

FIGHTING FOR THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF CONNECTICUT'S MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN.

Utility Protection Rights This Winter

As temperatures drop, keeping the heat and lights on becomes even more critical for Connecticut families. Through CCA's utility advocacy work, we help families understand their rights and access protections that can prevent utility shutoffs. Here are two important programs that prevent termination of utility service that families should know about as colder weather approaches:

MEDICAL PROTECTION: If a household member has a "life threatening situation," their doctor can submit a form to the utility that could protect access to heat and lights all year long. The doctor chooses the length of time that the service is protected. The form must be filed yearly. A household that has medical protection should try to make monthly payments, but even if they can't make a payment, the service cannot be turned off.

WINTER PROTECTION: Any household where the income is less than 60% of

median income (\$96,000 per year for a family of 4) can have their utility service protected from termination between November 1 and May 1. This protection exists even if the household has a

back bill and even if the service has been previously terminated. In order to obtain this protection, the utility account holder needs to contact the utility company and let them know that the household meets the financial criteria. Submission of financial information (documentation of state and/or federal benefits or paystubs) needs to be forwarded to the companies, but after the initial call, the family has 60 days to send in the information.

No family should have to choose between food and utilities. CCA is here to help families understand their rights and access available protections.

Read CCA's Q&A ON UTILITY PROTECTIONS to understand programs that can help prevent utility shutoffs. For more information or assistance, please see our utility protection flyer or reach out to Bonnie Roswig at broswig@cca-ct.org.



Center for
Children's Advocacy

Assistance With Light And Heat Programs And Protections

Center for Children's Advocacy
Can Help

There are many Special Programs
and Affordable Payment Plans that
could be right for you

Access to many existing programs does
not require medical provider involvement

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- Work Directly with You
- Help in Contacting the Utility Company
- Work to Get You an Affordable Payment Plan

HOW TO GET HELP:
Call, Text, or Email:

Bonnie Roswig, J.D. Center for Children's Advocacy

Call: (860) 545 - 8581 or
Call or Text: (860) 566 - 0836 or
Email: Broswig@cca-ct.org

Questions? Contact Bonnie Roswig

CCA Challenges Connecticut's Strict IQ Cutoff for Disability Services

Connecticut is one of only three states that uses a strict IQ cutoff to determine eligibility for services through the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). As a result, young people with documented intellectual disabilities and significant support needs can be denied critical services based on a single test score.

CCA is working alongside families, legal partners Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder and attorney Andrew Feinstein to challenge this restrictive system. Among those fighting for change is Darlene Bohannon, whose daughter Daynasha is a plaintiff in the lawsuit. Darlene has shared her family's experience of being denied services despite Daynasha's need for support to achieve her goals of working and living independently.

CCA's advocacy also helped advance legislation in 2026 requiring DDS to review its eligibility criteria and recommend reforms. While this represents important progress, the law does not immediately change who qualifies for services. Families like Daynasha's continue to face barriers today, making CCA's ongoing legal representation essential as we push for lasting reforms that reflect individuals' real-world needs, not just an IQ score.



CCA Calls for Urgent Reforms to Children's Behavioral Health Care

Recent CT Insider investigations have exposed a growing crisis in Connecticut's children's behavioral health system, including alarming conditions at the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center in Middletown, staffing shortages, inadequate treatment, and a lack of appropriate placements for children with complex needs.



CT Insider stories:



At the center of the latest reporting is a 17-year-old represented by CCA Child Welfare Project Director and Senior Attorney Josh Michtom. After receiving care at Solnit, clinicians determined she was ready for discharge, and a judge ordered her release. Yet, without an appropriate placement available, she spent weeks in a hospital emergency department, with brief stays in an emergency foster home, DCF offices, and a residential treatment program.

Her experience reflects a larger crisis CCA continues to address through individual legal representation and systemic advocacy. **Children should not be left in psychiatric hospitals, emergency departments, or temporary placements simply because the state lacks appropriate services and supports.** CCA continues pushing for greater transparency, accountability, and sustained investment in Connecticut's children's behavioral health system.



Read the full story of CCA's ongoing fight to reform DDS eligibility requirements



Explore CCA's Q&A on accessing DDS services to better understand eligibility requirements and families' legal rights

Looking Ahead

CCA's Policy and Advocacy Priorities

Building on important legislative wins in 2026, CCA is working alongside youth, families, and community partners to advance further reforms that protect children's rights and strengthen Connecticut's systems of care. CCA's ongoing policy priorities include:

CHILD WELFARE:

Strengthening oversight and accountability, expanding support for foster families, and improving access to family preservation services and legal advocacy.

YOUTH JUSTICE:

Diverting youth from incarceration by expanding community-based diversion programs and strengthening reentry services for young people returning from incarceration.

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS:

Advocating for equitable school funding, stronger protections for students with disabilities, and greater accountability around restraint, seclusion, and educational settings.

CIVIL AND DISABILITY RIGHTS:

Working with legal rights partners, in the wake of the federal retreat from civil rights enforcement for children and people with disabilities, to strengthen Connecticut's civil rights enforcement and protect the rights of people with disabilities to live safely in their communities with appropriate supports.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS:

Advancing efforts to prevent homelessness among older youth. These priorities reflect CCA's continued commitment to addressing systemic barriers while ensuring the voices of children and families help shape meaningful solutions.

Read more about CCA's ongoing policy and advocacy priorities: <https://cca-ct.org/ct-childrens-rights-advocacy-october-2026/>

CCA In Community

Lunch & Learn at Silver Golub & Teitell

CCA recently joined Silver Golub & Teitell (SGT) for a Lunch & Learn hosted by new CCA Board Director and SGT Managing Partner, Peter Dreyer. The discussion highlighted CCA's immigration advocacy, legislative priorities, Educational Success Project, and expanding Healthy Child Clinics, including new work focused on enforcing the rights of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism.



CCA Educational Success Project Attorney Ilana Ofgang presenting to attorneys at Silver Golub & Teitell

SGT has been a dedicated sponsor and supporter of CCA since 2009, and the Lunch & Learn provided another opportunity to share CCA's work and strengthen this longstanding partnership. CCA is grateful to Peter and the SGT team for their continued support!

to Connecticut's LGBTQ community!

Through CCA's LGBTQ Youth Advocacy Project, Attorney Sanchez advocates for queer and trans youth facing barriers related to education, discrimination, healthcare, housing, and civil rights. Their work also brings legal support directly into healthcare settings through CCA's medical-legal partnership with Anchor Health. Described by Anchor Health as an "indispensable advocate," Attorney Sanchez helps patients navigate legal challenges that can affect their health, safety, and stability.



Learn more about CCA's LGBTQ Youth Advocacy Project.



Parent Cabinet Training: Special Education 101

CCA's Parent Cabinet hosted a free, virtual **Special Education 101 training on Tuesday, October 27.**

Designed for parents, caregivers, and families, the session will provide practical information about special education rights in Connecticut and help families better advocate for the services and supports their children need.

Please help spread the word by sharing the event flyer with families who may benefit!

For more information about CCA's Parent Cabinet, contact Janet Ortiz at 203-335-0719, ext. 201.

Upcoming Stamford Events

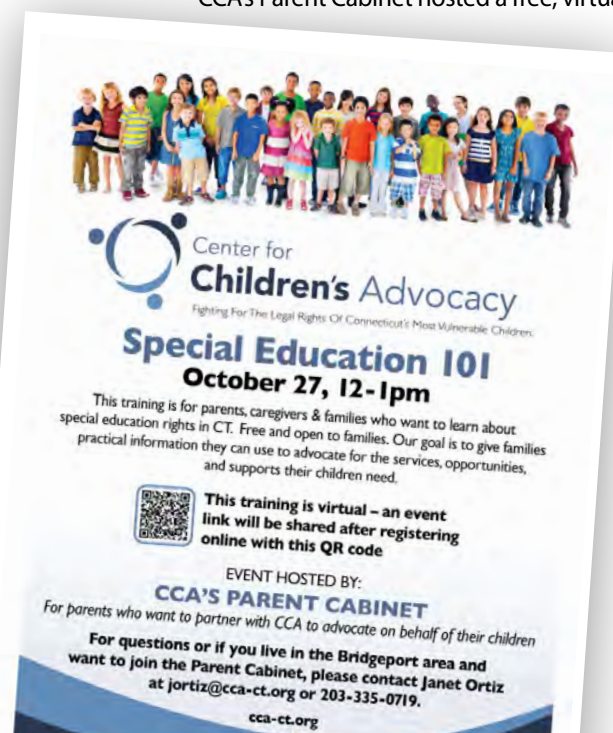
On November 18, CCA will provide a virtual training for Stamford-area parents, **Know Your Rights: Supporting Children with Developmental Disabilities.** The training will be followed by individual, community-based legal consultations to help families address challenges their children may be facing.

For more information, contact CCA Staff Attorney Ilana Ofgang at iofgang@cca-ct.org.

Mallory Sanchez Honored at Anchor Health's Inaugural Gala



Congratulations to CCA Staff Attorney Mallory James Sanchez, who was recognized at Anchor Health's inaugural gala on October 24 for their advocacy and commitment



Stand With Children and Youth Across Connecticut



Children and youth should not have to fight alone to access the services, protections, and opportunities they are entitled to. With your partnership and support, CCA can continue advocating for even more children whose needs are being overlooked, whose rights are being denied, and whose futures depend on

systems being held accountable. **Join our community of advocates fighting for the rights of CT's low-income children today:** <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/centerforchildrensadvocacy>

2026 Impact Letters

Your Investment Protects Children's Rights: One Child At A Time

We Listen

TO CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES

We Represent

WHEN A CHILD'S
RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED

We See The Pattern

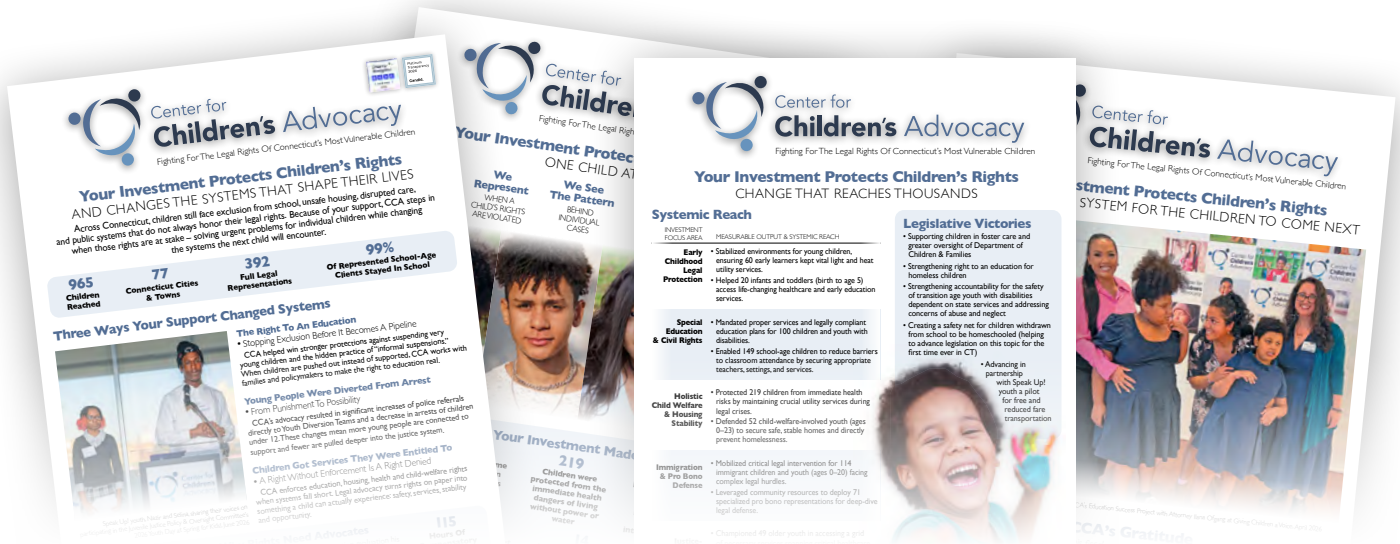
BEHIND
INDIVIDUAL CASES

We Change The System

THROUGH LAW,
POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP

More Children Benefit

BECAUSE ONE CASE CAN
REVEAL SYSTEMIC BARRIERS



CCA Listens. CCA Acts. CCA Holds Systems Accountable.

Over the past year, CCA helped protect the legal rights of **1,231 children across 77 Connecticut cities and towns**, providing critical legal representation, advocating for access to essential services, and holding systems accountable. Our FY2026 Impact Letters highlights what we accomplished alongside children, families, and partners — and the difference this work is making across Connecticut.

Thank you for being part of CCA's community and supporting our mission. Whether through advocacy, partnership, or financial support, you help make this work possible.



Read CCA's
FY2026
Impact Letters

Want to support the
work of the Center for
Children's Advocacy?



Help give children a voice
Donate Today!

Stand Up for Connecticut's Children

The progress we make this year relies on people like you who champion CCA's mission. But urgent work remains. Join us by investing in CCA to power our daily advocacy and stand up for Connecticut's kids. Together, we are building on this momentum and fighting for every child and family who needs an advocate in their corner right now.

Stand Up for CT's Kids:
Make a gift today! Contact:

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2074 Park Street, Unit 304
Hartford, CT 06106
860-570-5327 | communications@cca-ct.org

