As the new Children and the Law Committee Chair I would like to welcome you to the 2011-2012 bar year! The Children and the Law Committee is comprised of a wide range of legal professionals such as children’s lawyers, guardian ad litem, family law attorneys, agency attorneys, and others who are dedicated to using the law to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. The main purpose of our committee is to have a forum where lawyers can share ideas, experiences, advice, and resources about children’s legal issues.

I hope that you will each take an active role in our committee this year. There are many opportunities for you to share your knowledge and expertise with others. First, I strongly encourage you to submit an article for the 101 Practice Series, a publication sponsored by the ABA Young Lawyers Division. The purpose of these articles is to deliver specific, practical information regarding children and the law to new lawyers in an easy-to-read format. I think this is one of the best ways for our committee to illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of children’s law. My hope is that the articles will help both lawyers who work with children on a daily basis and lawyers who are searching for basic information and guidance on children’s law. Our committee is required to produce four (4) articles by the end of the bar year. Please contact me if you are interested in writing an article for further information and requirements.

Another way for you to get involved in our committee is to submit a program proposal for one of the upcoming ABA conferences. The first step of a program proposal is to create and submit a title and description of the program, including suggested speakers. If the program is selected, the organizer is responsible for carrying out the logistics of the program. Our committee must submit at least one more program proposal by the end of the bar year. The deadline for the program proposal is December 2, 2011. The program proposals submitted by this deadline will be considered for the 2012 Spring and Annual conferences.

Finally, our committee will host two teleconferences by the end of the bar year. The first will occur no later than November 15, 2011, and the second no later than July 1, 2012. Helping coordinate a teleconference involves submitting a teleconference proposal, applying for funding, and confirming the dial-in information for all involved.

I firmly believe that the strongest committees have members who are actively involved in all aspects of committee business. If you would like to become involved with our committee, please contact me directly. Volunteering in any manner, whether it be suggesting a topic for any of the above opportunities, writing a 101 Practice Series article, or planning a program, is encouraged and appreciated. I will be utilizing the YLD-Children and the Law listserve to update members on committee business and to solicit committee member participation. Please subscribe to the YLD-Children and the Law listserve, listed on website, so that you can stay up to date on all committee matters.

I am always open to suggestions on how to make the Children and the Law Committee more accessible and useful to its members. Please contact me at the email address below with any questions, feedback, or suggestions you may have regarding our committee.

I look forward to meeting and working with all of you this coming year.

Best,

Mia L. Kern

Chair, Committee on Children and the Law

Contact: mkern18@gmail.com