

Consortium Teams Up With Rutgers Law School Clinics for Statewide Survey on Access to Justice for Immigrant Children and Families

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The New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children is working with law school clinics at the Camden and Newark campuses of Rutgers Law School on a statewide survey on the unmet legal needs of immigrant children and youth in New Jersey. In the last four years, immigrant communities across the country have endured heightened levels of immigration enforcement, and with immigration of children and families to the United States set to grow, there has been — and will continue to be — increased need for immigrant legal representation in New Jersey. Despite the clear need, many regions of the state lack affordable immigration services, while in others, demand far outstrips the supply. The Consortium is committed to taking concrete steps in order to close this gap. Failing to provide immigrant children and youth with counsel raises significant due process issues given their developmental stage, and immigrants of all ages are at risk when unrepresented due to the complexity of the immigration system.

The Consortium has partnered with the Rutgers Child Advocacy Clinic in Newark and the Rutgers Immigrant Justice Clinic in Camden on a statewide survey of community organizations, youth, and families to measure the extent of this access to justice gap. The children and families study will focus on gathering experiences of individuals in their search for legal representation to receive help with their immigration issues, while the community organization survey will use the experiences of immigrant-serving organizations with capacity issues and referrals as a measure of need. Data from the survey will

be analyzed and put to work to drive concrete policy recommendations and advocacy for expanded services informed by the experiences and needs of immigrant communities.

If you would like to take the survey or learn more, as an individual or a community organization, please contact info@njcic.org to be put in touch with our colleagues at Rutgers Law School.