

SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL
Los Angeles, CA

Children's Rights Clinic

The Children's Rights Clinic provides representation to low-income children in the areas of school discipline, special education and other education related issues. Students have the opportunity in a real-life context to hone critical lawyering skills such as interviewing, negotiating, counseling, pre trial litigation and oral advocacy.

The Children's Rights Clinic is a five-unit course and graded. Students work on school discipline and special education cases wherein they interview and counsel clients, investigate and develop facts, interview witnesses, conduct legal research, draft complaints, negotiate with school personnel, and, if necessary, represent clients at hearings, ADR meetings or other court proceedings. These hearings provide the opportunity for clinic students to submit oral and written argument, examine witnesses, and present evidence before the school board. If appropriate, clinic students may have the opportunity to represent students on appeal before the county board of education and in delinquency or dependency courts.

What types of cases do students work on?

There are over 800,000 identified students with unique needs in LA County. Many of these students also face challenges of bullying and discrimination, housing instability, abuse or neglect. Ensuring equity in education is the primary goal of the Children's Rights Clinic. Clinic students provide direct representation of students and their families, primarily enforcing the law that ensures appropriate supports for students in need. Clinic students also work with community groups to advocate for better and more equitable educational opportunities for youth.



Someone real is sitting there and asking questions, responding, challenging you. You're the lawyer now. You're not in a classroom. This isn't a simulation. What are you going to do to help?



- Vice Dean Julie Waterstone,
Founder of CRC

Class Meets:

Wednesdays, 6–8 pm
OR
Tuesdays, 1:30–3:30 pm



Weekly Hours

Required:

15 hours/week
(includes class time)



Eligibility

Requirements:

- Good academic standing
- Complete first year of study
- Must have taken or be taking Evidence concurrently



How will the Children's Rights Clinic benefit my education and career?

Clinical experience is a critical part of every law student's growth and development. Whereas the classroom will teach you the analytical skills to assess facts and apply the law, the clinic will teach you how to put those skills into practice through direct representation of live clients. In CRC, you will develop and practice necessary lawyering skills that can be applied to any area of law and will work to make you practice ready, day one of your legal career. In CRC you will have both the opportunity and support to practice your skills, develop your own professional identity and build your confidence as a soon-to-be lawyer.



Did you know?

Professor Jenny Rodriguez-Fee is an alum of the Children's Rights Clinic. She was part of the first clinic cohort under the mentorship of Vice Dean Julie Waterstone. During her time in the clinic, she was able to persuade a county school board not to subject its students to random drug tests through blood draw, arguing that such a method was an unconstitutional violation of students' privacy. It was her first opportunity to represent clients and their interests and the first time she actually believed in herself as a future lawyer. She works to help each clinic student obtain that same confidence during their time in CRC.



Interested in applying?

Fill out the application form on the [Southwestern Legal Clinics portal page](https://swlaw.sharepoint.com/sites/clinic) at swlaw.sharepoint.com/sites/clinic or by scanning the QR code.

For more information about the Children's Rights Clinic, please visit www.swlaw.edu/childrensrightsclinic.

