

# CORE VALUES

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## FAIRNESS | JUSTICE FOR ALL | COMMUNITY

### **Do's and don'ts**

**Do start every conversation with shared values, like justice for all, fairness, safety, and security**

Don't make the story about lawyers, funding numbers, or the legal process

**Do focus on how you help people who face life-changing situations and how civil legal aid helps local communities**

Don't talk about civil legal aid as an anti-poverty program

**Do frame civil legal aid as a vital constituent service**

Don't position civil legal aid as a partisan issue

**Do emphasize strong, bipartisan support for civil legal aid from the courts, the business community, faith leaders and law firms**

**Access to justice is a founding principle of our republic**

**Justice for all is a shared idea we all pledge allegiance to**

**Ensuring fairness in the justice system is a fundamental American value**

Your message about impact should stay focused on **who you help**, and what elimination of LSC funding would do to them. Veterans denied rightfully earned benefits, women trapped in abusive relationships, parents seeking custody of their children, families facing wrongful evictions or foreclosures. This is much more powerful than focusing on staff, structure, systems, funding history, and office closure.

Remember: Most people have never heard of LSC or civil legal aid at all. Take this opportunity to educate them about the basics, that there are power imbalances in court, and how every day people are denied their rights by various bureaucracies. Civil legal aid programs across the country come to the rescue of Americans who cannot afford the legal help they need in life-changing situations.