**Advocacy for Youth in Congregate Care during COVID-19**

**Thursday, June 25, 2020**

**3:00-4:30 PM ET**

Federal and state law, as well as social science research, support the least-restrictive, most family-like placement for youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Despite that, many youth, particularly older youth, in both systems continued to be placed in congregate care at alarming rates. The risks and concerns of congregate care placement are heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Attorneys play a key role in advocating to get and keep their clients out of congregate care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Join attorneys from around the country to learn why congregate care placement is particularly risky during the pandemic, and what attorneys can do to zealously advocate for their clients that are placed in or may be placed in congregate care. Participants will walk away with best practices and advocacy tips that are applicable during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

**Speakers**

**Jennifer Rodriguez, JD, Youth Law Center**  
Jennifer Rodriguez, JD, is the Executive Director of the Youth Law Center (YLC), advocating to transform foster care and juvenile justice systems across the country so youth can thrive. Before coming to YLC in 2007, she served at the California Youth Connection, a nationally recognized foster youth advocacy organization.

**Jennifer Pokempner, JD, Juvenile Law Center**  
Jennifer Pokempner, JD, leads transition-aged youth projects at Juvenile Law Center. She focuses on issues related to older youth and young adults in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and does individual and policy advocacy at the state and federal levels. She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania and Temple Law Schools.

**Tom Welshonce, JD, KidsVoice**  
Tom Welshonce, JD, is a supervisor with KidsVoice in Pittsburgh, where he represents abused and neglected children in courts and school proceedings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Training@NACCchildlaw.org
www.NACCchildlaw.org
NACC COVID-19 Resource Hub