

In fulfilling its obligations under the contract and meeting the responsibilities of the Office of Child Welfare Parental Defense, the PDA, in FY 2012:

- Produced, in partnership with the Office of the Guardian Ad Litem, an annual conference designed to improve the quality of legal representation. 162 people attended the conference. 123 attorneys received 11.5 hours - including 1 hour each of Ethics, and Professionalism and Civility - of CLE credits. 35 attendees identified themselves as contract attorneys.

The 2012 Annual Conference was very well received. Ninety-one percent of the survey respondents found the conference relevant to their practice. Nine percent of the respondents found it “somewhat” relevant.

One hundred percent of the survey respondents rated the conference as either “good” or “excellent.” Thirty eight percent of the respondents rated the conference as “good.” Sixty two percent rated it as “excellent.”

Eighteen percent of the respondents indicated that this was their first time attending the conference.

- Held seminars on telling a compelling story during opening statements in a TPR trial. Seven individuals attended the seminar in Cedar City and five attended the seminar in Moab.
- Conferred with, and acted as a resource for parental defense attorneys in Utah. Continued to provide valuable information – practice tips, legislative and legal updates, and news relevant to representing parents - via e-bulletins and newsletters.
- Extended financial assistance to indigent parental defendants for expert witness services, paralegal services, and court transcripts on appeal, subject to certain monetary limits.

The PDA continues to solicit practitioners and observe court proceedings for ideas about educational and training opportunities to help ensure that it continues to provide effective training to parental defense attorneys.