



**SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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During my years as the Philadelphia Family Court Administrative Judge, I presided over thousands of child dependency cases involving abused and neglected children. I was proud to be one of the original Pennsylvania Dependency Benchbook Committee members that released the original Resource Companion in 2011.

As a Supreme Court Justice, I continue to hear these cases. I am aware of the many challenges faced by the children and families entering our Dependency courtrooms. I am also keenly aware of what is at stake in these cases and the myriad of issues presented in dependency proceedings. I am now the Supreme Court Justice leading Pennsylvania's Dependency Court Improvement Program.

As the Supreme Court Justice leading Pennsylvania's Dependency Court Improvement Program, I want to encourage you to utilize the Benchbook Resource Companion. The Resource Companion contains only articles reviewed by the Benchbook Committee and deemed core to judicial understanding. The Resource Companion is designed to assist judges and judicial officers working to ensure safe, timely, permanent homes for abused and neglected children. The Resource Companion provides valuable information and is to be used as an adjunct resource to the Pennsylvania Dependency Benchbook.


Benchbook Committee members reviewed 152 research papers, articles, and practice guides, selecting only the very best to be included in this revised document. The Resource Companion topical sections were carefully chosen by trial judges currently overseeing dependency proceedings, making them relevant and useful. While all sections have been updated, this edition of the Resource Companion includes new sections and resources on Autism, Implicit Bias, LGBTQA+ issues, and Reasonable Efforts.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the Benchbook Committee Chairperson, President Judge Craig Miller, and the entire Committee for their work on this edition. Their efforts have produced a revised document containing relevant and timely information I am confident you will find helpful. I'd also like to sincerely thank Sandy Moore, Office of Children and Families in the Courts Director, and her staff, who provided tireless support to the Committee.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who reads and uses this resource to assist Pennsylvania's most vulnerable children and families. The world is constantly changing, our knowledge continually growing, and both impact how we interact with others. I sincerely believe the knowledge contained within this Resource Companion, identified by judicial peers, will advance your understanding of the issues facing today's children and families. But more importantly, I trust that knowledge will strengthen your work to help children and families lead safe, happy, and productive lives.

I leave you with words of wisdom from Maya Angelou, and championed by Sandy Moore, which exemplifies our mission to improve the lives of children and families in Pennsylvania: "*Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.*"

Warmest regards,



Kevin