

Bronx County Family Court – Help Center

- ▶ In the Bronx, we created a multifunctional Help Center conveniently located on the first floor.
- ▶ Developed multiple collaborative partnerships with agencies and legal service providers.
- ▶ Reassigned staff & tasks Poor fiscal climate (Courts have history of status quo, regardless of changes)
- ▶ Increased Community Outreach
- ▶ Instituted and piloted several service friendly projects.





Why the Bronx Needed a Center

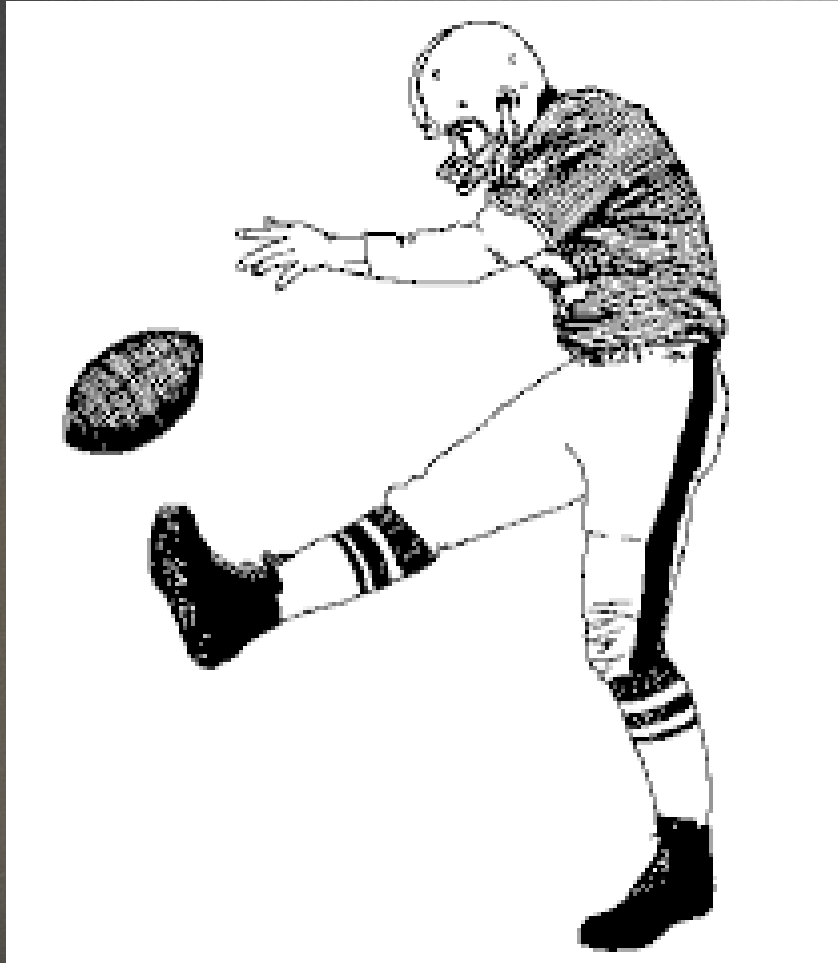
- ▶ The Bronx had the most Judicial Filings of any Family Court in NYS (approx. 57,000)
- ▶ Poorest County in NYS, great demand for legal services
- ▶ Large non-English speaking population
- ▶ Lowest educational levels in NYS
- ▶ Old building, difficult to navigate
- ▶ Poor service, long wait time, cutoffs

Anatomy of the Bronx Help Center

- ▶ Eight room Complex, including courtroom, located on 1st Floor
- ▶ Petition/docketing room, all petitions (200 p/day), motions, OTSC, etc. Record Room services
- ▶ DIY (A2J) w/ 9 Public Access stations in waiting room (Seating for only 64)
- ▶ Courtroom for Emergency Apps
- ▶ Interview rooms pro bono, agencies, programs, partnerships.
- ▶ Wi-Fi, TV – infomercials, materials
- ▶ Triage, Interpreters Counters
- ▶ Results: increased filings, decreased wait times, reduced staffing needs



Successful Collaborative Effort



- ▶ Elderly or Mobility Challenged victims of DV could appear remotely via phone then video.
- ▶ Each County in NYS has a designated agency to assist the elderly.
- ▶ Zero cost to implement
- ▶ DV APP – UCS obtained funding via a STOP Grant to have **PBN's LHI** and the Court's Case management system communicate.
- ▶ Comprehensive wraparound services

- ▶ In 2016, the NYS passed court sponsored legislation specifically allow video appearance for DV for **safety concerns or undue hardship**.
- ▶ Project overseen by the **Hon. Deborah A. Kaplan**, Statewide Coordinating Judge for Family Violence Cases
- ▶ Digitally sign petition, Secure email.
- ▶ Reach anyone, anywhere (home, shelter, Police pct., hospital, even library). HUGE operational change.

