

## Second Chance Project

The Second Chance Project helps parents with a finding of neglect on their record to move forward. Students in this project will help clients to request and conduct fair hearings to amend their record with the State Central Registry, and to file motions to vacate neglect findings or request suspended judgments so their record does not limit their employment opportunities.

Brooklyn Family Defense Project's (BFDP) clients usually have neglect cases filed against them for issues related to their poverty, domestic violence, mental illness, or addiction. During the court proceeding, families engage in supportive and rehabilitative services to help them address the challenges they face, such as parenting classes, individual or family therapy, or drug treatment. In many cases, parents consent to a finding of neglect because the court process is so long and difficult and they want their cases to be resolved quickly. Especially for clients who work, or for young clients who hope to get a GED or go to college, findings of neglect and reports on the State Central Registry



can interfere with their work opportunities – even where the reports are unrelated to their employment. Reports of child neglect are entered in New York's State Central Registry which is searchable by employers in fields such as child care, teaching, social work and nursing.

**PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION:** Brooklyn Family Defense Project.

**WHEN, FOR HOW LONG AND HOW OFTEN:** 10–12 hours total for writing and attending the hearing, plus 2 hours of training.

**GETTING INVOLVED:** Contact Anna Park, [anna.park@brooklaw.edu](mailto:anna.park@brooklaw.edu), for more information.

**OF INTEREST TO:** Anyone interested in family law, criminal defense, or poverty law, or those wanting to work directly with clients and get experience in court.