

Online Masterclasses for lawyers representing children in the criminal legal system



First Tuesday of each month 5:00pm - 6:30pm
Starting 4th November 2025
£30 / £15 (YJLC members)

Register for your place
[here](#) or email info@yjlc.uk

The SRA and the BSB require lawyers representing children to have specialist knowledge and skills which are continually updated. With the Ministry of Justice introducing an uplift to Youth Court fees, there is now a heightened expectation that children will benefit from higher-quality legal representation. Further regulatory developments are anticipated.



Our monthly masterclasses offer access to the country's leading youth justice lawyers at exceptionally good value, helping you stay ahead of regulatory requirements while delivering the best possible representation for children.

Masterclass Cost

Price per class	
Member prices*	Non-members prices
£15	£30

*Email info@yjlc.uk to learn more about becoming a YJLC member individually or for your firm / chambers

Masterclass Schedule

#	Date	Masterclass
1	04 Nov 2025	Effective Participation & Special Measures › Fitness to plead › Modifications › Instructing child-specific experts
2	02 Dec 2025	Child Criminal Exploitation 1 › How to spot a child Victim of Trafficking › Decisions from the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)
3	06 Jan 2026	Child Criminal Exploitation 2 › The Section 45(4) defence for children › Common law defence of duress
4	03 Feb 2026	Making Written Representations to the CPS on behalf of a Child › How to challenge negative decisions
5	03 Mar 2026	Bail & Remand Overnight police detention and court bail
6	07 April 2026	Public Funding › Certificates for instructed advocates and public funding appeal cases
7	05 May 2026	Advising Children for Police Interview
8	02 June 2026	Music Based Evidence (Gangs and Slang)
9	07 July 2026	Bad Character, Hearsay and Anonymous Witnesses
10	04 Aug 2026	Mitigation
11	01 Sep 2024	Reporting Restrictions & Anonymity Applications
12	06 Oct 2026	Ground Rules Hearing and Intermediaries

Trainer bios



Aika Stephenson

Legal Director, Just for Kids Law

Aika Stephenson is one of the UK's leading youth justice solicitors and the Legal Director of Just for Kids Law. With over 20 years' experience representing children in criminal proceedings, Aika brings unparalleled insight into the realities of youth defence work. Twice named Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year, she is also the author of *In Their Defence: Fighting for Youth Justice One Child at a Time* — a powerful account of her work and the systemic challenges faced by young defendants.



Shauneen Lambe

Director, Impact Law for Social Justice
and YJLC Founder

Shauneen Lambe is an internationally recognised lawyer, qualified as both a barrister in the UK and an attorney in the USA. She began her career at the Louisiana Crisis Assistance Center, representing clients facing the death penalty — including those accused of offences committed as children. A founding leader in youth justice reform, Shauneen is an Ashoka Fellow, an Eisenhower Fellow, and co-author of *Youth Justice Law and Practice* (the leading LAG textbook for lawyers).



Mel Stooks

Head of the Youth Crime Team,
GT Stewart Solicitors

Mel Stooks is an exceptionally experienced youth justice solicitor and Head of the Youth Team at GT Stewart Solicitors & Advocates. Since qualifying in 1998, she has dedicated her career to defending young and vulnerable people, often representing clients from police station to trial to ensure trust and continuity. An accomplished trial advocate, Mel regularly defends children charged with serious offences, including murder, and has particular expertise in neurodiversity and criminal exploitation. She has contributed to national best practice guidance, including the ICCA's *Advocacy for Children in Conflict with the Law*, and delivers specialist training for lawyers and other professionals working within the youth justice system.

They will be joined by other leading youth justice lawyers as they help develop your skills and knowledge in representing children facing criminal allegations.

Learn how to apply youth justice law and procedure effectively, and explore real case studies that reveal the tactics and approaches that work in practice. Each session is designed to strengthen your case preparation and advocacy skills and to enhance your ability to achieve the best results for your clients.



Register for your place [here](#) or email info@yjlc.uk

‘Barristers practising in youth proceedings should develop and maintain specialist knowledge and skills because they deal with some of the most vulnerable people in our justice system—children who often have complex needs and limited understanding of legal processes’



Bar Standards Board

‘A good youth court solicitor will maintain their competence by keeping their knowledge and skills up to date and applying them effectively in....Youth justice law, guidance, and procedure’



Solicitors Regulatory Authority



Youth Justice Legal Centre legal guides on these subjects are endorsed by The Law Society of England and Wales and funded in part by the Ministry of Justice.

Visit: yjlc.uk