

CHILDREN AND THE LAW COURSE SYLLABUS

Fall Semester 2008

Course Number: LAW 9586, 2 credit hours

Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m. - 7:50 p.m. Room 04

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Course Objective: Considers the historical evolution of children's rights in American jurisprudence and issues faced by children in the legal system, particularly in custody, paternity, adoption, child neglect and abuse, and criminal proceedings, with attention to the role of lawyers and other professionals in the system.

1. Text: Abrams and Ramsey, Children and the Law: Doctrine, Policy and Practice, 3rd Edition.
2. Testing and Grading: Your grade for this course will be based upon a conventional law school exam administered at the end of the semester. The self-scheduled exam will be two hours in length.
3. Attendance and Participation in Class: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class and regular attendance is required of all students in the class. In the event a student misses two or more classes, your grade may be lowered by one-half point (i.e. from a B+ to a B). Class participation is also required of all students. Although class participation does not increase your grade, your grade may be lowered by one-half point if you are not adequately prepared for class and/or do not adequately participate and respond when called upon.
4. Computer Use: Students are welcome to use laptop computers in the classroom for purposes relating to this class.
5. Assignments: The following reading assignments, including notes and problems contained within those readings, as well as any supplemental reading assignments that may be given throughout the course, must be completed prior to each class.

CLASS	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
August 20	Introduction Chapter 1 – The Status, Rights and Obligations of Children Childhood in America <i>Parens Patriae</i> Doctrine Traditional Roles of Parents and the Government The Movement Towards Children's Rights	1-34
August 27	The Movement Towards Children's Rights – Contin. Reconciling Parent's and Children's Rights	34-72
September 3	Children Articulating their own Interests International Law	72-108
September 10	Chapter 2 – Defining the Child-Parent Relationship	122-168

CLASS	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
	Establishing Paternity and Maternity Questioning the Definition of “Parent”	
September 17	Guardianship 3 rd Party Custody Emancipation The Legal Rights of Teenagers	168-199
September 24	Chapter 3 – Representing Children Introduction Children’s Abilities and Legal Disabilities Poverty and Race The Indian Child Welfare Act Cultural Context / Representing Children of Color	200-234 414-424
October 1	The Role of the Child’s Counsel Child’s Attorney vs. Guardian ad Litem	234-282
October 8	Chapter 4 – Abuse and Neglect Introduction Discovering Abuse and Neglect: Reporting Statutes The Child Protection System Limits on Intervention Patterns of Abuse and Neglect	283-326
October 15	Patterns of Abuse and Neglect Continued Duty to Investigate	327-371
October 22	The Reasonableness Requirement Termination of Parental Rights	375-414
October 29	Chapter 5 – Foster Care Challenges in Foster Care The Court’s Role in Permanency Planning The Child’s Right to a “Family” The Child’s Right to Services and Protection from harm Types of Placement	432-483
November 5	Chapter 7 – Adoption Introduction Agency versus Private (Direct Placement) Adoptions Consent The Rights of Unwed Parents Open Adoptions Transracial Adoptions / ICWA International Adoptions Adoptees’ Rights to Learn their Roots	619-628 655-694
November 12	Chapter 8 – Medical Decision-Making Decision-making Authority Medical Neglect Experimentation	714-719 746-760 774-799
November 19	Review and discussion of any missed material; REVIEW FOR EXAM.	
November 26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK	