

A Revivification of Professional Focus on the Rights of the Child

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The specialty of child forensic psychology focuses on the legal contours of the psychological wellbeing of children (Condie, 2003; Grisso, 2004). Psychologists who work in the domain of children and the law offer expertise as researchers, policy-makers, consultants, evaluators, clinicians, clinical supervisors, educators, and administrators. The field of child psychology and law encompasses a diverse set of issues (Melton, 2008).

Children become involved in the legal system via many avenues (Oberlander & Goldstein, 2001; Oberlander, Goldstein, & Ho, 2001). Examples include educational entitlements, disability rights and entitlements, probate matters (divorce custody, protection from abuse and neglect, protection from exploitation, foster-care placements, parental-rights-termination proceedings), international adoptions, juvenile-justice matters (Miranda comprehension, competence to stand trial, criminal responsibility, diminished capacity), adolescent independent autonomy in consenting to a limited range of medical procedures, privacy rights, freedom of expression and religion, refugee rights, and rights to safety and security in home and school settings.

Competent practice in the domain of children and the law is a rewarding challenge that requires a high level of training in psychology and child development, and familiarity with children's rights. This section of the journal provides articles that will help to familiarize and update practitioners with the science, the legal framework and reviews, and theoretical and conceptual data that support practice.

Authors are encouraged to contribute to this journal by submitting articles that cover not only traditional topics but also those less well covered in the specialty. To offer a few examples, much is known about the impact of physical and sexual abuse, but less is known about the impact of child neglect. Many authors have dealt with child-custody matters, but fewer have reviewed or researched the psychological wellbeing of child refugees who have relocated to safer regions. There is much emphasis on evaluations in the forensic psychology literature, but less is known about prevention and consultation efforts. Children's rights traditionally are accompanied by responsibilities. What do we mean, from a developmental standpoint, when we discuss expectations or responsibilities of children in a variety of settings—or as they assert their rights, consult with psychologists, or seek the aid of attorneys in protecting their rights? To summarize, we

seek journal submissions that contribute to the science of well-researched topics, but we also aim to publish articles on newly emerging and expanded roles for practitioners and researchers.

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