30 YEARS OF

# IMPACT

**Part of our 30th Anniversary Spotlight Series**

## Delivering Life-Changing Results

Impact at Children's Law Center begins with one child and ripples outward. It starts with Dakota, Elmer, RJ and thousands of other children whose lives changed because a Children's Law Center attorney was there at a critical moment. It expands through new laws that protects hundreds or thousands of children we may never meet. It is powered by donors, advocates and Children's Law Center staff working together so every DC child can grow up with a strong foundation of family, health and education.

**Because of supporters and partners like you, Children's Law Center has created lasting change for hundreds of thousands of DC children and families.**

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, we're shining a spotlight on the three pillars that have powered our work for decades – tenacity, innovation and impact. They fuel our work to build a strong foundation of family, health and education for every DC child – and position us to meet the challenges ahead.



DC 30 CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER

years of Tenacity, Innovation & Impact

# Protecting Progress

## This anniversary is a milestone — not a finish line. Our work will continue until every DC child has a strong foundation of family, health and education.

What sets Children's Law Center apart is that we don't give up until real results take hold.

A court order only matters if the leaking roof gets fixed. A new law is only successful when we see more children growing up safer and healthier. A systemic win matters when families can quickly access the support they need without being bogged down by government red tape. We keep fighting until change is real.

## Today, that commitment is more important than ever.

As DC faces rising unemployment, threats to family stability, budget cuts and harsh policy changes, we remain focused on protecting the progress we have made together — and making sure children and families are not left to face these challenges alone.

The road ahead may be more difficult, but our direction is clear. With our community beside us, we will keep bringing our tenacity and innovation to deepen our impact.








# Impact starts with a single child

**For three decades, Children's Law Center has stood with DC children and families at pivotal moments: helping a child exit foster care into a safe and stable home, making sure a student had the device they needed to communicate at school, or representing a family at an emergency court hearing when their landlord refused to fix the heat during a bitter cold spell.**

**60,000**

**children and families reached directly**

Ms. Harris' oldest daughter entered residential treatment following a behavioral health crisis. Her Children's Law Center lawyer made sure she continued receiving an education that met DC graduation requirements. We attended meetings, advocated for needed services and helped keep her on track academically.

Her daughter came back home and graduated on time. Today, she works with children with disabilities, drawing on her own experiences to support young people facing challenges of their own. As Ms. Harris recalls, her daughter says

> ***I know what I went through, and I can be that to someone else's child.***

At 12 years old, Keisha Hale survived Hurricane Katrina, spending four days in an attic with her family. The storm forced her family to relocate to DC. Shortly after, Keisha entered foster care and met Children's Law Center.

Keisha faced significant emotional challenges, including depression and thoughts of self-harm. With support from her Children's Law Center team, she gained access to mental health resources, educational support and the stability she needed to begin healing. Today, Keisha holds a master's degree, teaches fourth grade and is a published author.

In her recent poetry memoir, she shares her journey. Her message to young people navigating foster care:

> ***You are more than a foster child, and you can follow your dreams.***

By sharing her story, Keisha hopes to give a voice to experiences that often go unheard.

**This is the power of direct advocacy multiplied over decades. When children receive the support they need, they can do more than overcome obstacles. They grow up and strengthen our community.**



# Impact grows when we listen... and change systems

**Every day, our direct work with children and families shows us where systems are falling short — and what needs to change so all children can thrive. We listen to families, learn from their experiences and turn those lessons into stronger laws, policies and programs that reach children we may never meet.**

## Nearly 2,000 children have exited foster care into guardianship because of our advocacy.

In 2000, Children's Law Center was instrumental in passing the Foster Children's Guardianship Act of 2000. It allowed children who could not safely return to their parents to exit foster care into the custody of grandparents or other relatives. DC became the first place in the country to create this kind of reliable pathway to permanency.

After the law took effect, the number of DC children leaving foster care to live with grandparents and other extended family rose dramatically. Since 2001, nearly 2,000 children have exited foster care into guardianship — growing up with greater stability because of those policy changes.

## More than 75,000 students gain access to school-based behavioral health support.

In 2016, Children's Law Center helped pioneer a new public health model to bring behavioral health clinicians into DC schools. The number of students with access to a behavioral health clinician rose to more than 75,000 this past school year, three-quarters of DC's public school population. Today, we're fighting to protect the program so children can continue to receive support earlier, closer to where they learn and grow.

**When we turn individual lessons into systemic solutions, children today – and for generations to come – can grow up safer and healthier.**

**60+**

**laws passed**



# Impact lasts when we work together

**It takes a community to reach even more children and families and create change that lasts.**

## From 7 to 1.

Children with asthma are healthier because lawyers and doctors work together. How do we know? Through a unique data-sharing agreement with Children's National and AmeriHealth Caritas DC, we calculated the reduction in ER visits when we addressed housing conditions that were making children sick. On average, children's visits to the ER dropped from seven per year to less than one.

## 30,000 people trained.

Children's Law Center has trained pediatricians, judges, pro bono partners, parents, youth and community advocates to ensure the changes we've made last.

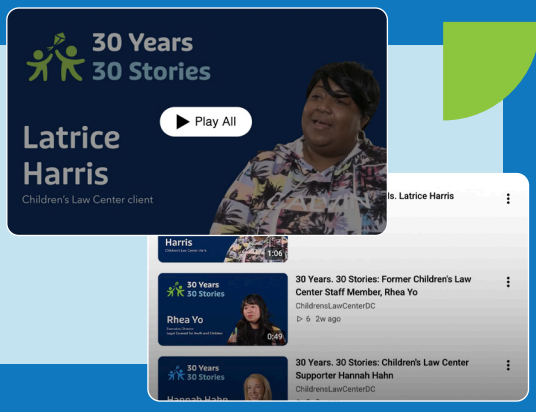
**Countless**

**partnerships help us expand what is possible**

**This is how impact reaches farther and lasts longer. When we work and learn together, children thrive.**

## Listen to more stories from across our Children's Law Center community:

Visit **childrenslawcenter.org/impact** to hear from the clients, alumni, partners and supporters who have shaped — and been shaped by — Children's Law Center's first 30 years.






# Thank You for Making Our Impact Possible

Your commitment helps us stay focused on our mission, even as new challenges arise. Because of you, Children's Law Center can solve children's urgent problems today, turn what we learn into broader reforms and keep improving the lives of DC children for generations to come.

As the safety net frays and the bureaucracy becomes harder to navigate, your support ensures children are not facing these obstacles alone.



**Interested in helping shape the next 30 years for DC children? Visit childrenslawcenter.org/impact or scan here to support our work and learn about ways you can get involved.**

**250 Massachusetts Avenue NW • Suite 350 • Washington, DC 20001 • www.childrenslawcenter.org**
**EIN #52-1961588 • CFC #43333 • United Way NCA #8070**