



Overview

Attorney General Kamala D. Harris has announced the formation of the Bureau of Children's Justice (Bureau) at the California Department of Justice. The Bureau's mission is to protect the rights of children and focus the attention and resources of law enforcement and policymakers on the importance of safeguarding every child so that they can meet their full potential.

Although children do not write checks and cannot always advocate for themselves, they are consumers of both public and private goods and services, and like adult consumers, they are entitled to certain standards of quality and care under the law.

Staffed with both civil rights and criminal prosecutors, the Bureau will focus its enforcement and advocacy efforts on several areas, including:

- California's foster care, adoption, and juvenile justice systems
- Discrimination and inequities in education
- California's elementary school truancy crisis
- Human trafficking of vulnerable youth
- Childhood trauma and exposure to violence

Attorney General Harris has made her position clear: being smart on crime begins with investing in children and preventing them from ever becoming involved with the justice system as victims or perpetrators of crime.

The Bureau of Children's Justice will draw on the wealth of expertise within CADOJ on issues impacting children's legal protection, including civil rights, education, consumer protection, nonprofit charities, child welfare, privacy and identity theft, and fraud. The Bureau will use the criminal and civil law enforcement powers of the California Department of Justice to identify and pursue much-needed improvements to policies impacting children, and work with local, state, and national stakeholders to enhance supports available for children in need and to hold those who prey on children accountable.

As chief law officer of the State of California, Attorney General Harris is committed to seeing that laws and regulations enacted to protect children are consistently and effectively enforced. As a career prosecutor specializing in sexual and physical crimes against children, Attorney General Harris has gained first hand awareness of the prevalence of crimes against children and of the great need to protect them as our most vulnerable members of society. Most importantly, Attorney General Harris' goal is to ensure that every child is aware of his or her inherent value to society and to the future of California.