

MELISSA D. CARTER
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Professional Experience

Emory University School of Law

Atlanta, Georgia

*Clinical Professor of Law, Barton Center Public Policy & Legislative Advocacy Clinics
Executive Director, Barton Child Law and Policy Center, December 2010 - present*

Administer multi-disciplinary clinical law program consisting of 4 in-house legal clinics enrolling 8-10 law and other graduate students each semester in direct practice and system design and improvement efforts related to children and families involved with the juvenile court, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems. Responsibilities of role include coordination of clinical faculty and supervision of staff and students; recruitment, selection, and direct supervision of early career post-graduate fellows; development of curricula; oversight of summer internship program; identifying fundraising opportunities, securing external funding, and managing the Barton Center's budget. Teach Child Welfare Law & Policy and Family Law I and II, directly supervise Policy and Legislative Advocacy Clinics, and serve on various faculty committees. Direct external communications, including media advocacy, strategic partnerships, and professional education opportunities. Provide consultation and technical assistance to government leaders and legal practitioners. Participate in local, state, and national policy development, system reform, and professional training.

Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children, State of Georgia

Macon and Atlanta, Georgia

Director, February 2010 – November 2010

Acting Director, January 2010 – February 2010

Deputy Director, August 2007 – January 2010

Administered starting budget of \$1.2 million and 10 staff to fulfill statutory mandates to provide independent oversight of state child welfare system and coordination of activities related to child injury and fatality review and prevention. Established legislative and policy priorities consistent with agency strategic plan and directed staff efforts to respond to public concerns about Georgia's child protection system, conducted systemic evaluation, and promoted best practices and balanced reform. Provided education and training on child welfare issues to government leaders, legislators, agency administrators, and child advocacy organizations.

Administrative Office of the Courts of Georgia, Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for Children

Atlanta, Georgia

Director of Legal Training, October 2006 – August 2007

State implementation of federal Court Improvement Program (CIP) training grant to improve the processing of civil child abuse and neglect cases. Extensive research, writing and presentation on child welfare matters. Analysis of state and federal legislation, policy, and regulations related to juvenile law. Regular interaction with

juvenile court judges, child welfare agency administrators, attorneys, and other juvenile court stakeholders.

Legislative Advocacy

Drafted dozens of state legislative proposals affecting children in the Georgia juvenile justice and child welfare systems, including a comprehensive revision to the state's juvenile code. Served as advisor to three gubernatorial administrations on foster care and adoption reform agenda. Provide support to lawmakers on technical and conceptual proposals addressing child welfare and juvenile justice issues.

Selected Presentations

Aligning Efforts to Improve the Foster Care Experience, U.S. Children's Bureau State Team Planning Meeting, Washington, D.C. March 2020.

Juvenile Justice Reform Roundtable, Georgia Grantmakers Association, Atlanta, GA, February 2020.

Child Welfare Refresher and Updates on the Child Abuse Registry, Office of State Administrative Hearings, Athens, GA February 2020.

Courageous Conversations: Quality Legal Representation, The Summit: Georgia's Child Welfare Conference, Alpharetta, GA, November 2019.

State of Child Welfare, The Summit: Georgia's Child Welfare Conference, Alpharetta, GA, November 2019.

2019 Legislative Session Report and 2020 Legislative Preview, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Via Webinar, November 2019.

State of Child Welfare, Embark Georgia Leadership Conference, Columbus, GA October 2019.

Family First Prevention Services Act, Annual Special Assistant Attorney General Conference, Buford, GA October 2019.

Juvenile Justice Reform (panel), University of Georgia Law School Law Symposium, Athens, GA October 2019.

Program Faculty, Reasonable Efforts Judicial Academy, U.S. Children's Bureau, Nashville, TN September 2019.

Opening Plenary, *Data-Driven and Evidence-Based Practice and Policymaking: Implications for Child Welfare*, U.S. Children's Bureau Child Welfare Evaluation Summit, Washington, D.C. August 2019.

The Family First Prevention Services Act: What the Act Means for Georgia's Child Welfare System, Georgia System of Care Conference, Stone Mountain, GA June 2019.

Families First Legislation (panel), 24th Annual Rosalynn Carter Georgia Mental Health Forum, Carter Center, Atlanta, GA May 2019.

Legislative Update, Council of Juvenile Court Judges, St. Simons, GA May 2019.

Child Welfare Policy Framework, University of Michigan Law School Bergstrom Fellowship Program, Ann Arbor, MI May 2019.

Quality Legal Representation for Children and Parents in Dependency Proceedings, Family Court of Delaware Joint Judicial and Commissioners Retreat, Rehoboth Beach, DE May 2019.

Quality Legal Representation, flash presentation, U.S. Children's Bureau State Team Planning Meeting, Washington, D.C. April 2019.

Legal Representation as a Prevention Strategy, Casey Family Programs Judicial Leaders Convening, Atlanta, GA Feb. 2018.

Predictive Analytics in Child Welfare, Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for Children Advisory Committee, Atlanta, GA December 2018.

Impact of State Policy on Child Welfare, Casey Family Programs Board of Trustees Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA November 2018.

Fostering Freedom: A Policy Conversation about Religious Exemptions in Child Welfare, National Association of Counsel for Children 41st Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX August 2018.

CIP Talks, "How Judges and Attorneys Help Strengthen Families," co-sponsored by the Children's Bureau, National Center for State Courts, and Capacity Building Center for Courts, Williamsburg, VA February 2018.

State of Child Welfare, Georgia Child Protection Summit, Atlanta, GA November 2017.

Child Welfare Policy and Legislative Update, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA September 2017.

Policy Analysis of Statutory Child Maltreatment Definitions, Casey Family Programs Strategic Consulting Region 4 Convening, Orlando, Florida, August 2017.

Acting as an Agent of Change, National Association of Counsel for Children Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA August 2017.

Federal Child Welfare Policy Changes, North American Council on Adoptable Children Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA July 2017.

Citizen Review Panels as Agents of Policy Change, National Citizen Review Panel Annual Conference, Anchorage, AK May 2017.

Breaking the Cradle to Prison Pipeline, United Way Connecting for Community Change Conference, Atlanta, GA April 2017.

Policy Access Points at the State and Federal Levels, JUSTGeorgia Institute, Macon, GA June 2016.

Navigating Special Immigrant Juvenile Status in Georgia, Panelist, Institute of Continuing Legal Education, Atlanta, GA February 2016.

Protecting Children in Danger: Legal Protections for Unaccompanied Minors and Victims of Maltreatment, Georgia Department of Education Homeless Liaisons Conference, Atlanta, GA June 2015.

State of Child Welfare, Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocate Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA March 2015.

Selected Publications

Melissa D. Carter and Courtney McMickens, *A Matter of Family: Finding Justice Within the Child Welfare System*, in *Social (In)Justice* (Ruth Shim and Sarah Vinson, eds. 2020) (forthcoming).

Melissa D. Carter, *Bending the Arc Toward Justice: The Current Era of Juvenile Justice Reform in Georgia*, __ Ga. L. Rev. __, 1133-1167 (forthcoming).

Melissa D. Carter, *The Need for a Prevention Throughline in Family Policy*, *Children's Bureau Express* (Apr. 2020), <https://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=website.viewArticles&issueid=215§ionid=2&articleid=5540>.

Melissa D. Carter, *Pursuing the Best Interest of Children*, *Children's Bureau Express* (Nov. 2019), <https://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=website.viewArticles&issueid=211§ionid=2&articleid=5445>.

Melissa Dorris Carter and Andrew Barclay, Op-Ed, *We Want Kids to Grow Up in Safe Families, so Let's Measure That*, *Chronicle of Social Change*, Nov. 6, 2018.

Melissa D. Carter, *Beyond the Courtroom: A Plea and a Plan for Children's Attorneys to Engage in Policy Advocacy*, *The Guardian*, Fall 2017.

Melissa D. Carter, Fulton County Juvenile Court Truancy Process Evaluation, commissioned report, Barton Child Law and Policy Center, September 2016.

Melissa D. Carter, Christopher E. Church & Thomas B. Hammond, *Kinship Care: A Child's Home Away from Home*, The Kinship Parenting Toolbox 59-63 (Kim Phagan-Hansel ed., EMK Press) (2015).

Professional and Civic Activities

- Vice-Chair, Juvenile Justice Advisory State Advisory Group, appointed by Gov. Nathan Deal, 2014-present
- Member, Georgia Youth Opportunities Initiative Leadership Team
- Co-Chair, Children's Justice Act Taskforce, 2010-present. Leading efforts of a statewide citizen review panel in the discharge of its duties as a federally-mandated multidisciplinary taskforce to improve the investigation, prosecution and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect
- Member, Board of Directors, Multi-Agency Alliance for Children, 2016-present (Secretary 2016-2019)
- Member, Advisory Committee, Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for Children, 2007-present
- Member, Advisory Committee, ChildKind, Inc., 2014-present
- 2013 cohort, Annie E. Casey Atlanta Leaders for Results Program, a ten-month executive leadership program designed in partnership with the Atlanta Civic Site to increase the pool of diverse leaders in Atlanta.
- Clinical Legal Education Association, 2010-present
- Member, National Association of Counsel for Children, 2002-present
- Member, State Bar of Georgia, 2002-present
 - Co-Chair, Children and the Courts Committee
 - Member, State Bar of Georgia Formal Advisory Opinion Board, 2014-present
- Member, Georgia Association of Counsel for Children

Education and Admissions

Education

- J.D., 2002, University of Illinois College of Law, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois
- B.S. 1999, Psychology, *Summa Cum Laude*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Bar Admissions

Illinois (2002); Georgia (2004)