



Dawne Mitchell

- Chief Attorney, Juvenile Rights Practice, The Legal Aid Society, New York, USA

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- 2017 - Present Chief Attorney, Juvenile Rights Practice, The Legal Aid Society, New York, New York
- 2011 - 2017 Attorney in Charge, JRP, Bronx Trial office
- 2006 - 2011 Deputy Attorney in Charge, JRP, Bronx Trial office
- 2001 - 2006 Assistant Attorney in Charge, JRP, Bronx & NY Trial offices
- 1996 - 2001 Staff Attorney
- 1993 - 1996 Staff Attorney, IOLA Fellow, New York Legal Assistance Group, New York, New York
- 1988 - 1990 Operations Management Development, Bank of Boston, Boston, NY

BIOGRAPHY

Dawne Mitchell is the Chief Attorney of the Juvenile Rights Practice at The Legal Aid Society in New York City. Dawne's legal career spans over two decades and demonstrates her deep passion for justice and compassion for the most vulnerable in our community.

Dawne oversees the Juvenile Rights Practice which provides legal representation clients who appear before the New York City Family and Criminal Youth Parts Courts in all five boroughs. Last year, Dawne's multidisciplinary team of more than 300 staff attorneys, social workers, paralegal, investigators, support staff and volunteers represented more than 30,000 children. In addition to representing many thousands of children and young adults each year in trial and appellate courts, the Juvenile Rights Practice pursues impact litigation and other law reform initiatives on behalf of young New Yorkers.

As an integral leader at The Legal Aid Society, Dawne's transformational management style, has served to empower children and families and has led to fundamental advancements in the practice. Dawne's leadership in the field has challenged status quo, racial disparities and systemic issues that have led to improved outcomes. One example is her pursuit to "decriminalize" and "problematize" youth in foster care. To that end, her team challenged the city's decades old draconian policy of seeking arrest warrants for runaway foster youth. On the youth justice front, her work has contributed to ground-breaking criminal justice reform with the enactment of Raise the Age and Raise the Lower Age legislation which redefined criminal responsibility of youth in New York. Pressing forward, Dawne's on a mission to ensure every child has an attorney present during a police interrogation. Fighting to protect the rights of young people at police precincts will put an end to false confessions that often lead to the false convictions, like those seen in the case of the Central Park Five.

Dawne values collaborative approach to problem solving and working closely with leaders to build stronger and more conscientious child centered policy and best practices. Dawne has received several honors and professional appointments. She serves on the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children. She is the recent past- Chair of Council on Children at the New York City Bar Association and is the Vice President of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Counsel for Children and member of the Board of Directors of the National Public Defender Association. Dawne serves as a member of the First Department Advisory Committee in New York. Dawne established the Juvenile Rights Law Clinic at New York Law School, where she is an Adjunct Professor of Law in an effort to continue to develop skilled trial advocates for vulnerable youth and families. Dawne has a B.A. from Spelman College and J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law.