

Emma Hetherington

Emma Hetherington is an Assistant Clinical Professor and the Director of the Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Clinic at the University of Georgia School of Law. In 2016, she was charged with the creation of the CEASE Clinic, the first of its kind in the nation. Dedicated to legal representation and advocacy for survivors of child sexual abuse in civil litigation and juvenile court dependency proceedings, CEASE has served over 200 survivors of child sexual abuse since its opening.

Hetherington has represented hundreds of children in juvenile court dependency proceedings who have experienced child abuse and neglect, with a specialized focus on youth ages 14 and up, most of whom have been sexually abused or exploited. She has served as faculty in several national and statewide conferences on child welfare, including the National Child Welfare, Juvenile and Family Law Conference and the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Conference. She has served as an expert for the Georgia General Assembly, providing testimony on proposed legislation directly affecting survivors of child sexual abuse and exploitation and has appeared in local, state and national media, including USA Today.

Hetherington serves on the executive committee for the Athens Sex Trafficking Response and Awareness (STAR) Task Force and is a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council's Georgia Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force, where she serves on the Survivors Supported and Protected work group. Hetherington provides legal consulting services to attorneys and advocates nationwide on matters involving child sexual abuse and exploitation, and her research focuses on the rights of survivors of the commercial and sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), interdisciplinary trauma-informed practice, and therapeutic jurisprudence. Before joining the law school's faculty, Hetherington served as the managing attorney for the Georgia Law Center for the Homeless and as a senior child advocate attorney for the DeKalb County Child Advocacy Center.

Prior to her work as a lawyer, Hetherington taught special education at the Emory Autism Center, providing therapeutic services as a certified applied behavioral analysis therapist for individuals with autism and their families.

Hetherington earned her bachelor's degree from Emory University and her Juris Doctor cum laude from Emory's School of Law.