

*“...PTLA is ready to launch a new project addressing the legal needs of children. This project contemplates a holistic approach to the representation of children. This approach will benefit not only the child by improving the quality of advocacy but also will benefit the community by preventing future problems from occurring.*

*It is unlikely that any other organization in Maine would be able to take on such a unique project.”*

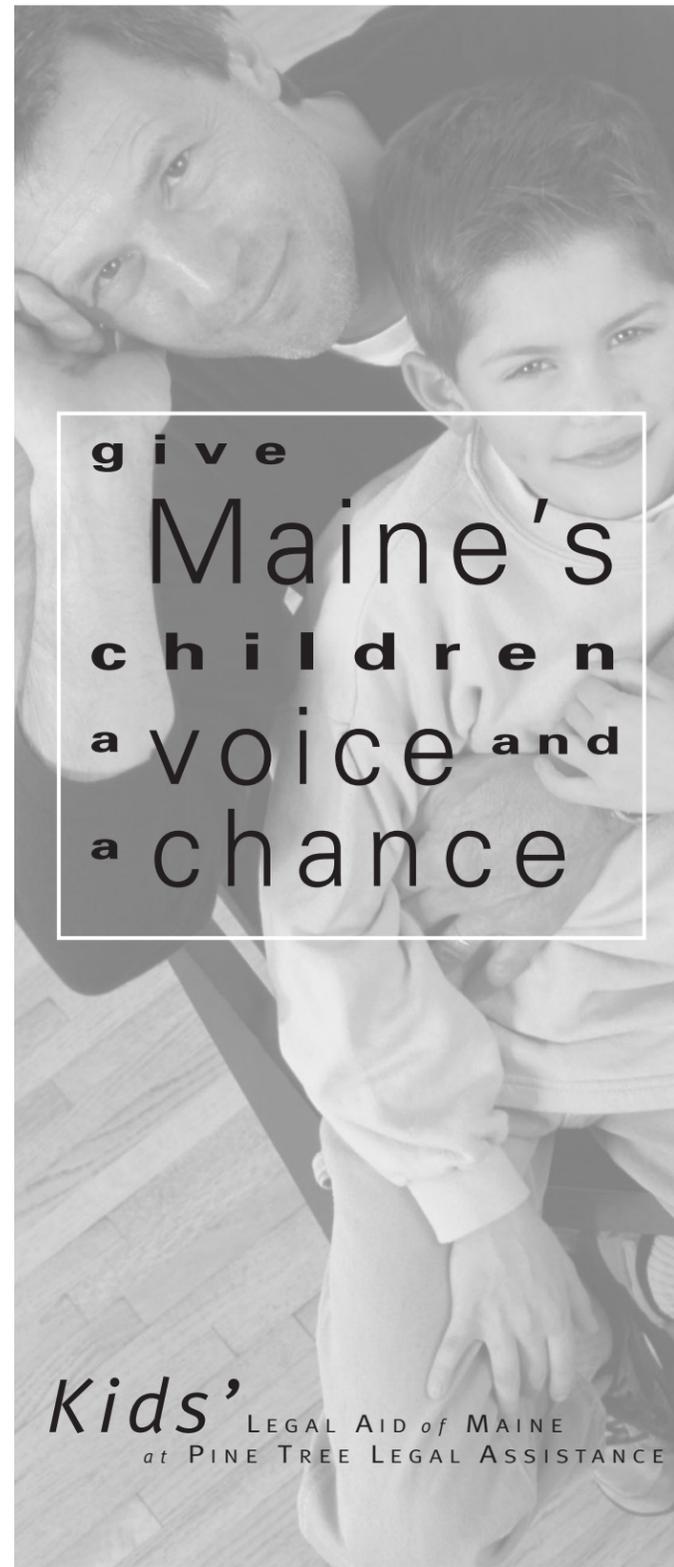
— Program Evaluation 2003  
Legal Services Corporation, Washington, DC

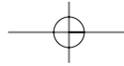


**Kids’** LEGAL AID of MAINE  
at PINE TREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

*A project of Pine Tree Legal Assistance:*  
Legal assistance and community education for  
low-income children and their families

P.O. Box 547, Portland, Maine 04112  
[www.kidslegalaid.org](http://www.kidslegalaid.org)





Kids' Legal Aid of Maine's goal is to ensure that all children are given the chance to live a safe, productive life. Through our legal support, we give them a voice. Our activities include:

### Legal Advocacy

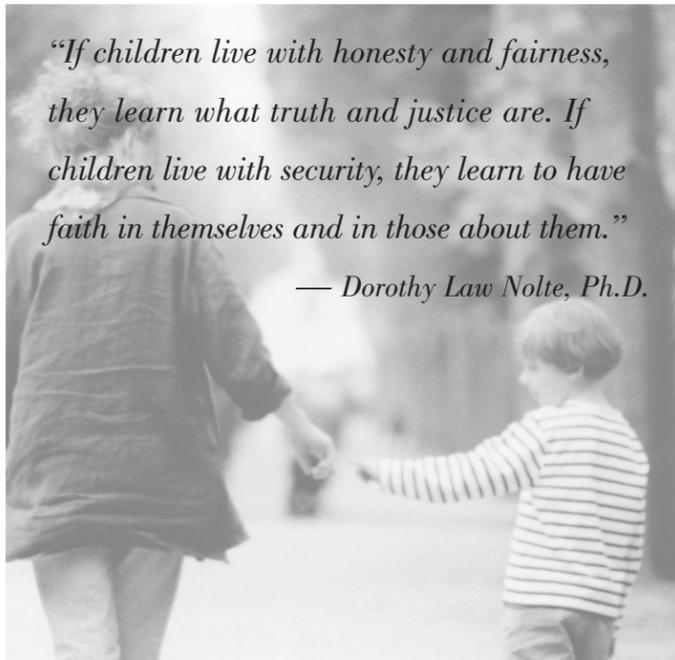
Kids' Legal Aid is based upon the premise that if we meet our children's needs, we can help them avoid future issues and provide them with real opportunities for success. We also recognize that if children's problems or issues go unaddressed, these injustices have consequences that last long into the future.

Kids' Legal Aid provides free legal representation to low-income children. We help them access education, health care, mental health and social services. We work with Pine Tree's general staff to ensure that the families have safe, affordable housing. Our lawyers also help young people involved in the juvenile justice system obtain meaningful alternatives to incarceration.

We accept referrals from parents, as well as court-appointed attorneys, probation officers, judges, school personnel and other social service providers.

*"If children live with honesty and fairness, they learn what truth and justice are. If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them."*

— Dorothy Law Nolte, Ph.D.



### Community Education

Our Community Education Program helps families understand the legal system and how to advocate effectively for their children. Our websites also provide detailed legal information and self-help tools for children and their families' legal needs ([www.kidslegalaid.org](http://www.kidslegalaid.org), [www.ptla.org](http://www.ptla.org) and [www.helpmelaw.org](http://www.helpmelaw.org)).

### Community Participation

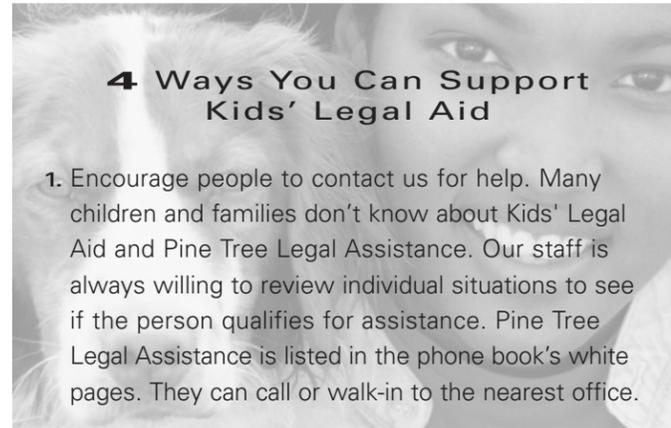
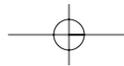
Kids' Legal Aid seeks guidance from an informal advisory board that includes parents, attorneys, doctors and community leaders. This group helps us identify program priorities, connects us with other organizations serving low-income children, and supports our education and advocacy efforts.

### In-Service Training

Every service provider working with low-income families should be familiar with the rights of all children to education, health care and other important services. To increase awareness of those rights, Kids' Legal Aid provides in-service training for organizations that work with children and their families.

### Legal aid makes a difference

**Case Study:** MG is a single mother living in Washington County, Maine, where illiteracy problems compound the State's highest per capita poverty levels. MG knew Pine Tree was a resource for her own legal needs, ranging from housing issues to government benefits, but never thought legal aid could help her 14-year-old daughter who was reading at a third-grade level and about to drop out of school. Her inquiry prompted an immediate investigation by our legal aid staff. As a result of their intervention, Pine Tree's legal staff worked with the local school to develop a new educational plan. Her daughter is now a junior, assisting other children in her school with remedial reading.



### 4 Ways You Can Support Kids' Legal Aid

1. Encourage people to contact us for help. Many children and families don't know about Kids' Legal Aid and Pine Tree Legal Assistance. Our staff is always willing to review individual situations to see if the person qualifies for assistance. Pine Tree Legal Assistance is listed in the phone book's white pages. They can call or walk-in to the nearest office.
2. Help us connect with others serving kids. Hundreds of nonprofit organizations, faith-based programs, and community groups exist in Maine to provide services to low-income children. If you are already involved with such a group, make sure they know about Kids' Legal Aid and Pine Tree Legal Assistance. Let us know if they'd like a guest speaker from our staff to talk about program services or provide training.
3. Volunteer. Given limited staff resources, our ability to meet the needs of low-income children requires volunteer time from attorneys and other professionals that work with children, as well as from community individuals. Contact us at 207-774-4753 to volunteer.
4. Be generous with your financial support. Kids' Legal Aid will only become a reality with new funding. Contributions are used to support direct legal services to those in greatest need. All contributions to Kids' Legal Aid are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

For more information or to make a charitable donation,

**contact:** Nan Heald  
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