

Washington State, Fathers Engagement Project Region II south

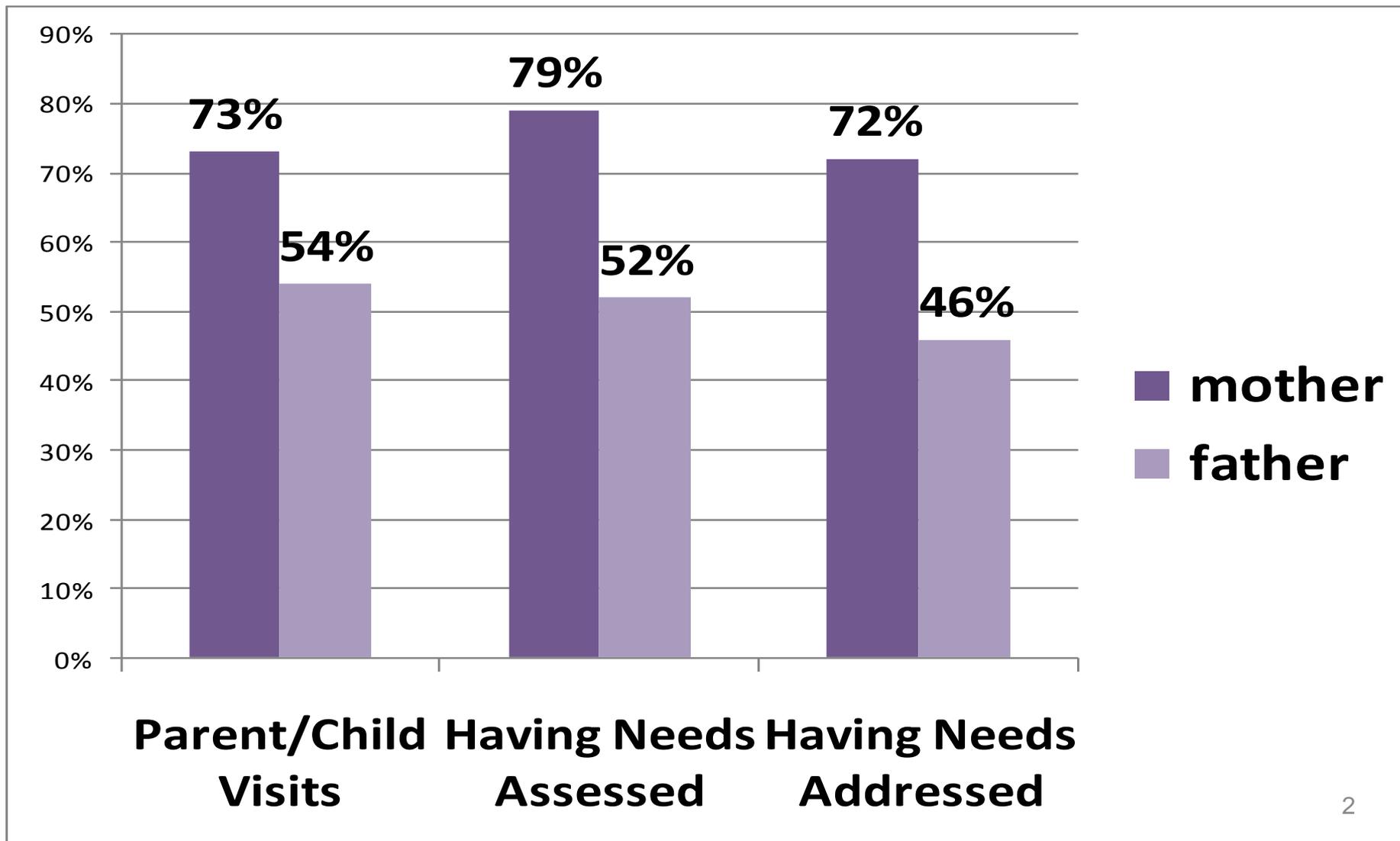
Northeast Family Strengthening Conference
September 26 – 27, 2011

Without a Compass? Models to Help Dads Navigate Child Support & Child Welfare Systems

LaRon Burris, Father Group Facilitator, Contractor

Child & Family Services Review

2007-2008 Case level Findings (32 states; 2069 cases)



QIC-NRF Initial and Expanded Focus

- **Initial primary focus per the request for application:**
 - Field test a 20-week peer-facilitated father support group across the four sites
- **Expanded focus within 3 months of implementation:**
 - Increased documentation of identification, location and contact efforts related to nonresident fathers
 - Provision of training and skill building to social workers and other professionals
 - Engagement in cross-system efforts

Summary of Recruitment & Eligibility and Other Findings in Region IV

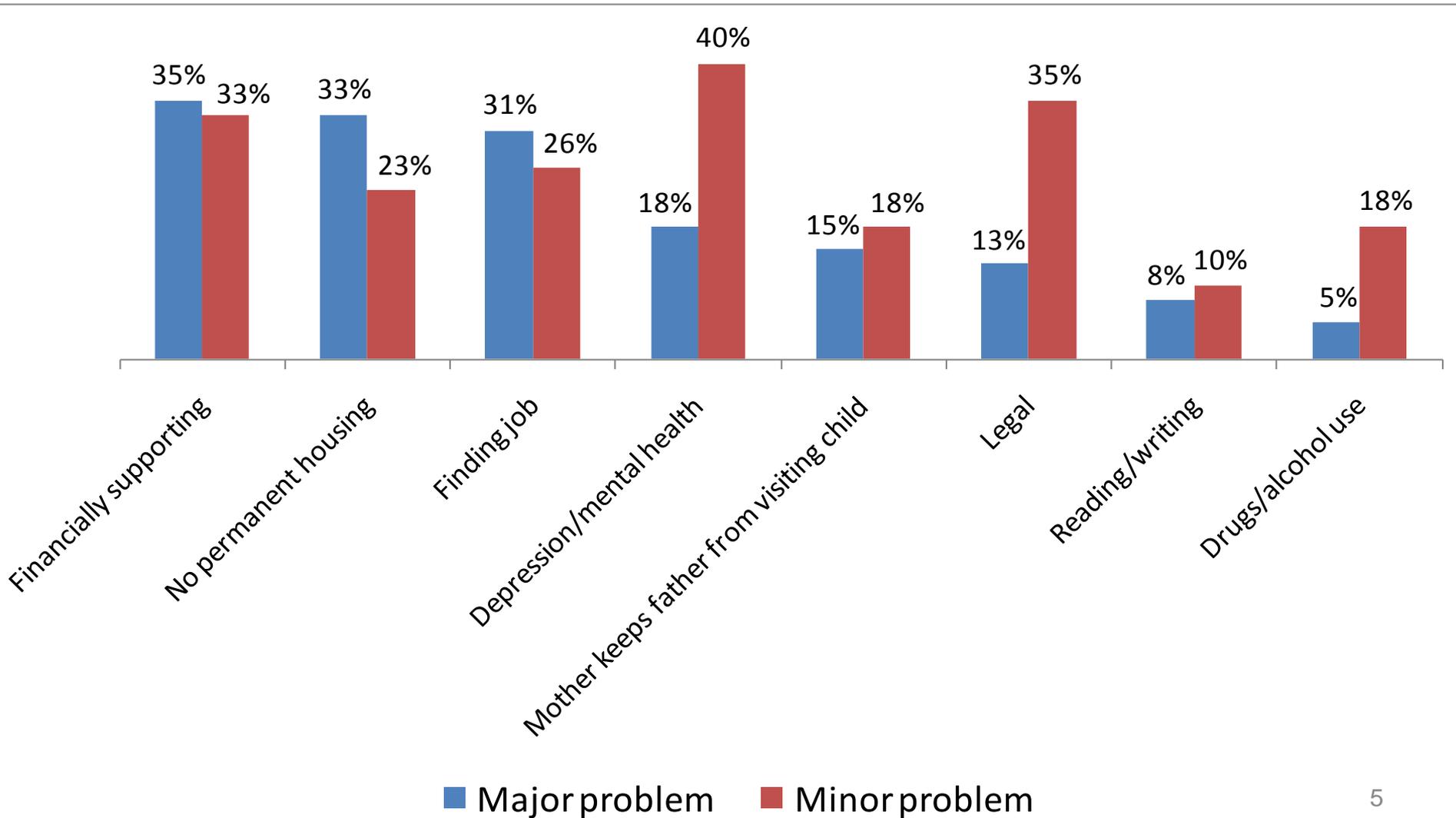
Program fathers were offered:

- 20-week father support and educational group
- 12 structured week curriculum covering topics identified as best practice
- 8 meetings were topics the fathers identified or the group agreed upon
- Meals & transportation support
- Some support with navigating systems

The 12-week curriculum:

1. Introduction
2. Overview of the Child Welfare System
3. Service Planning in the Child Welfare System
4. Supporting Your Children
5. Shared Parenting
6. Understanding Your Children
7. Identifying /Accessing Resources
8. Legal Advocacy /Court Etiquette
9. Visiting with Your Children
10. Taking Care of You
11. The Role/Culture in Parenting
12. Workforce Readiness

Many fathers self-identify problems at intake (WA data)



Fathers Self-Report Post Program: Father's Abilities

	% who agree or strongly agree
This program is helping me reach my goals for my family and me.	93%
Fathers in this program learn from each other.	93%
This program has helped me improve my parenting skills.	86%
My ideas and opinions were welcomed and included in the program.	85%
This program has helped me reduce stress in my life.	57%
Having a male researcher as the first person to contact me about the program was one of the reasons I decided to get involved.	50%

For more information contact:

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Legal Information for Families Today
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New York, New York 10013
212.343.1122

www.LIFToonline.org

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Without a Compass?

Models to Help Dads Navigate Child Support & Child Welfare Systems

By: Jameelah J. Hayes, Esq.
LIFT, Legal Director

What is LIFT?

Overview & Mission

LIFT's Mission: To enhance access to justice for children and families by providing legal information, community education, and compassionate guidance, while promoting system-wide reform of the courts and public agencies.

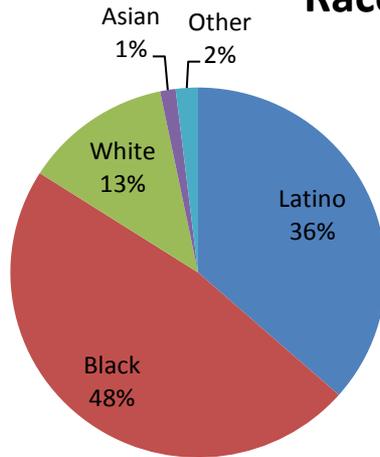
All of LIFT's programs empower unrepresented litigants to successfully self-advocate in Family Court:

- **Family Court-based Help Centers and Education & Information Sites**
- **36 multilingual Legal Resource Guides**
- **Family Law Information Telephone & Email Hotlines**
- **Legal Education Webinar Program**
- **Family Legal Center**

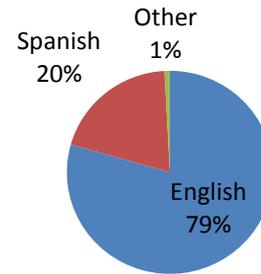


2010 Demographics of Families Served Across LIFT Programs

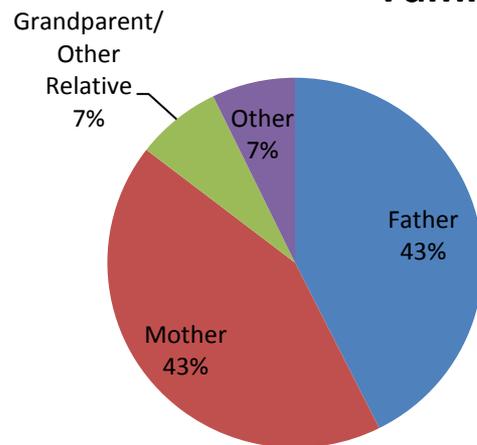
Race/Ethnicity



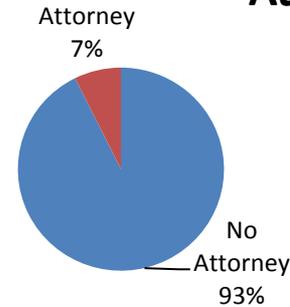
Language



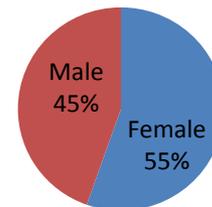
Family Member



Attorney



Gender



What Cases are Heard in Family Court?

- Abuse or Neglect of Children
- Adoption
- Child Support
- Custody
- Guardianship
- Juvenile Delinquency
- Order of Protection
- Paternity
- PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision)
- Spousal Support
- Visitation
- Voluntary Placement of Child into Foster Care

Family Law Information Telephone & Email Hotlines

On the Hotlines:

- Receive answers to their questions about New York State family law and guidance about Family Court procedure
- Receive referrals
- Schedule a one-on-one meeting at LIFT's Family Legal Center located at LIFT's community or Court-based locations

Family Law Information Telephone & Email Hotlines

212-343-1122

www.LIFThotline.org

Call Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm. Email
Anytime



Family Court Help Centers and Education & Information Sites

EDUCATION & INFORMATION SITES: The Education & Information (EI) Sites are located in the lobbies and waiting areas of the Family Courts in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens. At the EI Sites, bilingual (Spanish/English) Site Coordinators provide answers to all family law questions. All of our original multilingual, easy-to-understand Legal Resource Guides are available at the Sites.

Family Court Help Centers and Education & Information Sites

Bronx Family Court, 900 Sheridan Ave., 7th Fl & Lower Main

Brooklyn Family Court, 330 Jay St., 5th Floor & 6th Floor

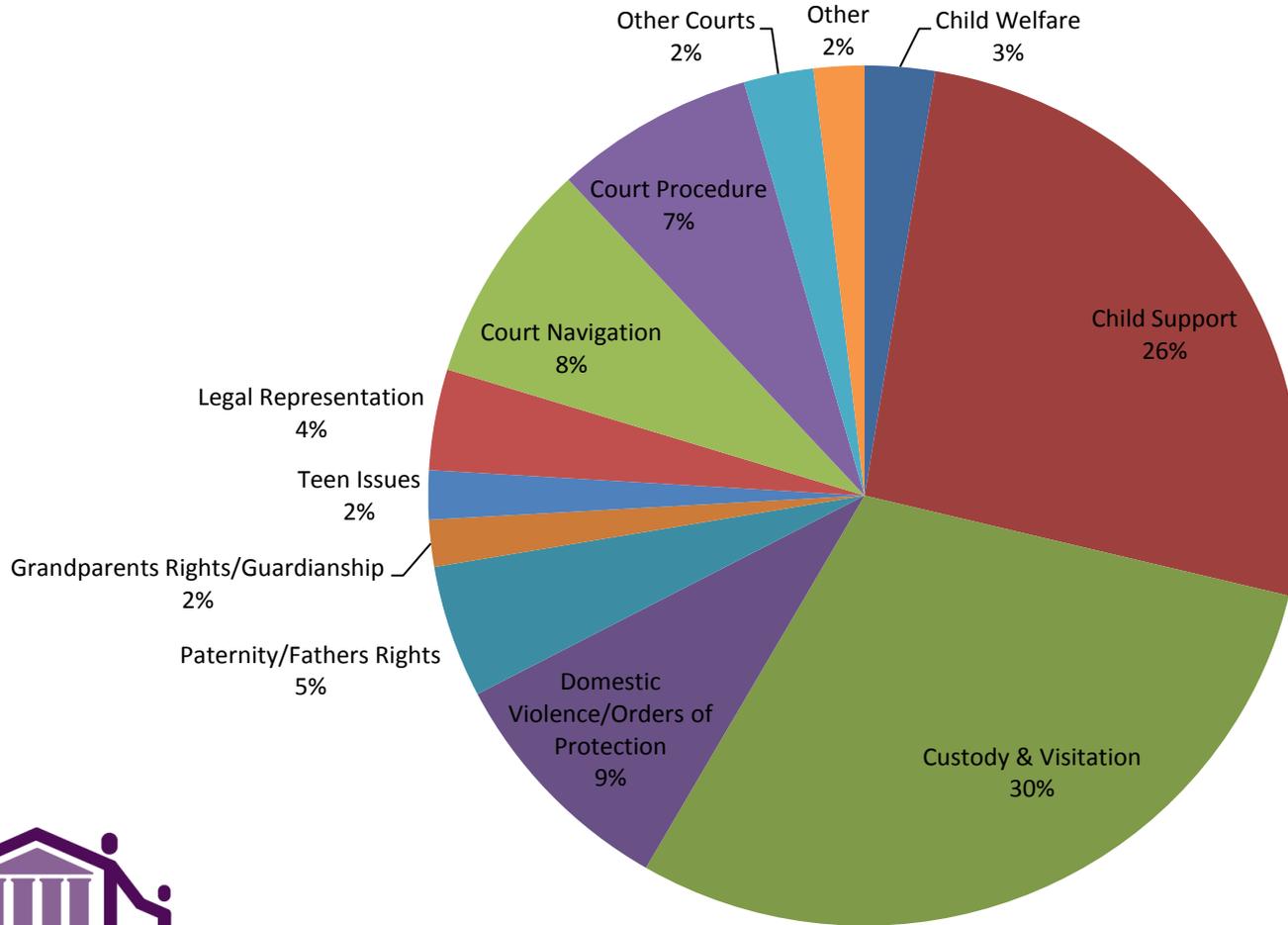
Manhattan Family Court, 60 Lafayette St., Lobby

Queens Family Court, 151-20 Jamaica Ave., Lobby



Areas of Inquiry

Help Centers and Education & Information Sites and Hotline



Family Legal Center

The Family Legal Center (FLC) offers intensive one-on-one legal information and community based services. FLC provides peer support groups, financial literacy education, and high-impact for unrepresented parents and other caregivers involved in child support and visitation cases.

Consumer Feedback

- 97% of participants stated that coming to the Family Legal Center was helpful
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy to get the information they needed
- 100 % agreed or strongly agreed that the information made a big difference in helping them understand their rights
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed that they know what to do in their Family Court case



The **Family Legal Center** is open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.
Call the Hotline to make an appointment – **212-343-1122**

Legal Resource Guides

- LIFT produces 36 original Legal Resource Guides.
- The guides are available in eight different languages.
- The guides are distributed at the Help Center and EI Sites, Family Legal Center's Resource Library, on LIFT's website, and are e-mailed to Hotline callers.
- LIFT also produces a coloring and activity book for children called *Pat the Pigeon Goes to Family Court*, in which Pat is given a tour of the courthouse by Judge Friendly; and an illustrated book for teenagers about the juvenile justice system called, *When I was Before the Judge*.



A thumbnail image of a document titled 'Child Support A Guide for Parents Who Pay'. The document includes the LIFT logo, contact information (Hotline: (212) 343-1122, Website: www.LIFTonline.org), and several sections of text explaining child support concepts like 'Definitions of key terms', 'What will happen when I go to court?', 'Why did I get papers saying I must go to court?', 'Who can file a child support petition?', and 'Can I get a lawyer for my child support case?'. A dollar sign icon is also present.

Legal Education Webinars

- LIFT is developing internet-accessible and interactive series of webinars on varying Family Court and family law topics.
- LIFT's first Legal Education Webinar will address the legal issues relative caregivers may face in Family Court and will be released by 2012. Sign up for LIFT's e-newsletter on our website to learn more.



To Learn More about LIFT:

Visit - www.LIFTonline.org

Call - 212.343.1122



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Justice for all.
One family at a time.

WHO WE ARE | OUTCOMES AND IMPACT | GET HELP | GET INVOLVED | DONATE

Every day, thousands of families attempt to navigate the complex Family Courts...

LIFT is here to help - in the courthouse and in the community.

...without legal representation.

Justice for all.
One family at a time.

Get Free Legal Information

Call our Hotline
212-343-1122

Ask a Question

Visit our Family Legal Center

Attend a Workshop or Support Group

Donate to LIFT

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@LIFTonline

LIFT uses Facebook and Twitter to communicate online and connect with organization stakeholders and the people we serve.