



cl@n childlaw

Community Law Advice Network cl@n
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Tel: 075 275 66682 E-mail: info@clanchildlaw.org

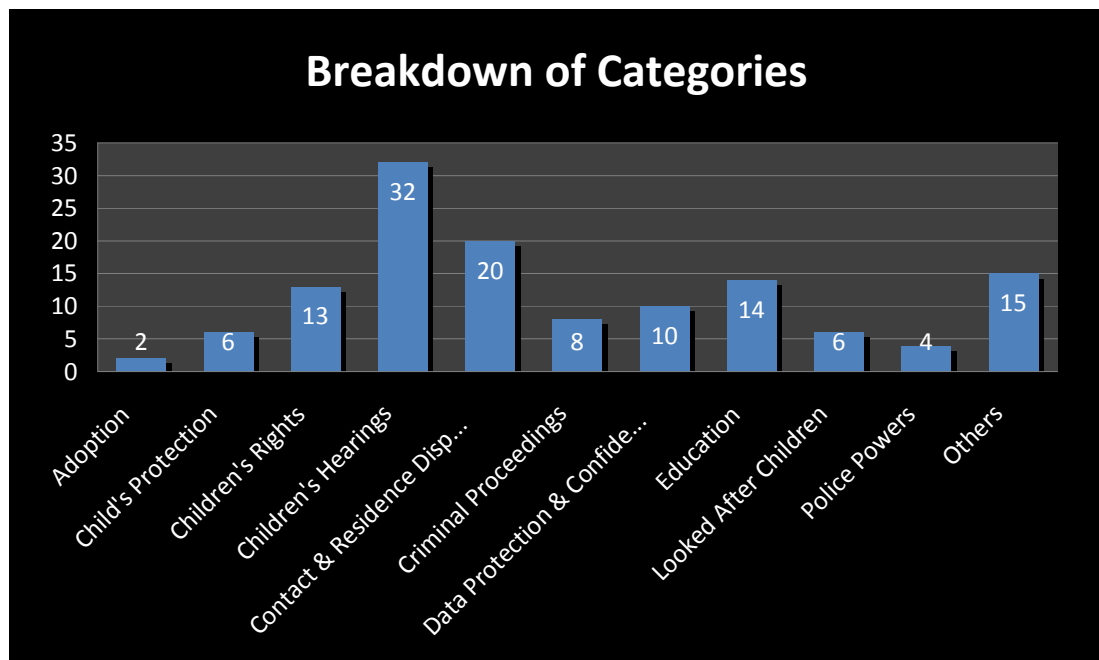
Patron: Sheriff Gail Patrick

ANNUAL REPORT April 2008-May 2009

We are an ambitious, exciting and unique outreach law centre, delivering free legal advice and representation to children and young people in Edinburgh and the Lothians. We aim to give practical effect to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, enabling children to participate fully in decision making processes which affect them and allowing their views to be heard. We help Children and Young People up to the age of 18, or 21 if they have been Looked After Children.

The first year of cl@n childlaw has been stimulating and challenging. We are delighted to have put our vision into practice and the outcomes achieved are remarkable. It is clear that the need which we identified exists. Through delivery of our unique legal advocacy service, we have successfully met that need, within the limits of our resources. Our challenge remains being able to meet that need efficiently and effectively. We plan to expand our operations as our resources increase, since the current need exceeds our present capacity.

WHAT KIND OF HELP DID CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE NEED?



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Registered Office 1 Rutland Court, Edinburgh EH3 8EY Company Limited by guarantee No. 335011

Registered Charity Number: SC039156

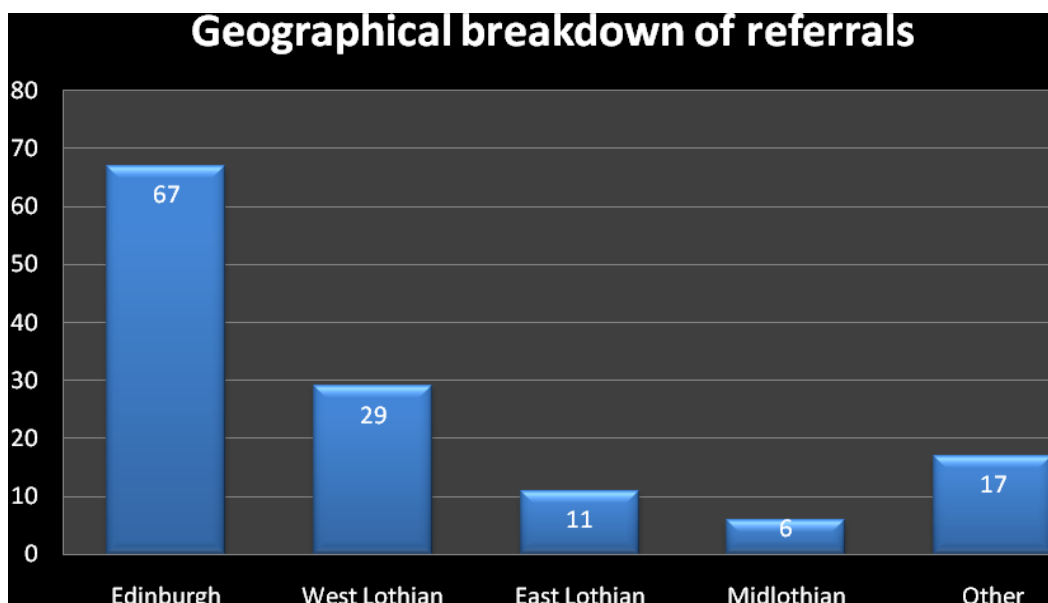
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The “Others” category includes matters such as *guardianship, rehabilitation of offenders, foster care allowance, aliment, benefits, consent to go abroad, Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, contact with child, parental rights and responsibilities, Child Protection Case Conference decision, criminal proceedings and Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinated Support Plan.*

Our feedback indicates that all users reported an increased knowledge of the legal process. No complaints were received. We represented children and young people at court or at tribunals on 32 occasions, some of which took as long as 3 days.

WHERE HAVE THE REFERRALS COME FROM?



HOW HAVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOUND US?

Referrals have come from different agencies, including various voluntary organisations, social work departments and solicitors and also via the internet, through friends and relatives, from the Press and from school.

The children and young people who have used our service are mostly between the ages of 14 and 16, but we have also helped children as young as 10 years old and previously looked after young people up to the age of 20.

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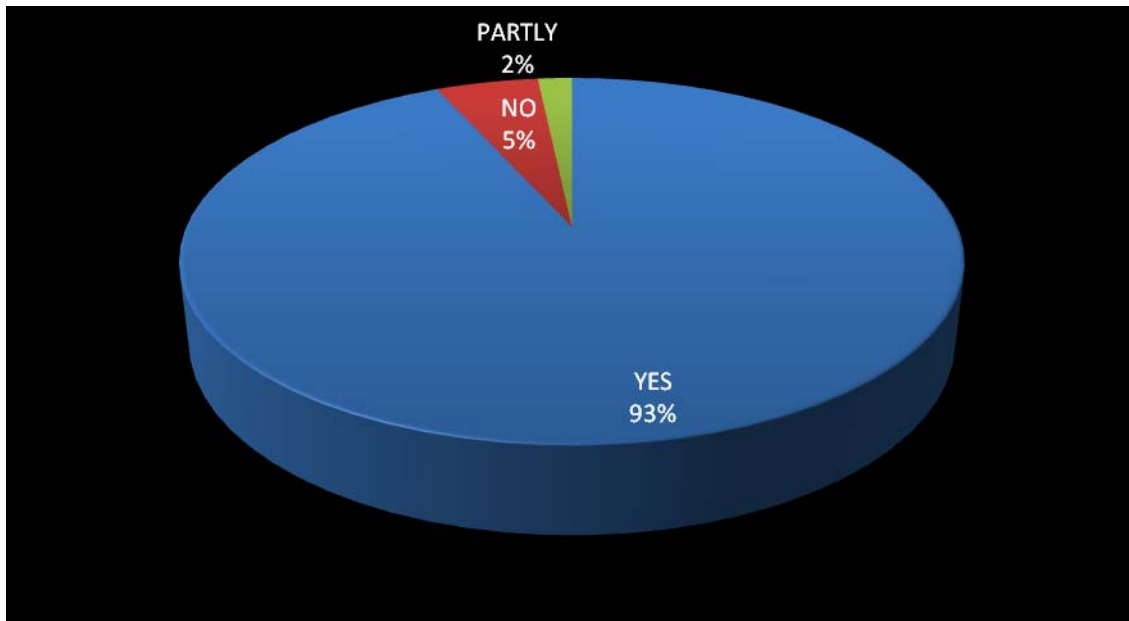
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DID CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVE WHAT THEY WANTED?



WOULD THEY HAVE GOT THE SAME EXTENT OF LEGAL HELP WITHOUT CL@N CHIDLAW?

Our service-users report that they would not have received the same legal “child-friendly” advocacy service were it not for cl@n childlaw. On occasions where we were not able to represent children ourselves, we provided preliminary advice and referred them to other solicitors who were able to assist.

Feedback:

“My daughter felt that someone was taking an interest in what she had to say...This way of having her own lawyer was less stressful.”

“Meeting my lawyer helped me because I felt my opinions mattered.”

“It allowed my son to get his side of the story across...he was treated as an equal and made to feel valued...without their help, we would not have stood a chance of winning his appeal.”

“If I never met the lawyer I wouldn’t have got back to school and onto a college course and they also helped me in the appeal by putting across my points and believing in me”

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TRAINING

We have trained over 150 professionals in relation to Child Law. Courses have covered Children's Rights and Responsibilities, Children's Hearings, Child Protection and the Law and Giving Evidence in Court. Bookings have been made by individuals as well as by groups. Those trained have included teachers, voluntary sector workers, social workers, and solicitors working with children.

Feedback:

"Very interesting and relevant. I enjoyed the chance to discuss issues with multi-agency workers."

"Excellent update, helping to refocus on child protection issues in relation to family law."

"Appreciated the flexible, open approach."

"Very informative, good clear handouts, good group discussions."

"It was a good brief overview of the Children's Hearings which has enabled me to be more confident when going to the hearings."

"Well delivered, good opportunities for questions, answers and discussion."

"Very useful and interactive."

"I have a better understanding of the process."

THE FUTURE

At cl@n childlaw, we are very much looking forward to our second year of operation. We plan to reach out to more children and young people who would not otherwise have received the legal help that they require. By delivering our unique service, we aim to continue contributing towards better outcomes for the children and young people of Scotland.

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