



Changing Family Units Create Demand for Parent-Child Law Practice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lansing

LANSING, Mich. — Family units seem to change more and more every year, creating a need for new practice areas to open. To serve these needs, Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith has started the practice area of **Parent-Child Law**. Parent-Child Law includes the following challenging cases:

- Representing adults who are accused of child abuse or neglect in either criminal or termination of parental rights proceedings
- Representing children in some cases, such as children whose parents are divorcing and children whose parents are engaged in a custody dispute
- Collaborative divorce, where a husband and wife each retain a specially trained attorney and sign a commitment to settle without going to court, enabling them to work out issues directly with one another in a structured and safe environment

Three lawyers will be working in this practice area: **Joseph Kozely**, of the firm's Farmington Hills office, has a Master of Social Work degree, practiced in child and family therapy before becoming an attorney and has years of experience representing adults and children in child abuse/neglect cases; **Nichole Derks**, with the firm's Lansing office, has experience in criminal defense and litigation of divorce and custody matters and also represents parents and juveniles who are charged with crimes; and **Kirsten McNelly**, of the firm's Lansing office, has experience in family law cases, including abuse/neglect, termination of parental rights, contested custody and property division matters, and both domestic and international adoption and is trained to practice collaborative divorce.

Kozely commented that, "Today's family faces unique changes and this collaborative group is serving their needs." When asked about the new practice area, McNelly stated, "I feel that the Parent-Child Law group will be a great help to clients in that there are so many new legal issues facing modern families. Foster Swift has an experienced team in place that can navigate the ins and outs of the legal system in an efficient, confidential, and respectful manner."

According to a Child Protective Services report, the state of Michigan has seen a steady increase in child abuse/ neglect cases and complaints from 1999-2008, showing a growing demand for this type of law practice across the state. There has also been an increase in the number of divorces in the state according to the Department of Community Health, displaying yet another reason for this type of practice area to be needed in Michigan.