts with the legal system, education, social service or mental health systems. JFCY was formally incorporated as the Canadian Foundation for Children Youth and the Law in 1978, and has operated as Justice for Children and Youth since 1990. This year we celebrate our 37th anniversary.

JFCY's mission is to protect and advance the legal rights and dignity of children and youth in Canada. Voice and empowerment are important tenants of the mission. Providing children and youth with the tools and context which allows them to speak for themselves as individual rights holders in our society is the most effective way to preserve their rights.

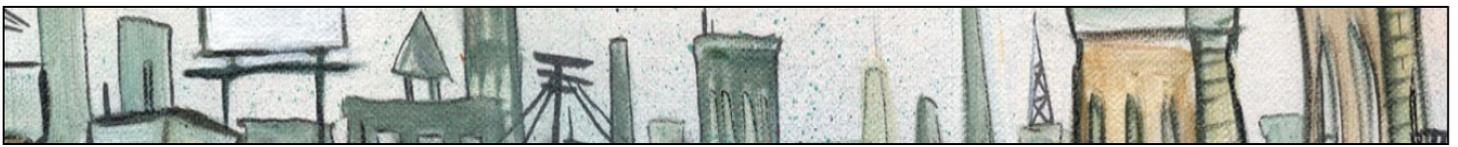
JFCY's vision is to increase our impact on the rights and dignity of children and youth by providing a deeper offering of sustainable community development, public legal education and direct legal services.

Board Members

- Cheryl Milne, Chair & President
- Anne Irwin, Vice-President
- Rishma Bhimji, Secretary
- Lennox Gibbs: Treasurer
- Jeffrey Rosekat
- Darren Thorne
- Jane Gaskell
- Emma Rhodes
- Grace Greatrex

Staff

- Mary Birdsell, Executive Director
- Karien Gibson, Office Manager
- Martina Nikolova, Administrative Assistant
- Emily Chan, Community Development Lawyer
- Emily McKernan, Staff Lawyer
- Andrea Luey, Staff Lawyer
- Samira Ahmed, Staff Lawyer
- Julia Huys, Street Youth Legal Services Lawyer
- Jenna Persaud, Staff Lawyer
- Jesse Mark, Staff Lawyer



Message from the Chair

It has been a great pleasure to return to Justice for Children and Youth as a volunteer after working for many years as a staff lawyer. JFCY continues to be a leader in advocating for the rights of children and youth with an incredibly dedicated staff. As Chair of the Board this past year, I have also seen firsthand the dedication of the volunteers on the board who have worked hard to support the work of the organization. While the board focuses less on the hands-on difficult work of the clinic, it has worked hard to put in place the structure necessary to allow the staff to do rewarding and important advocacy on behalf of our clients. We have endeavoured to update our procedures and policies to ensure a properly functioning organization. We look forward to revisiting our strategic plan in the coming year and to bringing onto the board additional volunteers with expertise to help us with that and with the other essential aspects of the work of a volunteer charitable board.

We have been pleased with the additional support that we and all legal aid clinics have received this year from Legal Aid Ontario. The increase in support will allow the lawyers to assist a greater number of individual clients at a critical time. A recent CAS report stated that Toronto is the child poverty Capital of Canada at 28.6% of children living in low-income households. However, the work the organization does impacts children across the country. Sadly, Canada is only ranked number 57 of countries that have created an enabling environment for children's rights. I like to think that the work of JFCY can help to improve this ranking. JFCY's key strength is its commitment to children and social justice. This has earned the clinic a unique and respected reputation in both the social services and legal communities. I am looking forward to the next year in which we seek to obtain stable funding for our street youth legal services program and to continue our support for the work of our amazing staff.

Cheryl Milne
Chair and President



Message from the Executive Director

It is an exciting time for Justice for Children and Youth. With no shortage of work to do, recent interest in advancing access to justice has meant increased funding for legally aided services, and an increase in clinic resources for the first time in many years. As community legal clinics seek to ensure their services are relevant and progressive, JFCY has been engaged in a modernization project and will co-locate with eight other specialty clinics and the Association of Community Legal Clinics in March 2016.

As we near the end of 2015, I am struck by how quickly the years seem to fly by, no doubt in part because of how busy we are. I am glad to take a moment to reflect on what has happened at JFCY over the past year or so, and as I do, my mind turns to my colleagues and our clients.

We are ever balancing our ability to provide services to the individual young people who come to our door, with the need to devote time to law reform, systemic change and test cases. We are a small office trying to provide services to a very big province.

We have been increasing the depth of our connections to others interested in advancing child and youth rights, to those next door, and to some around the world. We have complex and challenging cases, both test cases and individual clients. We continue to work on supporting each other personally and professionally.

As you can read in the pages that follow, we are engaged in a wide range of activities that requires our staff to be creative, professional, sharp, and compassionate.

A day working at JFCY might mean a meeting with a Cabinet minister to discuss a needed change in the law, and next, a meeting with a teenager who is “sleeping rough” to discuss needing a winter coat; making submissions to the Supreme Court of Canada one day, and explaining the law to a traumatized 13 year old who has a brain injury the next; discussing the complexities of privacy law and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* with psychiatrists or school principals in the morning, and discussing the law and the complexity of whether to pursue a legal remedy with a 16 year old who has been kicked out of their house after living with abuse.

The work can be difficult and inspiring, rewarding and devastating; often we cannot fix what most needs to be fixed, and can only offer respectful and dignified support.

The people I work with are people who can do all those things. I would like to take this opportunity to publically thank and honour our staff for all that they bring to our work at JFCY. They are smart and resourceful, every day they bring passion and compassion, rigour, insight and tenacity, warmth and a good sense of humour, emotional and intellectual intelligence, and a willingness to get pretty close to the fire. I deeply appreciate what you do for our clients, for one another, for me, and for JFCY as an organization.

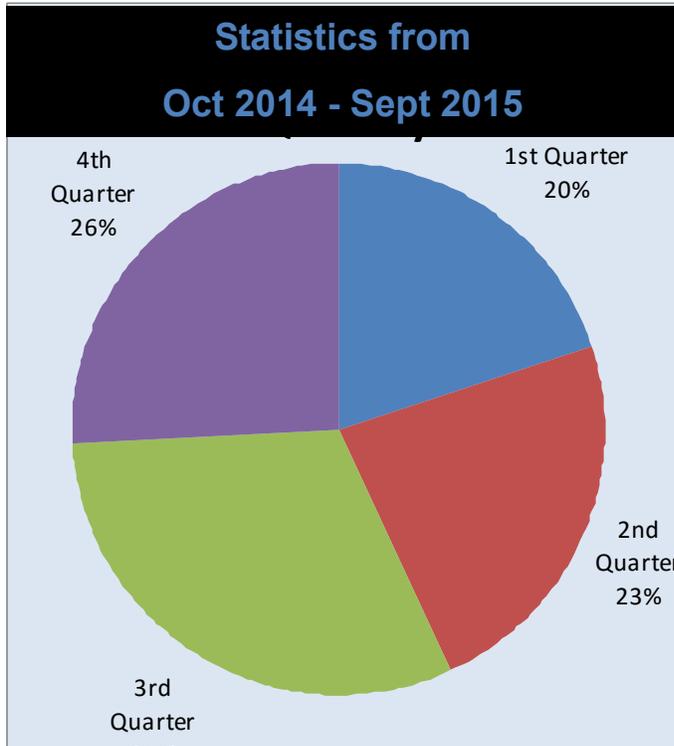
Thank you for everything you do, it really does make all the difference.

Mary Birdsell

Executive Director



Intakes



MONTH	TOTAL	%
October	158	8%
November	136	7%
December	77	4%
1st Quarter Total	371	
January	150	8%
February	153	8%
March	129	7%
2nd Quarter Total	432	
April	167	9%
May	165	9%
June	249	13%
3rd Quarter Total	581	
July	160	9%
August	154	8%
September	169	9%
4th Quarter Total	483	

Client Casework

The staff lawyers at JFCY provide direct legal representation, in all areas of law affecting low-income children and youth under 18, and homeless youth under 25. We also offer information, advice, and brief services to young people, parents (in education matters), professionals and community groups. Areas of law include criminal law, constitutional law, human rights, education law, family law, mental health law, health law, victim support and income maintenance. While we provide services across Ontario, most of the direct representation we are able to provide is in the Toronto area; on occasion we are able to provide representation in other parts of the province. We also provide support and mentorship to lawyers seeking to provide child rights oriented representation to young people across the province.

The following snapshots of JFCY cases from 2015 are representative of some of the typical issues that arise, and the contexts in which our clients find themselves:



On behalf of a high school student, we initiated an appeal of an expulsion to the Child and Family Services Review Board. The matter was settled before the hearing in the client's favour.

A client with autism was facing charges under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*; the downtown youth court judge praised the model of resolution the JFCY lawyer used and asked for a case summary to distribute provincially as a model for resolving more serious charges committed by young people with complex mental health needs

We acted as *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) in a criminal matter where the parents were charged and convicted of manslaughter in the death of one of their children. The Toronto Star sought to lift a publication ban; we argued to protect the publication of the unusual family name. Although the court decided to publish the names of the parents, there were limitations in place to protect the identity of the remaining children (a nine year old and a one year old).

We acted for a child on an application before the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario where a public service failed to accommodate the needs of severely disabled young person. The matter was resolved by a very favourable settlement for the child, and an agreement that the organization would make policy changes.

We negotiated with counsel of a housing co-operative to allow a young woman to stay in her housing unit where an eviction would have left her homeless. She was a victim of domestic violence and her partner often appeared uninvited to her home to harass her, sparking noise complaints from neighbours which almost led to the potential eviction.

On behalf of a young person, we appealed the decision of the Ontario Works providers in a mid-sized municipality who required that a 16 or 17 year old have her benefits paid to a "trustee." There was no social agency in town willing to act as a trustee, and she risked having her landlord take advantage of her vulnerable position. The Social Benefits Tribunal overturned this decision and allowed the young person to receive her benefits directly. We expect this will influence the practice across the province.

We assisted a homeless young person in getting a change of legal counsel on a Legal Aid certificate because the lawyer on record charged over \$1000 for representation at a refugee hearing on top of being paid through Legal Aid. The lawyer was also not fully preparing the client for the hearing and was giving erroneous advice. The young person was connected to a trusted immigration lawyer and Legal Aid Ontario was notified of the unethical practices of the initial lawyer.



Types of Cases

AREA OF LAW / SUBJECT	TOTAL	%
HOUSING	55	3%
ONTARIO WORKS	57	3%
ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM	7	<1%
VICTIM RIGHTS SERVICES	2	<1%
OTHER INCOME MAINTENANCE	7	<1%
GENERAL ADMIN	31	2%
LEGAL AID CERTIFICATES	6	<1%
IMMIGRATION	70	4%
EMPLOYMENT	21	1%
EDUCATION	316	17%
PUBLIC SERVICES	2	<1%
HEALTH CARE	39	2%
CORRECTIONAL LAW	1	<1%
HUMAN RIGHTS	26	1%
CHILD WELFARE	115	6%
CRIMINAL	363	19%
FAMILY	204	11%
CONSUMER AND DEBT	9	<1%
CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION BOARD	6	<1%
WILLS AND ESTATES	13	1%
RECOVERY OF POSSESSIONS	24	1%
LEAVING HOME	171	9%
SHOPLIFTING DEMAND LETTERS	138	7%
OTHER: MISC	118	6%
PUBLICATIONS	2	<1%
POLICING	25	1%
PRIVACY	3	<1%
VIOLENCE	40	2%
TOTALS	1871	



Test Case Litigation

JFCY seeks to have a systemic impact on the recognition of children's rights. In addition to the day-to-day casework, JFCY engages in test case litigation to protect and advance the legal rights of all children and youth. JFCY's written and oral arguments include ensuring that decisions advance the rights of children, are in compliance with the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, and due consideration is given to the best interests of children and their rights as provided for under the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Child*, and other international instruments. Brief summaries of recent test cases:

C.M.M. v. D.G.C., Divisional Court, 2015

JFCY intervened where a parent challenged his child's application for child support without a litigation guardian. She was 14 year old at the time she filed her application and was 16 years old at the time of the appeal. This case is important to our clients, as we regularly represent minors suing for support and the large majority of these young people would not have access to a litigation guardian. The Court held that there is no basis for the general proposition that a child must have a litigation guardian in order to pursue her claim for child support from her parent. In their findings, the Court noted that, "there is a legitimate concern that the requirement that a child must always have a litigation guardian in such matters may effectively disenfranchise many children from the very relief that the *Family Law Act* accords to them."

Kanthasamy v. Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Supreme Court of Canada, 2015

JFCY intervened in this case, an appeal from the Federal Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. At issue is what the appropriate legal test is for an Application for Permanent Residency in Canada based on Humanitarian and Compassionate considerations under the *Immigration Refugee Protection Act*. The Appellant was 17 years old at the time of his application.

JFCY's intervention focused on the children's rights perspective under domestic and international law including the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and argued that when the principal applicant for an Humanitarian and Compassionate claim is a child on their own, the procedural and substantive process requires that Best Interests of the Child be *the* primary consideration to be taken into account, rather than focusing on the element of hardship which is the test applied to adult applicants. *This appeal was heard in April 2015 and we await the decision from the Supreme Court of Canada.*



Canadian Doctors For Refugee Care, The Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, Daniel Garcia Rodrigues, Hanif Ayubi and Justice for Children and Youth v. Attorney General of Canada and Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Federal Court, July 2015

JFCY is one of three public interest applicants in a court challenge to the cuts in Refugee healthcare by the Conservative Federal Government in 2012. All parties argued that the cuts were unconstitutional and violated several sections of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The Federal Court used very strong child rights language in finding that there was a violation of section 12 of the *Charter* in that the government intentionally targeted an admittedly poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged group and that this treatment is cruel and unusual, particularly, but not exclusively, as it affects children; that the right to equality provided for by section 15 of the *Charter* was violated by providing a lesser level of health care to refugee claimants from “Designated Countries of Origin”.

The government was given four months to remedy these infringements and failed to convince the Federal Court of Appeal to stay this decision beyond the four months while the appeal was proceeding. As a result, basic healthcare coverage was reinstated including medication for children under 19 and pregnant women. This appeal was originally set to be heard at the Federal Court of Appeal on October 26-27, 2015. *For a number of reasons, including the election of a Liberal government, an adjournment has been granted by the court for a date to be set. We are hopeful that the new Liberal Government will withdraw this appeal as they indicated they would during their election campaign.*



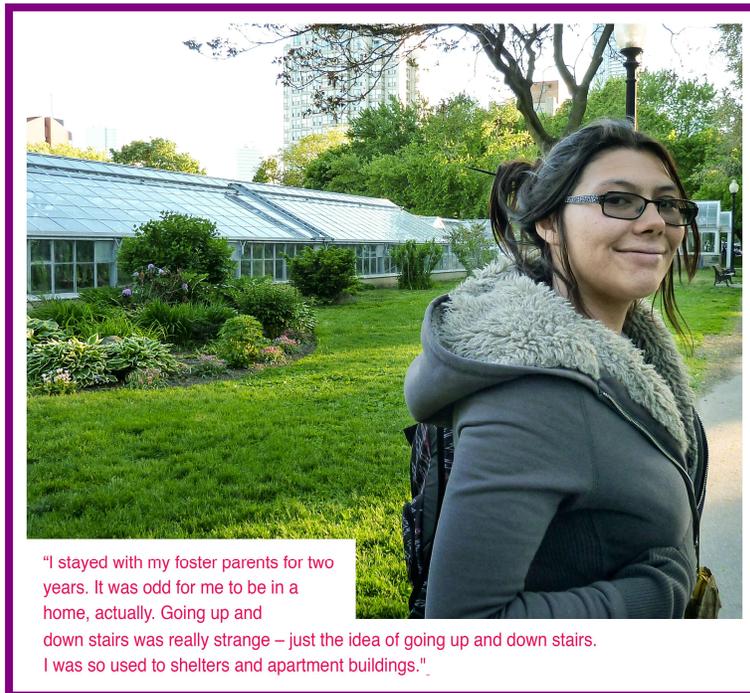
Refugee healthcare team at the Federal Court. Left to Right: Mary Birdsell, Julia Huys, Emily Chan, Pia Zambelli, Lorne Waldman, Jackie Swailand, Adrienne Smith, Audrey Macklin, Maureen Silcoff.



Street Youth Legal Services

Street Youth Legal Services (SYLS) is a program of JFCY that provides legal information, advice, and referrals to street-involved youth through workshops and individual consultations. We do this in partnership with all of the street youth serving agencies in Toronto. A lawyer from JFCY goes to meet young people who are homeless and unstably housed, at the organizations and agencies who offer other services to this community of young people. We go to them to provide front line access to justice, reducing the barriers in every way we can.

Street-involved young people often have multiple and interconnected legal problems. Complex barriers, including a lack of financial resources, social isolation and mistrust often prevent our clients from getting the help they need. SYLS delivers legal services directly to young street-involved people in drop-in centres and shelters, at the places where they congregate to access other services, such as health care, food, employment assistance and counseling. It is our goal to educate young people about the value of law to empower even our most vulnerable citizens.



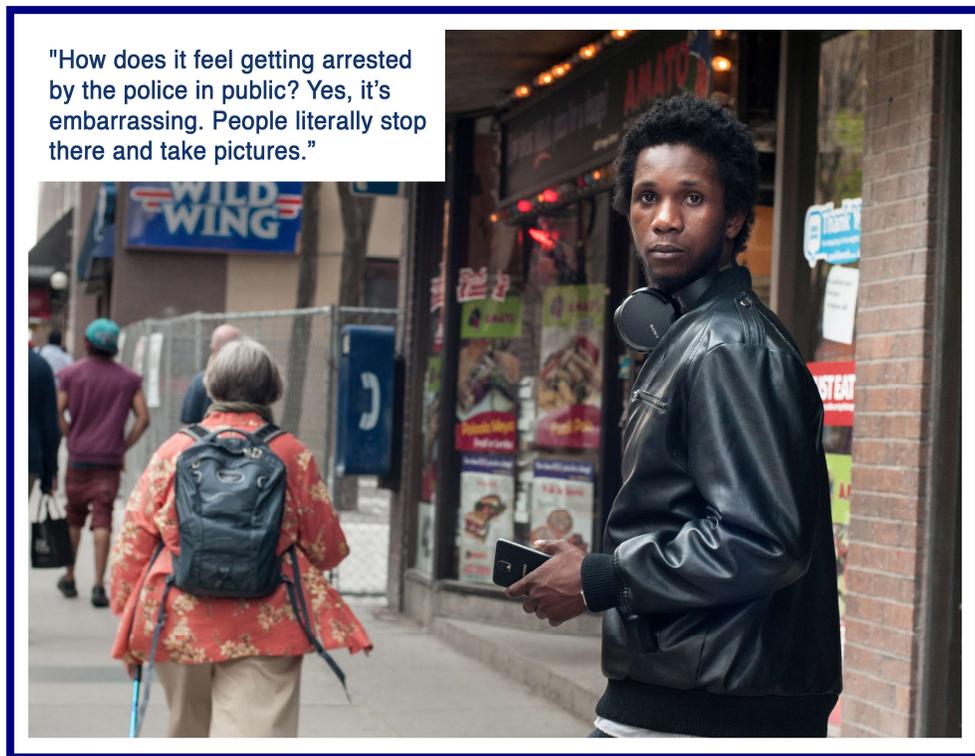
SYLS also provides legal education workshops and engages in law reform activities with young people and adults who advocate on behalf of street-involved youth. A selection of these activities include:

Acting Out! - Street Law Smarts, a joint project of Sketch Working Arts and JFCY, is funded by the Law Foundation of Ontario. Sketch Working Arts is a creative enterprise for youth 16-29 living homeless and on the margins. The SYLS lawyer and young people with lived experience provide experiential legal information workshops to people whose work connects them with young people experiencing homelessness (various street youth serving agencies, child welfare agencies, child and youth worker students, and the Social Justice Tribunal annual training). Through this project we were able to update our *Street Law Smarts* publication, which covers twenty-six different legal topics that impact homeless youth.



SYLS continues as a long standing member, and on the Advisory Committee, of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness; we are involved in a seven-year research project on youth homelessness with three research areas - Frameworks to Prevent Homelessness, Effective Responses to Youth Homelessness, and Justice Issues Affecting Persons Experiencing Homelessness.

SYLS was also active in the CAS-led project, “What’s the Map?”, an initiative born out of the joint CAS-CAMH research project, “Hidden in Our Midst: Homeless Newcomer Youth in Toronto,” that studied the growing problem of homeless youth without immigration status in Toronto.



In 2015, with pro-bono assistance from a local graphic designer, we created “Street Youth of Toronto,” a documentary photography project capturing the images and lived experience of street youth. The young people shared with us their personal histories, and lived experiences on the streets and with the legal system, to help us understand how these experiences have impacted their lives. The project is designed to be both awareness raising and educational. The first photographs of the project were completed in time for the “International Summit on the Legal Needs of Street Youth,” held in June 2015 in London, England and hosted by the American Bar Association (ABA). JFCY’s Executive Director was invited to attend the Summit, with others from around the world who assist street involved young people, and young people themselves.



Website and Social Media

JFCY launched a new website that has been designed to be mobile friendly, accessible and bilingual. Early monitoring indicates that the website has held over 5000 sessions in the last two months.

JFCY merged its social media platforms onto the new website and are very pleased to see that we are garnering attention. JFCY Ontario's YouTube videos created by our volunteer youth group has attracted over 10,000 views in the last 12 months and we receive calls from young people who say, "I saw your YouTube video and I now want to talk to a lawyer." JFCY has over 200 followers on Twitter and as many likes on Facebook. *Join in to hear from JFCY regularly!*

The main page of the English and French websites:

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ABOUT JFCY ASK A LAWYER DONATE FRANÇAIS

Search ...

Legal services for young people under 18 and homeless youth under 25 in Ontario.

Legal Rights Wiki
I am being **expelled**.
The **police** stopped me.
YCJA Records destruction.
Help with **leaving home**.
I'm in **child protection** court.
I am a **victim**.
I received a **ticket**.

Ask a Lawyer
Free confidential legal advice for youth under 18 and homeless youth under 25 in Ontario.
416-920-1633
1-866-999-5329

Research & Resources
Our **Cases & Decisions**
Policy & **Position** Papers
Download JFCY **Publications**
Our **Blog** Postings
YouTube **Videos**
External **Resources**

LEGAL RIGHTS WIKI **ASK US ONLINE** **GO TO RESOURCES**

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

À PROPOS DE NOUS CONSEILS JURIDIQUES FAITES UN DON ENGLISH

Recherche ...

Services juridiques pour les jeunes personnes âgées de moins de 18 ans et les jeunes itinérants de l'Ontario de moins de 25 ans.

Wiki sur les droits
Je suis **expulsé**.
La **police** m'a arrêté.
La destruction des **casiers judiciaires d'adolescents**.
Aide avec le fait de **quitter la maison**.
Je suis au **tribunal de protection de l'enfance**.
Je suis une **victime**.
J'ai reçu une **contravention**.

Conseils juridiques
Conseils juridiques gratuits et confidentiels pour les jeunes âgés de moins de 18 ans et les jeunes itinérants de moins de 25 ans.
416-920-1633
1-866-999-5329

La recherche et les ressources
Nos **causes & décisions**.
Documentation sur les **politiques & prise de position**.
Les **publications** disponibles.
Nos **blogues**.
Ressources **externes**.

WIKI SUR LES DROITS **POSE TA QUESTION EN LIGNE** **RESSOURCES**



Policy and Law Reform

JFCY advocates for law and policy reform, and endeavours to respond to current developments and proposed changes to the laws that affect the rights of children and youth.

Activities in 2014 - 2015 included:

Consultations with Service Ontario on incorporating a children's rights approach to the change in sex designation requirements.

Consultations with healthcare providers who are considering opening a safe injection site, on the development of a policy about the provision of services to young people.

Consultation and written submissions were provided for the five year review of the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Consulted in drafting legislation that was introduced to provide voluntary child welfare services to 16 & 17 year olds.

Meeting with Attorney General as part of the Repeal the Safe Streets Act Coalition; worked on creating an online petition, and appeared on CBC radio, Ontario noon, and on Talk 1010 radio.

Participation on the consultation committee for a province-wide Trans Legal Needs Assessment being led by HALCO.

Meetings with policy staff from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and written submissions regarding proposed legislation on how police treat police records disclosure requests, including *Youth Criminal Justice Act* records.

Consultations with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services regarding proposed legislation to regulate police "street checks" or "carding".

Consultations with Criminal Injuries Compensation Board regarding the accessibility of the board to young people, in particular, the Board's current requirement to have a litigation guardian.

Consultations on the proposed centralized Toronto Courts.

Participation in the Ministry of the Attorney General's roundtable on mental health issues in the criminal justice system.

Seeking discussions with Boards of Education across Ontario on the practice of excluding students under s.265(1)(m) of the *Education Act*.

Discussions with the Toronto District School Board to express our view that a standard clause contained in the Minutes of Settlement where they ask students and parents to sign away their right to pursue any human rights complaints against the board for anything the board may have ever done, is illegal.



Community Projects and Partnerships

A part of JFCY's vision is to provide a deep offering of sustainable community development to meet current needs and to ensure adequate resources are available for future generations. JFCY remains involved in a number of on-going partnerships, engaged in new initiatives and has provided consultation in various sectors.

A selection of this work:

A new "Child and Youth Law" section of the Ontario Bar Association (OBA) was created in partnership with the Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL). This section has co-hosted numerous presentations with other OBA sections, including the Family Law section (on child support claims by the child), Immigration Law section (on rights of minors), Education Law section, (discipline issues) Criminal and Women's Law sections (on sexting and teenage behaviour). JFCY's Executive Director is currently sitting as the Vice-Chair.

As a founding member of the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of Children, a JFCY lawyer has been on this board run registered charity since its inception. JFCY's Executive Director is currently sitting as the Treasurer.

Members of the Advisory Committee for the Canadian Bar Association's four year project, "Supporting Access to Justice for Children and Youth in East Africa (SAJCEA)." JFCY lawyers have also contributed to organizing and presenting at the annual regional conferences; in Kenya the focus was on Public Legal Education and in Tanzania the focus was on restorative justice practices in youth criminal justice and test case litigation. JFCY also hosted a SAJCEA delegation in Toronto.

Participated in the LGBTQ Youth Suicide Prevention Summit hosted by EGALÉ which brought together experts from across Canada to share best practices and develop plans for action.

As a member of community advisory committee for the Social Justice Tribunal of Ontario, JFCY has been able to be part of encouraging a children's rights lens on the practices of the Tribunals in the child and youth cluster.

JFCY is a member of the consultation committee for the "Cross-Over Youth Project" run out of Ryerson University. A newly founded project funded by Justice Canada, (with participation from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services Ontario) that seeks to improve outcomes for young people who are involved with children's aid services and are facing charges in the youth criminal justice system. JFCY has agreed to provide legal services to young people who may need assistance.

JFCY worked with the Association In Defence of the Wrongly Convicted in developing public education materials - a graphic novel - about the law and experience of young people making statements and defending charges in youth court.

JFCY has worked with Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO), a sister specialty clinic, on the development and updating of their website "Youth Criminal Law".



Public Legal Education

In conjunction with meeting the legal needs of our clients, JFCY creates and maintains a wide range of public legal education materials and an on-line Legal Wiki. Recently updated materials include the very popular Teen Street Guide, the Know Your Rights guide to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (English only, French out for translation), the Street Law Smarts publication covering 26 topics developed with the interests of young people facing homelessness in mind.



Staff lawyers, Emily Chan (left) and Andrea Luey (right) presenting workshops at First Work 2014, 26th Annual Futures Conference for Youth Employment Counsellors.

Demand for presentations remains high and JFCY lawyers take on a large number of speaking opportunities, this has included:

Workshops for young people in school assemblies, conferences, classrooms, alternative attendance programs and after-school programs, in community agencies and centres, and the Roy McMurtry Youth Centre (GTA youth jail).

Workshops for post-secondary students at the University of Toronto's Law School and Ethics program, Humber College's Police Foundations program and Child and Youth Workers program, George Brown's Community Service Workers program, and York University's Refugee Studies department.

Training for front-line professionals such as principal candidates, guidance counsellors, child welfare workers, children's mental health care providers, probation officers, youth justice workers, youth employment counsellors, and Student Parent Support Workers for Toronto's Pathways to Education Programs, International Summer Course on the Rights of the Child at the University of Moncton, and to members of the Five County Network in Eastern Ontario.

For lawyers through the Osgoode's CPD programs, the Law Society of Upper Canada, the Law Union, the Ontario Bar Association and the Canadian Bar Association.

Speaking on panels during Pride week covering transgender, education, police and other legal issues that disproportionately impact LGBTQ2S children and youth.

Webinars for the Adoption Council of Canada and Legal Aid Ontario's Provincial Learning Action Committee.



In the Media

JFCY lawyers receive requests for interviews regarding our cases and commentary on relevant issues that impact the rights of children and youth.

A sample of when we have appeared in TV, radio and in print media:

In the Toronto Star regarding girls being held in custody and problem of limited space and held far from home.

In the Toronto Star regarding the Ontario Bar Association's program on Child Support.

On CBC radio, The Current, regarding the strip search of a student in Quebec.

On Radio 1010 regarding the efforts to repeat the *Safe Streets Act* in Ontario.

In Law Times regarding the refugee health care challenge.

On CBC radio interviews held across Canada regarding the refugee health care challenge.

On CBC radio, Metro Morning regarding a Children Aid's Society emergency worker's strike.

In the Toronto Star regarding the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth's report on secure isolation.

On City TV regarding the arrest of a 15 year old for number of bank robberies.

In the CBA's National Magazine regarding children's rights in Canada.



JFCY Executive Director, Mary Birdsell. Image from "A Voice for the Voiceless; making the case for Children's Rights," an article in the Canadian Bar Association's National Magazine.



Students

JFCY hosts a number of students to provide opportunities for them to learn more about children's rights, to develop skills and to enhance the work of the office. This past year we have had a rich assortment of students who have come to us from a number of different settings. They have come on secondment from Blake's law firm, on academic placement from Ryerson University's Bachelor of Social Work and Masters of Social Work program, as volunteer law students through Pro Bono Students Canada, on licensing placement from the Law Practice Program, through an internship grant from the University of Western's Law School, on work placement from Seneca College's law clerk program, high school students through high school co-op placements and the Law in Action Within Schools program from the University of Toronto, and a YWCA supported administrative worker.

We also had the great fortune of having an articling student, who's dedication to our work has been an inspiration.

Volunteers

Our dedicated **Board Members** make our work possible. They bring a range of skills and a commitment to the advancement of social justice and children's rights.

The **Youth Advisory Committee & Public Legal Education Team** (YAC-PLE Team) is comprised of high-school, post-secondary students and law students, who create communications, including YouTube videos and zines, for young people to advise and inform them of their legal rights. Currently, the committee is focusing on a three part video on Sexting.

This year we did some restructuring to our **Policy Advisory Committee**, which is composed of expert scholars and professionals from a range of disciplines most relevant to our work. These advisors volunteer their time to share research, write or review materials and provide expert advice to the lawyers at JFCY. We benefit from their thinking on specific cases, on policy issues, and in the preparation for test cases.

The **Fundraising Committee** works to raise funds in a variety of ways to support the organization's work. We continue to need to fundraise to provide our Street Youth Legal Services program, and to support our extensive range of public legal education materials. Our Annual Fundraising event is an evening of music, fun and community building. In addition to helping us support our unfunded and underfunded work, it provides us with an opportunity to thank our large community of supporters: our volunteers, students, Board members, advisors, youth team members and others who help make our work possible.

JUSTICE
FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUTH