

CFCR's Mission Moments Newsletter



From Council for Children's Rights <info@cfcrights.org>
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Juneteenth: Celebrating Resilience & Fighting for Justice

Juneteenth marks the day that the last enslaved African Americans finally learned that they were free on June 19th, 1865- two years after slavery was abolished by President Lincoln in the Emancipation Proclamation, issued in 1863. **On this holiday, we celebrate resilience, while also remembering that even now, the fight for justice continues for Black Americans.**



Too many times, children of color disproportionately face barriers to resources and opportunities due to discrimination embedded in our legal, criminal, healthcare, and education systems. At Council, we envision a community that treats all children with fairness, compassion, and respect. Our systemic work acts towards ensuring that every child may experience equitable opportunity regardless of their race, ethnicity, or background.

In our own community, there are thousands of children who need someone to stand up for them and protect their rights. When children interact with the juvenile justice system, they should be treated with respect and provided holistic support that addresses the root cause of the issues, rather than hefty punishments. Our Children's Defense Team approaches all of our child-client's needs including family, physical and mental health, housing, and education. **This ensures that we are providing our children with true justice, allowing them to feel heard and seen, returning to their community feeling empowered.**

Our Research and Policy Team tackles the challenges of these systems at large, amplifying the importance of equitable opportunity for all. **By advocating for changes within these systems, we are able to protect future generations, while also honoring those who paved the way for justice in the past.**

[Want to learn more about Juneteenth and how to celebrate with your family?](#)

[Check out these resources:](#)

- [Understanding and Celebrating Juneteenth](#) by the National Museum of African American History and Culture
- [5 Ways to Celebrate Juneteenth With Your Family](#) by PBS
- [How to Celebrate Juneteenth](#) by GLSEN

Support a Brighter Summer for Our Children



Summer should be a time filled with fun, but for many of our children, summer is an especially difficult time.

When school is not in session, several of our child-clients lose access to resources including supportive teachers, school staff, and friends. Furthermore, they may not be able to access food or may be facing difficult family discord.

With your support, Council is able to continue providing services that provide our children with a voice and hope for a brighter future. In the last year, we served 2,222 children, 51% of those cases were related to mental health alone.

Will you be the one to speak up for our children? Will you be the one to fight for their right to a future full of opportunity?

Donate to Provide a Brighter Summer!

Council Changemakers

This month we are excited to spotlight our Education Law Program Assistant, Estephani Cruz Santana

**ESTEPHANI
CRUZ
SANTANA**

Program Assistant,
ELP



What led you to Council and how long have you been here? I started at Council in September of last year, so about eight months now. For as long as I can remember, I have always had a passion for helping others. After college, I wanted to work in a field where I could do that and build relationships with our clients so that they felt heard. At Council, I get to do that and so much more.

Tell us about your role here: I am the Program Assistant for the Education Law Program (ELP) at Council. The ELP team assists students facing educational challenges who are in the juvenile delinquency or child welfare systems (Education Navigation), to parents and guardians of students who have special education, Section 504, or discipline-related issues (through Community Referrals), and to the community at-large through free training sessions (Trainings and Systemic Work). I have the pleasure of supporting the ELP attorneys with cases that have any of the latter and I work closely with Spanish-speaking parents and families.

What inspires you about Council? The families we serve. Every child, parent, client, etc., that we serve has a story. Within each of their individual stories, Council is the impact character. At Council, we advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves or need that extra support. In all, we wish to have a lasting impact to all those we serve.

What do you wish people knew about Council? I wish that people knew the intense passion, loyal dedication, and tireless work ethic that all people at Council have. While Council does have distinct teams that handle a variety of cases from custody to education to delinquency and mental health, each person who works on a case is honored to do so.

Where are you from or where did you grow up? I was born in Atlanta, GA but my family moved to Charlotte, NC when I was 10. My mom is from Mexico, I recently got to travel there, and it was such an amazing and beautiful experience. I hope to have another trip in the future.

Outside of work, how do you like to spend your time? Outside of work, I like to spend time with my family, friends, and my significant other. Whether it is taking a walk on the local nature trail, grabbing dinner, having a fun game night, or simply enjoying each other's company, it is always a good time.

Get Involved with Council

Spread the Word: Please help us share our mission with your friends and family by forwarding them this newsletter. We are also looking for community members and philanthropists to help accelerate our fundraising efforts. If you're interested in learning how you can get involved, email advancement@cfcrights.org.

Volunteer: We have [multiple opportunities to volunteer](#), most notably with our Custody Advocacy Program (CAP). You do not need to be a lawyer or have legal experience to volunteer. Email volunteer@cfcrights.org for more information.

Give: You can [donate online](#) or by sending a check to: ATTN: Council for Children's Rights, 601 East 5th Street, Suite 450, Charlotte, NC 28202. Email advancement@cfcrights.org with any questions and to learn more.



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