

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNSEL FOR CHILDREN



NEWS RELEASE

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131 ATTORNEYS CERTIFIED AS CHILD WELFARE LAW SPECIALISTS

DENVER, July, 2010 – The National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) has certified a new group of *Child Welfare Law Specialists (CWLS)*. These attorneys represent children, parents, and state welfare agencies in abuse, neglect, and dependency cases and were awarded specialty certification in child welfare law this summer. Legal specialty certification, similar to medical board certification, is awarded to attorneys who demonstrate proficiency in a recognized legal specialty by satisfying the requirements of good standing, substantial involvement, education, peer review, writing, and substantive knowledge. Specialists must pass a comprehensive child welfare law written examination. Eleven states certified attorneys in 2010 including the first group of CWLS from: Georgia, New Hampshire, New York, Texas, and Utah. A list of all NACC certified lawyers by state is available at www.NACCchildlaw.org. The 131 newly certified lawyers will be publicly recognized at the NACC's 33rd National Child Welfare, Juvenile, and Family Law Conference in Austin, TX, on October 22, 2010.

In 2001, the American Bar Association (ABA) recognized Child Welfare Law as a legal specialty. In 2004, the ABA accredited the NACC as the child welfare law certifying body. The U.S. Dept. of HHS Children's Bureau then sponsored the NACC's pilot program to certify the nation's first child welfare law specialists. It has since been endorsed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and the Conference of Chief Justices/Conference of State Court Administrators (CCJ/COSCA).

Child welfare law specialty certification is designed to improve outcomes for children and families in the foster care and court systems by improving the quality of legal services delivered. It is a component of the NACC and federal government initiatives to produce safety, permanence, and well-being for our nation's foster care population.

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