

**BARBARA J. ELIAS-PERCIFUL, JD**

*Director | Texas Lawyers for Children*

Barbara Elias-Perciful is the Director of Texas Lawyers for Children and a past Chair of the Texas State Bar's Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. Barbara received the American Bar Association's 2009 Child Advocacy Award for her extensive service in the child protection field. She also received the 2017 Fairy Davenport Rutland Award for Distinguished Service to Children and Families, given by the Texas State Bar's Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. Barbara serves on the Collaborative Council for the Supreme Court Children's Commission and also on the Commission's Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care. Barbara also served on the Development Committee to start the new State Bar Child Protection Law Section. Barbara graduated second in her class and cum laude from Southern Methodist University's School of Law in 1984. After completing a federal judicial clerkship, she began her law practice in business litigation at Latham & Watkins in California. Barbara continued her practice in business litigation at Carrington, Coleman, Sloman & Blumenthal in Dallas. After taking her first court appointment to represent an abused child, Barbara left Carrington, Coleman to start a private practice devoted exclusively to child abuse issues. Because Barbara was distressed to see the disparity in the quality of legal services provided to corporations and those provided to abused children, in 1995 she founded Texas Loves Children, Inc. ("TLC"), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of child abuse through legal advocacy and education. TLC created Texas Lawyers for Children, which provides statewide assistance to Texas judges and attorneys handling child abuse and neglect cases through an interactive Online Legal Resource and Communication Center. TLC's Online Center received the 2010 Award for Excellence in Social Innovation from the Dallas Center for Nonprofit Management after selection by an independent panel of community leaders. This award is given for the project that best provides "a novel solution to an ongoing social problem that is more effective, efficient, and sustainable...and demonstrates significant positive change around a specific social issue." In 2014 TLC's Online Center received a national award from the Foundation for Improvement of Justice for improving the justice system in the area of child protection, particularly in speeding up the court process and serving as a national model. TLC has replicated the Online Center as the "Child Protection Connection" for California, Alabama, Florida, and Maryland and has the vision of expanding it nationally to help even more children.