



Every Family Matters

10 Years of the Center for Family Representation

Thank You & Welcome

Dear Friends,

In the 10 years since our founding, the Center for Family Representation has made remarkable progress to improve the services and outcomes for vulnerable families at risk of separation. Not only have we kept record numbers of our own clients' children out of foster care, we have changed court practices and enabled thousands of child welfare professionals to improve their own practices, therefore strengthening families in New York and throughout the country.

We could not have achieved this without a wide array of partners: our dedicated Board and Junior Board, expert staff, colleagues throughout the community, and many generous donors. From foundations that supported us at the start to the newest members of our teams, CFR has built a network of individuals and organizations who believe deeply in our mission of keeping families together.

As our friend and supporter, I hope this report will make you as proud as I am about all we have accomplished together—and inspire you about the work we have ahead of us as we move into a new decade of serving families. Thank you for being part of the CFR family.

Warm regards,



Susan Jacobs
Founder & Executive Director



Members of CFR's Board of Directors in 2002 (l to r): Susan Jacobs, Philip Segal, Jane Spinak & Martin Guggenheim

Table of Contents

- 1 Thank You & Welcome
- 2 Our Accomplishments
- 3 Our Work
- 4 National Impact
- 5 Our Families
- 6 Jennifer & Fred's Story
- 7 Our Volunteers
- 8 Events & Fundraising
- 9 Our Supporters
- 10 Financials
- 11 Leadership

10 Years of Accomplishments

Our Mission: Keep Families Together

We provide families in crisis with free legal assistance and social work services to enable children to stay with their parents safely. CFR works to keep children out of foster care entirely or keep their time in care to a minimum.

Important Milestones:

- **2002**
 - More than **28,000 children live in the foster care** system in New York City.
 - Children in the New York City foster care system **stay in care for a median of 11.5 months.**
 - CFR is founded by Susan Jacobs in response to the crisis in child welfare and parent representation.
 - CFR receives its first grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
 - CFR has a **staff of 3** and a budget of **\$250,000.**
- **2003**
 - CFR creates its first 26-part training series for child welfare practitioners including parents' attorneys across the City.
- **2004**
 - CFR hires its first Community Advocacy Team, consisting of a lawyer, social worker, and parent advocate.
- **2007**
 - New York City awards CFR its first contract to represent **500+ parents each year in Manhattan Family Court.**
- **2008**
 - Robin Lyde, a CFR Parent Advocate, is featured in a New York Times article.
 - CFR helps organize the first ever national parent representation conference with the American Bar Association.
- **2009**
 - **CFR serves its 1000th family.**
 - Michele Cortese & Jill Cohen author an article on "Cornerstone Advocacy", our approach to parent engagement, published in the American Bar Association's *Child Law Practice*.
- **2010**
 - CFR launches the first "Cornerstone Institute" to teach practitioners from Georgia and Vermont how to replicate our team model.
- **2011**
 - CFR hosts policy forum on "Cross Cultural Challenges in Child Welfare."
 - The New York State court system contracts with CFR to provide training and technical assistance to all 13 Judicial Districts.
 - CFR presents at the American Bar Association's National Conference on parent representation.
- **2012**
 - **CFR serves its 3,000th family.**
 - New York City awards CFR its second contract to represent **500+ parents each year in Queens Family Court.**
 - CFR immediately causes policy change in Queens Family Court—parents now sit at the table with their attorneys in court.
 - The American Bar Association publishes a second article by CFR staff, Elizabeth Fassler & Wanjiro Gethaiga, on how to prevent families from being prosecuted in court.
 - Susan Jacobs and CFR client, Jose Gunnell, are featured in the New York Times.
 - Susan Jacobs is cited in a New York Times article on open access to family court.
 - CFR holds its second "Cornerstone Institute" for practitioners from Iowa.
- **2012**
 - **CFR turns 10!**
 - Fewer than **14,000 children now live in foster care** in New York City.
 - The median stay for children in New York City foster care has fallen to just 6.4 months citywide. Children with CFR's assistance stay in care for a median of just 2.2 months.
 - CFR now has a **staff of more than 80** and a budget of nearly **\$7 million.**
 - CFR staff Rebecca Horwitz, Sandy Rosin & Chloe Junge author an article on working with young parents in the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law *Clearinghouse Review Journal of Poverty Law and Policy*.
 - CFR staff present at a Congressional Briefing in Washington, DC.
 - Legal and social work staff attend and present at the Children's Defense Fund national conference in Ohio.
 - Susan Jacobs is featured on *MONEY with Melissa Francis* to discuss the costs of foster care and CFR's work.
 - CFR hosts its 10th anniversary *Celebrating Families Gala* at the Mandarin Oriental New York, raising 50% more revenue than ever before.

Our Work

Team Model

Every CFR client receives the services of our innovative team model. The team consists of a lawyer, a social worker, and a parent advocate, who work closely together to offer distinct and important forms of professional support to parents. This groundbreaking approach was the first of its kind in the nation and gives every family the individual attention they need to stay together safely.

The CFR lawyer provides expert legal representation in court. The social worker gets to the root of the problem and helps the client access stabilizing services, such as housing, employment training, drug treatment, and domestic violence counseling. Finally, the parent advocate, a trained professional who has personally experienced the child welfare system and can truly empathize with vulnerable families, provides emotional support and helps the client engage in services—ensuring follow through.

Training

CFR trains more than 500 practitioners annually on our strategies for dramatically reducing foster care stays and on our innovative team model. While CFR works directly with parents, increasingly, we provide training and technical assistance to a wide range of child welfare professionals from caseworkers to judges throughout the country.

Advocacy

Our direct service work with indigent families informs all of our policy work. CFR's groundbreaking approach means that we have a place at the table, within task forces and coalitions, and with decision makers at all levels of government. CFR uses these opportunities to make recommendations on policy and program initiatives for both the child welfare and the family court systems to ensure that parents and their children have access to the best legal services and opportunities to keep their families together.

Every Family
Matters



National Impact

Sharing what Works

CFR has trained more than 5,000 child welfare practitioners from 13 states on our innovative team model, our Cornerstone Advocacy approach to speed safe reunification, and best practices to strengthen families.

Participants have included judges, attorneys, court personnel, social workers, parent advocates, law interns, medical professionals, and more.

“I have been to many trainings during my long career, but never have the trainers been so attuned to meeting the needs of the audience. It was impressive to see how each team member is so confident in his/her respective role and how the role contributes to the whole and to the outcomes you are achieving for your families. We all have a lot to do and we begin today.”

Trine Bech, Executive Director, Vermont Representation Center, Burlington, VT

“The CFR Training has been the single most beneficial experience I have encountered in improving my own representation of parents and helping train my students to provide quality representation to our clients.”

Jean C. Lawrence, Director, Family Representation Clinic, College of Law, University of Iowa

“When parents’ rights are protected, we do better, as a system, at protecting the rights of their children. CFR is at the center of that.”

John Mattingly, the Annie E. Casey Foundation & former Commissioner, NYC Administration for Children’s Services



In June 2012, Executive Director Susan Jacobs and Parent Advocate Robin Lyde traveled to Washington D.C. to speak about CFR’s work at a Congressional briefing, held in support of a bill to provide federal funding for parent representation efforts nationwide. Sponsored by Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-WI), the bill cites CFR’s excellent results as proof that struggling parents can keep their families intact when provided with quality services and representation.

In September 2012, Ms. Jacobs was featured on *MONEY with Melissa Francis* on FOX Business News to discuss the costs of the foster care system and how CFR’s work saves significant taxpayer dollars—and saves families from being separated.



Our Families

Vulnerable & Resilient

Every family served by CFR struggles with the challenges of poverty. Yet every family is unique, and specialized advocacy and services from our teams gives clients the ability to overcome a diverse set of challenges in order to reunify with their children.

Of the more than 1,900 parents CFR served in the past year:

- 93% are people of color
- 76% are women
- 31% struggle with substance abuse
- 30% are affected by domestic violence
- 29% of our clients under age 25 have experienced foster care or are still in care
- 22% have a mental health diagnosis
- 17% are immigrants
- 15% are homeless

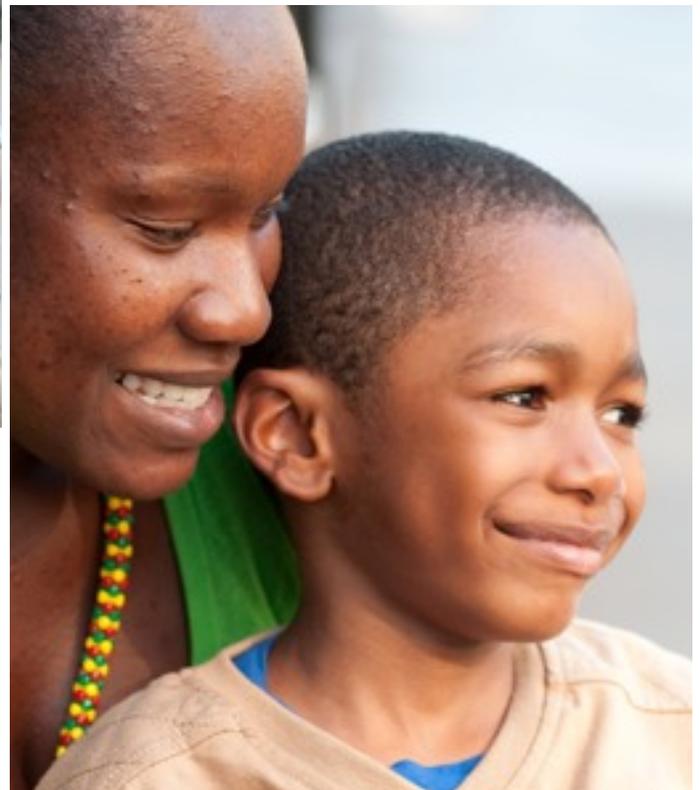


Snapshot: Manhattan Clients

In Manhattan, our average client is an African American single mother between the ages of 20 and 30 who has two young children.

Snapshot: Queens Clients

In Queens, more of our clients are immigrants, especially Latino, fathers, families headed by 2 parents, and the working poor.



Jennifer & Fred's Story

Caught in the System

After her daughter Liana was born prematurely, Jennifer stayed with her fragile baby constantly. After two months, she felt comfortable leaving the baby with her husband Fred, a loving father to their two older sons, and went out to dinner with her sister. That night, Fred left Liana on the bed with her 8-year-old brother Joshua for a few minutes while he heated up a bottle. In that time, his 4-year-old son Michael jumped on the bed near the baby and fell on her. Fred rushed back when he heard Liana crying. He had no cause for alarm, however, she calmed down and later went to sleep as usual. Neither of his sons told him about the accident.

In the next few days, Jennifer and Fred noticed that Liana was fussier than usual. They called their pediatrician who said not to worry. But when Liana stopped moving her legs, they took her to the emergency room, where an x-ray showed a fractured femur.



“Jennifer and Fred are great parents who were caught up in a system that failed to properly investigate and completely ignored the family’s strengths. There were ways other than removal to ensure the children’s safety.”

Elizabeth Fassler,
CFR Attorney,
Queens Practice
Co-Director

Because Jennifer and Fred had no idea how Liana had been injured, hospital staff believed she was the victim of abuse. Although their two older sons were well taken care of and the family had no history with child protective services, the hospital contacted the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS), which immediately removed all three children. Jennifer and Fred were devastated.

Jennifer was assigned a CFR team in the Queens Family Court, who advocated for the children to be placed with relatives, to minimize the trauma of separation, and for the children to be able to visit their parents as much as possible. Jennifer and Fred never missed their daily supervised visits and completed every service that ACS asked of them with help from their CFR social worker. But because the fracture still

remained a mystery, ACS would not allow the children to go home.

During a supervised visit, Joshua suddenly told his parents that he knew how Liana had gotten hurt and related the story of Michael falling on the baby. With this new information, the CFR attorney immediately called in a doctor to testify that Joshua’s explanation was consistent with the nature of the fracture and asked the judge allow the children to be returned to their parents. Though ACS protested, the judge agreed with CFR and allowed the children to go home. The family was overjoyed.

Today, Jennifer and Fred live together happily with their children and recently welcomed a new baby boy. With the steadfast advocacy of their CFR team, their case has been dismissed entirely.



Our Volunteers

Committed to Keeping Families Together

Every year, CFR relies on dozens of extraordinary volunteers from law firms, corporations, and the community to provide many kinds of help for our families. From sorting baby clothing to drafting appeals, volunteers help CFR operate more efficiently and fulfill our mission.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please contact: Kesha Thomas at kthomas@cfyny.org or visit us on the web at www.cfnry.org.

“As a CFR attorney, I represent parents during one of the most terrifying junctures in their lives. While our work is difficult, a “win” for me is when my clients’ needs are met with respect and hope. All too often, that is a new experience for them.”

Rebecca Boucher, Volunteer Attorney

“I wanted to make a real difference in people’s lives... CFR’s work with parents at risk of losing their children to foster care really resonated with me... I know that by continuing to support CFR as an organization, I can still make a real difference in their lives.”

Bobbie Crosby, Volunteer

Thank you to our Pro Bono Partners for your service to our clients:

- Jean Clemente
- Tara Conroy
- Margaret Dale
- Nicholas DeBaun
- Robert Dunn
- Christian Elloie
- Daniel Gonen
- Martin Guggenheim
- Christopher Karagheuzoff
- Joseph Manicki
- Riche McKnight
- Malinda Morain
- John Newman
- David Paul
- Proskauer Rose LLP
- Philip Segal
- Segal & Greenberg LLP
- Joanne Seltzer
- Sidley Austin LLP
- Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
- Jane Spinak
- Erika Stalings
- Gary Stellato
- S.Alyssa Young

To learn more about pro bono opportunities, contact Michele Cortese at mcortese@cfyny.org



Thank you to our corporate partners for their volunteer support

Pictured Above Left: Volunteers from Goldman Sachs Community Team Works
Pictured Above Right: Morgan Stanley Volunteers

Fundraising & Events

Efficient & Effective



“CFR, every day of this decade, has helped so much to brighten the future for families, and therefore by definition the future of our City, State, and Nation.”

Judith S. Kaye, former Chief Judge, New York Court of Appeals, 2012 Founder’s Award Recipient

Celebrating Families Gala

In 2006, CFR held the first *Celebrating Families* event for 75 guests. Just six years later, more than 370 longtime supporters and new friends gathered at the Mandarin Oriental New York to celebrate CFR’s 10th anniversary. The *2012 Celebrating Families Gala* raised more than \$367,000—a **record for CFR**.

Attendees of CFR’s six *Celebrating Families* events have raised more than \$1.1 Million in critical general operating funds to support our work with New York’s most vulnerable families.

Thank you to our dedicated donors, sponsors, award winners, and Gala Chairs for their commitment to CFR’s work.

CFR’s Junior Board

The CFR Junior Board is a volunteer council of young professionals founded in 2007, representing major law firms, financial institutions, nonprofit organizations, and more. Its members promote CFR in the community through fundraising and volunteering activities. Junior Board members host numerous events, participate in professional development opportunities, and work to attract new friends and supporters to the organization.

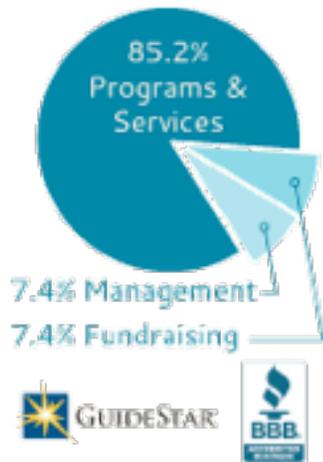
Since its founding in 2007, the CFR Junior Board has:

- Raised more than **\$42,000** through *Jeans for Family* campaigns.
- Provided more than **750 backpacks** for children through their annual *Backpack Drive*.
- Given more than **500 toys** to children through CFR’s annual *Holiday Party & Toy Drive*.
- Raised more than **\$23,000** through just two *Summer in the City* events—the Junior Board’s primary fundraising event for young professionals.



Efficiency

CFR’s fundraising efforts are extremely efficient. For every dollar CFR raises, more than 85% goes to CFR’s programs to support families in crisis.



Our Supporters

Thank you to our donors over the past year:*

\$25,000 and up

- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Child Welfare Fund
- Ira W. DeCamp Foundation
- Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation
- IOLA Fund Of The State Of New York
- New York Community Trust
- New York State Assembly
- New York State Unified Court System Office of Court Administration
- The Sirius Fund

\$10,000 & up

- Anonymous
- Lily Auchincloss Foundation
- Baby Buggy
- C. Edwin Baker Trust
- The Viola W. Bernard Foundation
- Mary Breasted & Ted Smyth
- Margaret & Jim Dale
- Huda & Samia Farouki
- Joel & Stacy Hock
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- Judith & Jonathan Marshall
- Newmark Grubb Knight Frank
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- Laura A. Warner & Carl M. Stanton

\$5,000 & up

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- Bobbie Crosby
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- Howard & Amy Seife
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- Whitestar Consulting & Contracting, Inc.
- Winston & Strawn LLP

\$2,500 & up

- Anonymous
- Julie Allen
- Lissy & Josh Bank
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\$1,000 & up

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- Amer Bisat & Nadia Abu el- Haj
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- Laurie M. Tisch Foundation
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- Sang Kil Yi & Helfried Schwarz
- Howard L. Zimmerman Architects, P.C.

CFR would like to thank our photographers:

- Ellen Dubin Photography
- Happening Photos
- Tess Colwell Photography

CFR would also like to thank our filmmaker, Jaleh Teymourian for her on-going support.

CFR would like to extend a special thanks to our longtime institutional funders:

- Anonymous
- Viola W. Bernard Foundation
- Anne E. Casey Foundation
- Bernard F. & Alva B. Gimbel Foundation
- Child Welfare Fund
- Hyde & Watson Foundation
- IOLA fund for the State of New York
- Ira W. DeCamp Foundation
- Lily Auchincloss Foundation
- New York Bar Foundation
- New York Community Trust
- New York City Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator
- New York State Assembly
- New York State Office of Children & Family Services
- New York State Office of Court Administration
- The Sirius Fund



Financials

Transparency & Accountability

CFR carefully monitors our finances in order to ensure that every dollar we raise is used to help keep families together and reduce the long-term negative effects of foster care on the next generation of families.

CFR maintains the highest standard of financial management and continually receives high marks from charitable rating services and auditors.

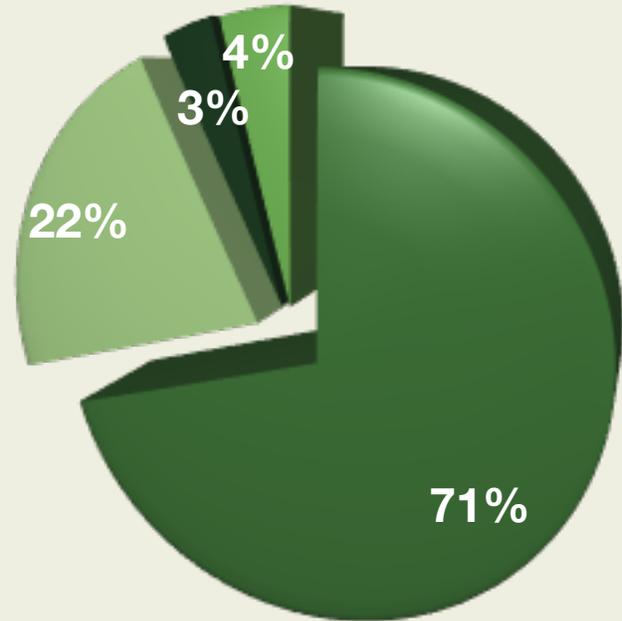
Cost Savings

CFR's model costs far less than foster care.

CFR is extremely effective at preventing foster care placement, minimizing the time children spend in care, and shortening the length of a case—through which we achieve significant cost savings.

- **\$6,500** - Average Cost of CFR's innovative team model (a lawyer, social worker, and parent advocate).
- **2 years** - Average length of a CFR case.
- Historically, CFR prevents foster care **52%** of the time and our client's children stay in care on average just **2.5 months**.
- **\$29,000** - Average cost of foster care for 1 year in New York.
- **29 months** - Average length of time a child spends in foster care in New York State.
- **In our 10 years of operation, CFR estimates that our services have generated taxpayer savings of more than \$130,000,000.**

Revenue by Source



- Government Contracts
- Grants
- Individual Donors
- Event Revenue

Financials

CFR's Audited Financials & IRS Form 990

- [2011 Audited Financials](#)
- [2011 IRS Form 990](#)

To learn more about CFR's financial reports, please visit <http://www.cfrny.org/about-us/financial-information/>

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Executive Staff

Susan Jacobs,
Founder & Executive Director
Michele Cortese,
Deputy Director
Genevieve Christy,
Chief Financial Officer
John Linder,
*Chief Development &
Communications Officer*

Top: All of CFR Staff in 2005
Bottom: Just one-third of CFR's
Staff in 2011

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CFR
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Center for Family Representation, Inc.
40 Worth Street, Suite 605
New York, NY 10013
www.cfrny.org