



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12/29/22

**THE CENTER FOR THE RIGHTS
OF ABUSED CHILDREN**

**Aimee Jolley
The Center for the Rights of Abused Children
aimee@thecenterforchildren.org
(602) 689-4052**

**Arizona Governor's Office Grants \$1,000,000 to The Center for the Rights
of Abused Children to expand pro bono legal services for teens and
youth in foster care.**

Phoenix, Ariz. – The Office of the Governor has awarded \$1,000,000 to The Center for the Rights of Abused Children to provide pro bono legal support to teens and youth in foster care. The provided funds were made available through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund in the American Rescue Plan Act.

During the pandemic, Arizona's placement and licensing agencies reported a record number of closures in foster care licenses. With fewer families available to help, more children and teens are facing a particularly acute challenge in group homes. Funding will be used to help these abandoned and abused children and youth who need extra education support, aging out support, and other assistance in the wake of the pandemic. The Center for the Rights of Abused Children Pro Bono Children's Law Clinic provides a unique support for Arizona's children and teens in foster care not provided anywhere else.

"Arizona is grateful for foster and kinship care families who selflessly support our state's most vulnerable children," said Governor Doug Ducey. "Since our first day in office, we've prioritized ensuring Arizona children in foster care have the support they need, including legislation signed earlier this year to increase the kinship care stipend for families in Arizona. We're proud to invest in The Center for the Rights of Abused Children which has a proven track record of providing free emergency legal representation to abused and abandoned children in Arizona. This life-saving work is crucial to meet the needs of our state's most vulnerable children and give them the opportunity to grow up in safe, loving homes."

"With this funding, we can serve thousands more children who face the prospect of aging out of the system," said Darcy Olsen, CEO of The Center for the Rights of Abused Children. "Our goal is to turn no child away."

Direct services will include helping arrange evaluations for, and access to, special education services, to helping older youth reconstruct educational records to ensure they receive all earned credits and help them get on track toward graduation or successful independent living. The clinic will also help expunge delinquency and non-dangerous criminal convictions – a right available to all children when they turn 18, but a right few children in foster care can exercise without the benefit of parents or attorneys. A clean record will help these youth pursue higher education, join the armed

services, find employment, and more. The clinic will also help youth obtain copies of their birth certificates or social security documentation. Obtaining these documents will help open doors to scholarship, free tuition, and other education programs and helps available to children who have been in foster care.

Children and teens in need of assistance should reach out to Kileen Lindgren, kileen@thecenterforchildren.org.

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About The Center for The Rights of Abused Children: The Center for the Rights of Abused Children fights for better futures for America's abused children with a pro bono Children's Law Clinic, common-sense reforms and public interest litigation. Join our life-saving work to end violence against children today, thecenterforchildren.org

Contact: For press opportunities, please contact Aimee Jolley: (602) 689-4052 or aimee@thecenterforchildren.org.