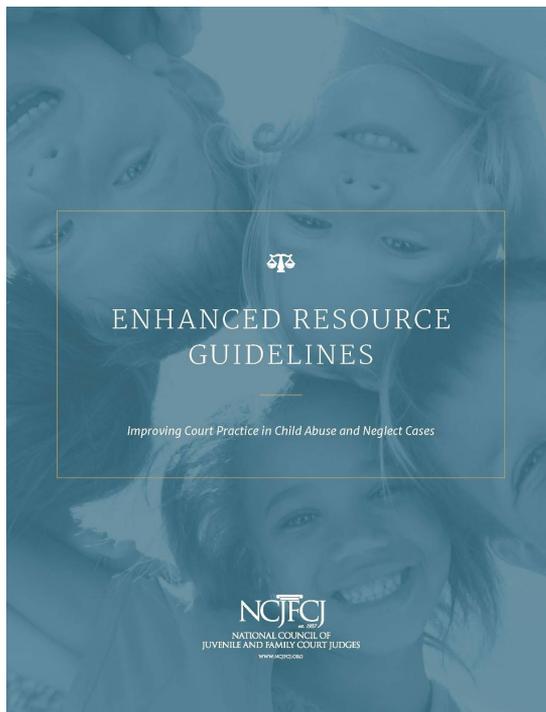


National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Releases *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* for Child Abuse and Neglect Cases; FFCR's Candice Maze is Co-Author



Since its first release in 1995, the *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, produced by the [National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges](#) (NCJFCJ), has set the standard for dependency court practice and has been a critical tool for judges across the country seeking to implement best practices. The NCJFCJ's new [Enhanced Resource Guidelines](#), released on May 26, 2016, incorporates the experiential learning of judges who implemented the original *Resource Guidelines'* best practices, changes to child protection and related federal law, as well as the latest research on child development and promoting positive outcomes for children under the jurisdiction of the court.

Prior to joining FFCR as our Executive Director, Candice L. Maze was part of a consulting team of lawyers, judges and researchers charged with gathering information and authoring the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines*.

"The original *Resource Guidelines* publication was groundbreaking in 1995 and has been an essential guide for the courts and other child welfare professionals since. In fact, a number of the modifications FFCR has made in recent years to our Citizen Review Panel hearing process and our program database were significantly influenced by both the original and the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines*," said Candice. "It was a real privilege to work with many of our nation's top juvenile judges and leaders on the development of this critical publication."

The NCJFCJ focuses on improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile and family courts and is the country's oldest judicial membership organization. To date, approximately 40,000 copies of the original *Guidelines* have been distributed. NCJFCJ also used the *Guidelines* as part of a Model Court initiative that involved more than 80 jurisdictions nationwide. The Model Court Initiative helped inform many of the updates made in the *Enhanced* version. Florida has been part of that effort: the Florida Statewide Model Courts Initiative was launched on July 27, 2010.

Topics addressed include increasing the number of adoptions and safely reducing the number of children in foster care, along with lessening the time a child remains under jurisdiction of the court and much more. The *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* also include a judicial bench card for each stage of the court process, providing recommendations on preparation for each hearing, case management during the hearing and preparation for the next hearing.

The [NCJFCJ's press release about the publication](#) contains more information about the principles covered in the book, as well as a link to [download the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* for free](#). It is a wonderful resource for all practicing in the dependency court arena.