

Pre-Law School Considerations

Making the decision to go to law school for a career in child advocacy is an important and potentially expensive one—you'll need to make sure that it's the right decision for you.

Before taking the first step toward three or even four years of law school ask yourself the questions listed below—you'll need to really think about your answers to help you decide if law is the right path for you.

Another suggestion—visit your undergraduate school's department of career services or, if you have access to a law school in your area, call up their career services office to see if you can talk with an advisor about a legal career path.

Of course, right now, you can simply scroll down and get more information from our site and it's links—good luck!

Step 1

Decide if law school is the right decision for you

Do I really want to go to law school?

*Remember a law degree is important **IF** you are interested in:*

- ✓ *litigation (either direct courtroom work or class-action, impact litigation);*
- ✓ *legislative activities;*
- ✓ *a political career;*
- ✓ *a judicial career; and*
- ✓ *a career teaching the law or teaching law school clinical courses*

And—ask yourself the following questions:

- What do I want to achieve as a child advocate?
- Do I need a law degree to achieve my goals as a child advocate?
- Will a law degree make me a better child advocate or enhance what I want to do as a child advocate?

- What do I want my life to look like in 5 or 10 years?
- Will a career in law help me do that?
- Am I going to law school for me or for someone else?

- If I don't get into law school the first time I apply, what's my alternate plan?
- Would I be happier doing something else?

Step 2

OK—you know you want to go to law school—so what's next?

- Make an appointment with your school's pre-law advisor to discuss your law school options
- If your school doesn't have a pre-law advisor, go to your school's career advisor and get a letter of reciprocity to a local school that either has a pre-law advisor or that is a law school and make an appointment to discuss your options
- Check out information and options by:
 - Linking to the Law School Admission Council at www.lsac.org. This site will walk you through the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS), Choosing a Law School, Applying to Law School, and Resources
 - Looking at Petersons.com/law which will help you search for a law school, explore alternatives to law school, finance your education, and prepare for the Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT)
- Sign Up for and Prepare to Take the LSAT
 - www.review.com/law – Princeton Review Website. Provides information on various law schools, good source of test preparation materials and courses.
 - www.kaplan.com – Kaplan Testing Center. Information on LSAT preparation as well as various law schools and application procedures.
- Research Law Schools
 - <http://stu.findlaw.com/> - Great source of comprehensive law school information and law student resources.
 - <http://thor.prohosting.com/~gadbudha/lawschoolbystate.htm> – List of law schools arranged according to state with links to their respective web pages.
 - www.utexas.edu/law/faculty/bleiter/LGOURMET.HTM – Educational Quality Rankings of US Law Schools, very academic rankings, focusing on faculties, publications, and reputations.
 - www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/beyond/bchome.htm – US News and World Report Rankings of US law schools. Not that reliable and skewed based on job placements and class size, yet extremely popular and relied-upon rankings.

→ www.abanet.org/legaied/home.html – American Bar Association Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar. Includes guides to law schools, 20and comprehensive information about law school and pre-law opportunities.

→ www.aals.org – The Association of American Law Schools. Information and statistics on American law schools, *pro bono* opportunities and lots of information on law faculties.

→ http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/svp/carct/matrix.html – Boston College Career Center Admissions Grid. Provides students with information regarding their standing based on the percentiles for GPA and LSAT scores. Allows them to determine which schools are likely to admit them based solely on their numerical rankings.

□ You can also look at

The American Bar Association's main website at www.abanet.org

The American Association of American Law Schools website at www.aals.org

B. Choosing the Right Law School

