



**South Carolina
Legal Services**

Balancing the Scales of Justice

Our Community



Diversity is More Than Race

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Mission Statement

A statewide law firm that provides civil legal services to protect the rights and represent the interest of low income South Carolinians.

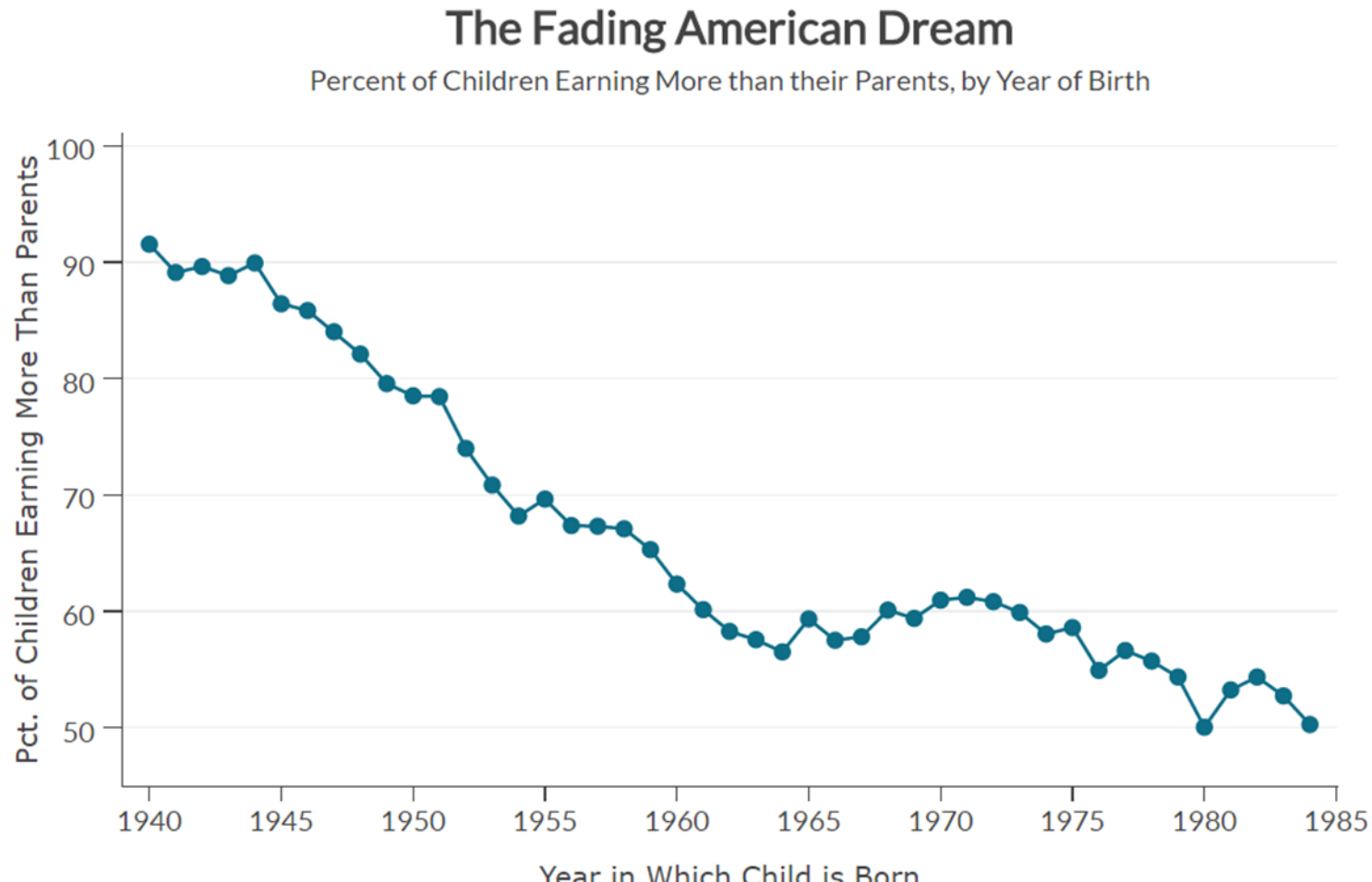


SCLS Education Unit Belief

- ▶ A public education is the only real opportunity that a child living in poverty will have to break the cycle of poverty.
- ▶ We believe in the public education system.

Equality of Opportunity Project

► <http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org>



Income Mobility Study

Raj Chetty of Harvard University- released January 2014

The chances of children raised in the bottom 5th income level to rise to the top 5th income level.

- ▶ Aiken area 4.6%
- ▶ Bennettsville area 3.3%
- ▶ Barnwell area 4.0%
- ▶ Charleston area 5.4%
- ▶ Charlotte area 4.3%
- ▶ Columbia area 4.2%
- ▶ Florence area 4.7%
- ▶ Greenville area 4.9%
- ▶ Spartanburg area 4.0%
- ▶ Sumter area 4.2%

Poverty

- ▶ In 2015 According to the National Center for Children in Poverty 227,897 children live in poor families.
 - ▶ Poor is defined as 100% of the federal poverty guidelines.
 - ▶ Low Income is defined as 100-200% of the federal poverty guidelines.
-
- ▶ National 21%
 - ▶ South Carolina 26%



Poverty in Perspective

- ▶ Students living in households at 130% of the federal poverty guidelines qualify for free meals at school.
- ▶ Students living in households with income up to 185% of the federal poverty guidelines qualify for reduced meals at school.
- ▶ "South Carolina's TANF [welfare] program is approximately 50 percent of the federal poverty level."
- ▶ According to SCDSS "23,795 South Carolina residents received TANF benefits" and approximately 76% of TANF recipients are children.
- ▶ Legal Options

Ageing Primary Caregiver

- ▶ Many people are waiting until later to have children
- ▶ Nationwide, 2.7 million grandparents are raising grandchildren, and about one-fifth of those have incomes that fall below the poverty line, according to census figures.
- ▶ 5.8 million children are living with their grandparents, as the parents struggle with a variety of problems such as financial hardship, drug and alcohol addiction, prison time, domestic violence, divorce and more.
- ▶ The number of grandparents raising grandchildren is rising
- ▶ 13.5% of African American, 6.5% of Hispanic, and 4.1% of Caucasian American children are being raised by grandparents

Grandparents as Parents

- ▶ Research Evidence
 - ▶ Children raised by their grandparents may need:
 - ▶ substantial stability in their schooling
 - ▶ placement with the same teachers and classmates in consecutive years.
 - ▶ social skills training
 - ▶ skills to establish and maintain friendships.
 - ▶ academic and homework assistance
 - ▶ tutoring
 - ▶ peer, adult mentor, or school professional that could provide help with homework completion.

Grandparents as Parents

Social workers can also help grandparents by connecting them with community agencies and resources that provide therapeutic, financial, and social service assistance.

- ▶ referral sources for:
 - ▶ After-school care,
 - ▶ Medical and dental treatment,
 - ▶ Community-based counseling, and
 - ▶ Legal services
 - ▶ Locating appropriate community activities such as sports and music programs
 - ▶ Summer camps



Grandparents as Parents Resources

The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging

**AAA - Region I (Anderson,
Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee,
Pickens and Spartanburg)**

SC Appalachian Council of
Governments

30 Century Circle Greenville, SC 29607
864-242-9733

**AAA - Region III (Chester,
Lancaster, York and Union)**

Catawba Area Agency on Aging

2051 Ebenezer Road, Ste. B, Rock Hill,
SC 29732

803-329-9670, (800) 662-8330 (toll
free) www.catawba-aging.com

**AAA - Region II (Abbeville, Edgefield,
Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick and
Saluda)**

Upper Savannah Council of Governments

430 Helix Road, Greenwood, SC 29646
800-922-7729 (toll-free) 864-941-8069

**AAA - Region IV (Fairfield,
Lexington, Newberry, Richland)**

Central Midlands Council of Governments

236 Stoneridge Drive, Columbia, SC
29210

803-376-5390, 866-394-4166 (toll free)

<http://aging.sc.gov>



The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging

<http://aging.sc.gov>

AAA - Region V (Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun and Orangeburg)

Lower Savannah Council of Governments

2748 Wagener Road, Aiken, SC 29801
803-649-7981

AAA - Region VII (Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marion, and Marlboro)

Vantage Point, Hartsville, SC 29551

843-383-8632

AAA - Region IX (Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester)

Trident Area Agency

4450 Leeds Place W, Suite B, N. Charleston, SC
29405
843-554-2275

AAA - Region VI (Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter)

Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments

36 West Liberty, Sumter, SC 29151
803-775-7381

AAA - Region VIII (Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg)

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments

1230 Highmarket Street, Georgetown, SC 29440
843-546-4231

AAA - Region X (Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper)

Lowcountry Council of Governments

I-95 Exit 33 Hwy. 17, Point South, SC 29945-0098
843-726-5536



Discipline and Behavior

Poverty, Trauma and health issues affect children's brains and cognitive development.

▶ **Students living in Poverty**

- ▶ Richland One 73.7%
- ▶ Horry County 64.6%
- ▶ Charleston 53.3%
- ▶ Marion 87.9%
- ▶ Marlboro 82.8%
- ▶ Anderson 3 72.7%

- ▶ Look for and be sensitive to underlying causes for behaviors
 - ▶ Disabilities
 - ▶ Unstable home environment
- ▶ Develop programs that address behavior concerns without removing the child from the school
- ▶ Eliminate zero tolerance policies in your district
- ▶ Champion best-practice schools and administrators in your districts
- ▶ Together we can reduce poverty in South Carolina by keeping kids in schools and preparing them for life.

Mental Illness

- ▶ According to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 18% of adults have an anxiety disorder and 8% of children and teenagers “experience the negative impact of an anxiety disorder” in our communities.
- ▶ Genetics
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Legal Options



Domestic Violence

- ▶ In 2015 South Carolina was the deadliest state in terms of the number of women killed by men.
- ▶ In 2016 South Carolina was ranked 5th deadliest state in terms of the number of women killed by men.
- ▶ Unfortunately for the past 18 years South Carolina has been on the top 10 of this list.
- ▶ What does that say about the social emotional development of our children?

- ▶ Legal Options



Abuse and Neglect

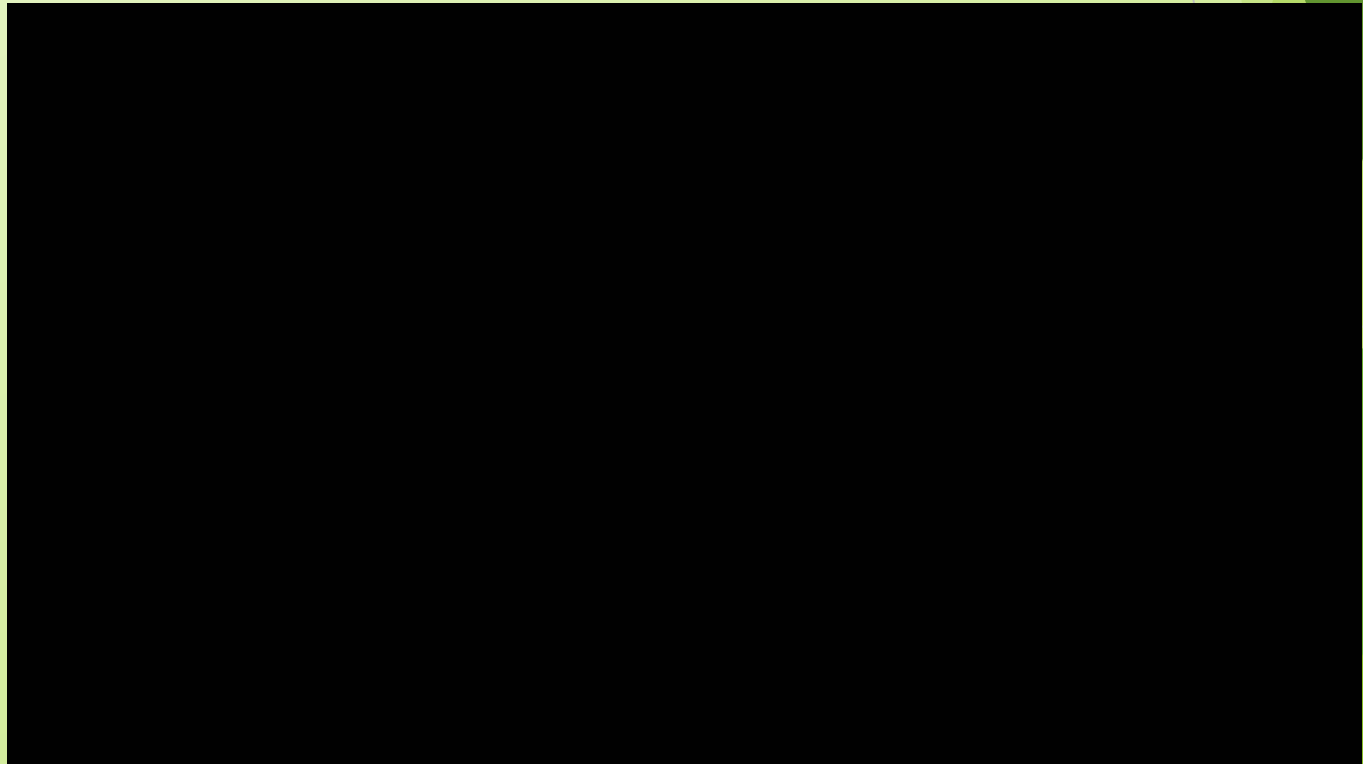
- ▶ Most school employees are mandated reporters. Avoid creating policy that adds a step in the process before reporting abuse and neglect.
- ▶ It may not be easy to report because we do not have one phone number or website but you need to do your part.
- ▶ If you have questions refer your staff to USC School of Law's Children's Law Center for training on mandatory reporting of suspected abuse and neglect.

- ▶ Legal Options



Case Study

How Can We Help?



Who is income eligible?

- ▶ Screening Process
- ▶ Federal Poverty Guidelines
 - ▶ (125-200%)
- ▶ Limited Assets
- ▶ Specific Grant Exceptions





South Carolina Legal Services

SCLS has 9 offices around the state, and serves all 46 counties in South Carolina



Which areas of law?

- ▶ Consumer/Finance
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Income Maintenance/Public Benefits
- ▶ Elder Law and Miscellaneous



Consumer/Finance Law

To secure and retain property and enforce consumer protection laws

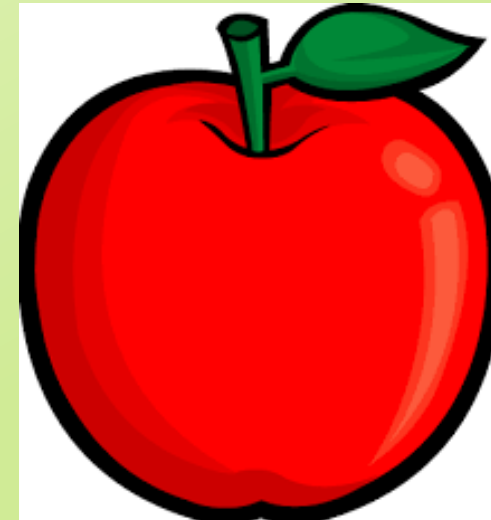
- ▶ Bankruptcy/Debtor Relief (Chapter 7 and 13)
- ▶ Collection (Repossession/Deficiency / Garnishment)
- ▶ Contracts/Warranties
- ▶ Collection Practices/Creditor Harassment
- ▶ Predatory Lending Practices
- ▶ Loans/ Installment Purchase
- ▶ Public Utilities
- ▶ Unfair Sales and Practices
- ▶ Other Consumer/Finance



Education

To ensure and maintain access to education

- ▶ Discipline
 - ▶ Suspension
 - ▶ Expulsion
- ▶ Special Education
 - ▶ IDEA
 - ▶ Section 504
- ▶ Access
 - ▶ Bilingual
 - ▶ Residency
 - ▶ Testing
 - ▶ Enrollment
- ▶ Vocation Education
- ▶ Student Financial Aid
- ▶ School Fees and Charges
- ▶ Other Education



Employment

To ensure economic stability and access to employment remedies

- ▶ Employment Discrimination
- ▶ Unemployment Compensation
- ▶ Wage Claims
- ▶ Earned Income Tax Credit
- ▶ Other Tax Issues
- ▶ Employee Rights
- ▶ Wrongful termination
- ▶ Removal of Barriers to Employment
- ▶ Other Employment Issues



Family

To ensure safety, housing, and economic stability

- ▶ Adoption
- ▶ Visitation
- ▶ Custody
- ▶ Divorce/Separation
 - ▶ physical cruelty
- ▶ Name Change
- ▶ Guardianships and Conservatorships
- ▶ Domestic Abuse
 - ▶ Orders of Protection
- ▶ Child Support Modifications
- ▶ Contempt
- ▶ Other Family



Health

To ensure access to health care

- ▶ Medicaid
- ▶ Medicare
- ▶ Government Children's Health Insurance Programs
- ▶ Home and Community Based Care
- ▶ Private Health Insurance
- ▶ Long Term Health Care Facilities
- ▶ State and Local Health
- ▶ Other Health



Housing

To ensure sufficient quality and quantity of affordable housing

- ▶ Federally Subsidized Housing Rights
 - ▶ Section 8
- ▶ Homeownership/Real Property
 - ▶ not foreclosures
- ▶ Private Landlord/Tenant
- ▶ Public Housing
- ▶ Mobile Homes
- ▶ Housing Discrimination
- ▶ Mortgage Foreclosures
- ▶ Mortgage Predatory Lending
- ▶ Other Housing



Income Maintenance Public Benefits

To obtain and maintain economic benefits

- ▶ Social Security
- ▶ Food Stamps
- ▶ SSDI
 - ▶ if private attorneys won't accept
- ▶ SSI
- ▶ Veteran's Benefits
- ▶ State and Local Income Maintenance
 - ▶ formerly TANF/FI
- ▶ Other Income Maintenance





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Miscellaneous and Elder Law

To ensure access to the civil legal justice system

- ▶ Legal Assistance to Non-Profits
- ▶ Indian/Tribal Law
- ▶ Wills/Estates
- ▶ Advance Directives
- ▶ Probating Estates
- ▶ Heirs Property Issues
- ▶ Other Miscellaneous



Emergencies Not Listed

Requires special case review and acceptance by management

- ▶ Immediate Legal Action Required
 - ▶ To secure or preserve a necessity of life;
 - ▶ To protect or eliminate a significant risk to health or safety of client or immediate family member; or
 - ▶ Address other significant legal issue that arises because of a new and unforeseen circumstance.



How to Apply

By phone:

- ▶ Call the Legal Aid Telephone Intake Service at **1-888-346-5592**
- ▶ Open Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Online:

- ▶ www.sclegal.org

In person, at a local SCLS office:

- ▶ For emergencies only (e.g., served with legal papers)
- ▶ At designated locations in outlying counties



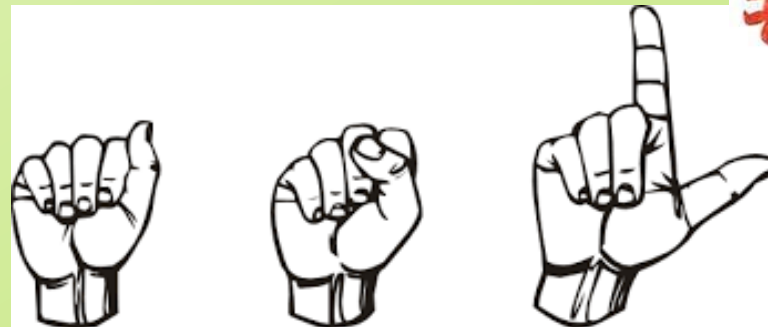
Additional Services

Disabled Individuals

Non-English Speakers

Individuals with Vision and/or Hearing Impairments:

- **Home visits**
- **Spanish speakers on staff**
- **all offices equipped to handle all foreign languages**
- **Braille**
- **sign language interpreters**





What happens after the intake?

- ▶ The applicant's information is transferred to the appropriate local Legal Services office for further action
- ▶ Applicants will be notified in about 1 week's time regarding their application.

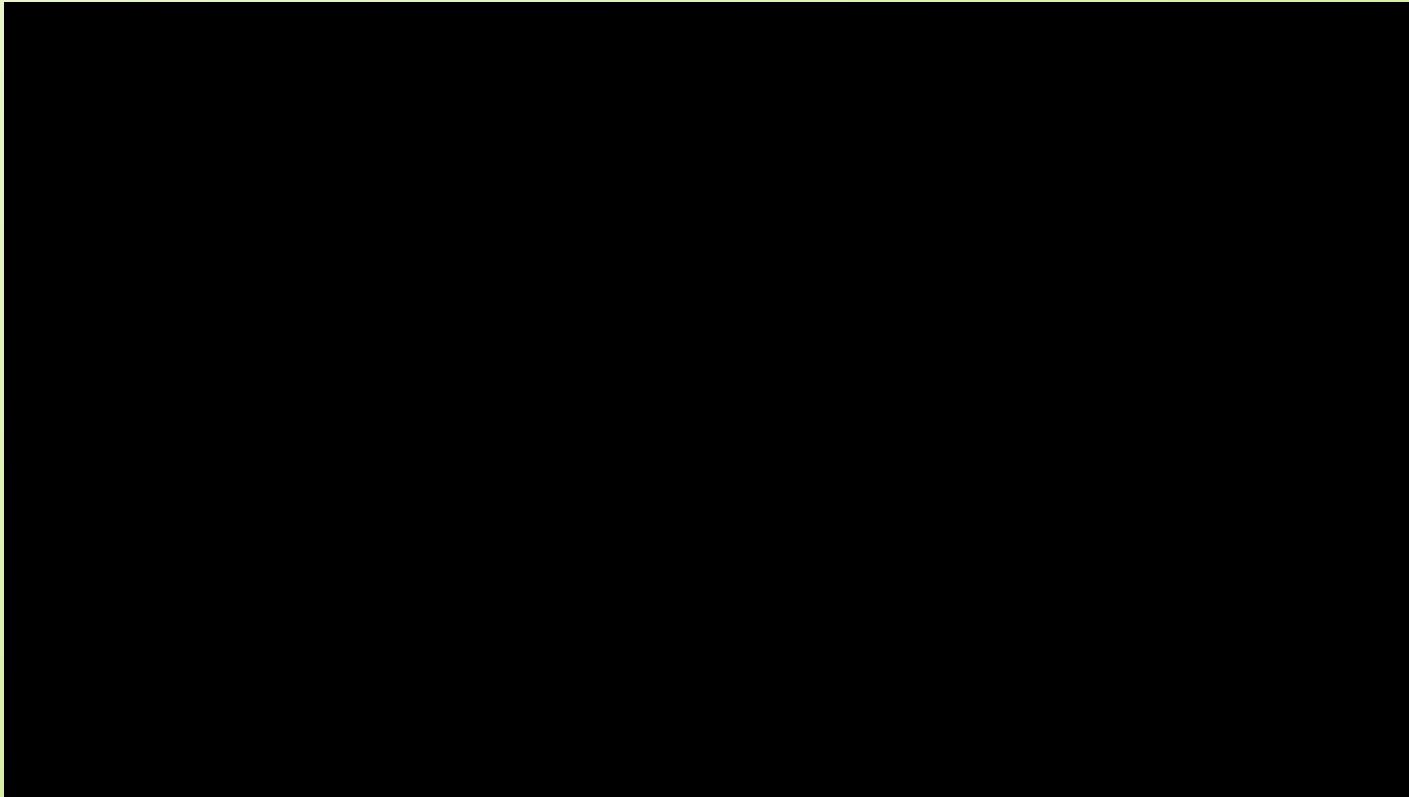


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How Can You Help?

- ▶ Remember that we are a community.



Question and Answer Session





Thank You!

Contact Us:

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