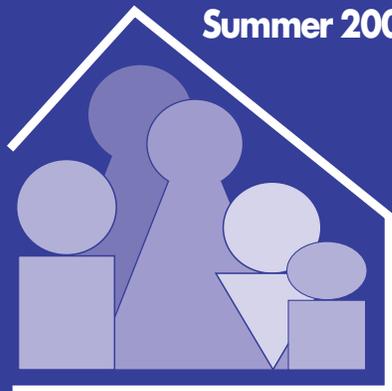


Summer 2006



**NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FOR FAMILY-CENTERED PRACTICE
AND PERMANENCY PLANNING**

at the Hunter College
School of Social Work



A service of the
Children's Bureau/ACF/DHHS

Permanency Planning Today

YOUTH DEFINED PERMANENCY

The names of the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and our newsletter, *Permanency Planning Today*, make it clear that we are all about permanency. But just what does "permanence" mean? The Federal Government, public child welfare agencies, and the other sources offer formal definitions, but perhaps it is the definitions that come from young people themselves that help us best understand what permanency means to them. What is your definition of permanency? What is it that each individual child and adolescent sees as permanency for him or herself?

Federal Definition

"A child may be said to have achieved a permanent home when the child is reunified with his or her family, when a finalized adoption has occurred, or when a legal guardian has been established for the child."

US DHHS (2005) Child Welfare Outcomes 2002: Annual Report
http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm#cw

Components of Permanency

PERMANENCY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK:

"Permanency is not a philosophical process, a plan, or a foster care placement, nor is it intended to be a family relationship that lasts only until the child turns age 18. Rather, permanency is about locating and supporting a lifetime family ... Permanency should bring physical, legal and emotional safety and security within the context of a family relationship and allow multiple relationships with a variety of caring adults ... Permanency is achieved with a family relationship that offers safe, stable, and committed parenting, unconditional love and lifelong support, and legal family membership status ... Permanency can be the result of preservation of the family, reunification with birth family; or legal guardianship or adoption by kin, fictive kin, or other caring and committed adults."

NRCFCPPP and Casey Family Programs (2004) Permanency for young people: Framework
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/permanency-for-young-people.html

CALIFORNIA PERMANENCY FOR YOUTH PROJECT:

"Permanency is an enduring family relationship that ... is safe and meant to last lifetime ... offers the legal rights and social status of full family membership ... provides for physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual well-being ... assures lifelong connections to extended family, siblings, other significant adults, family history and traditions, race and ethnic heritage, culture, religion and language."

California Permanency for Youth Project (2005) 4th National Convening on Youth Permanency: Brief Summary
http://www.cypj.org/reports.htm#convening_reports

YOUTH-DEFINED PERMANENCY

Diana Walters, youth, Maine: "Familism: does not rest on biological ties, but rather a reciprocal sense of commitment, sharing, cooperation and intimacy that is taken as the defining bonds between "family" members. It embraces a feeling of invitation, or welcomeness, unconditional love, personal loyalty, and a willingness to sacrifice for others. Familism makes the home a base to which you can always return when your independent endeavors fail or prove unsatisfactory." ... Former Youth in Care: "Having a key to the house would represent a permanent, secure family relationship...."

Quoted in Charles, K. & Nelson, J. (2000). Permanency planning: Creating life long connections
Tulsa, OK: National Resource Center for Youth Development
<http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/publications/monographs/mono.pdf>

RESOURCES: FIND OUT MORE:

Mallon, G.P. (2005). Toolbox no. 3: Facilitating permanency for youth
Washington, DC: Child Welfare League of America. Chapter 3: Defining Permanency



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from the desk of THE DIRECTOR



Youth Defined Permanence

The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning is currently involved in providing technical assistance in several parts of the country with a focus on permanence for adolescents. Wherever we meet with agency staff, we encourage the participation of young people in defining the course of the initiative and engaging in the process of finding permanent connections that are fit for them individually. By including youth in building an understanding of what permanence means in their lives, agencies can improve both programs to help youth appreciate the need for long term connections and support them in developing those connections. What we hear from youth is often the concept that "permanence" is not necessarily what we think it is - that young people have their own ideas about what it takes to make them feel that they have achieved permanence, as well as safety and well-being.

Working with youth towards permanence is challenging for many reasons. Adolescents in out-of-home care are often caught in a situation that pulls them in opposite directions. On one hand, they want -and need- to be connected with caring adults who will be life-long sources of love and support. On the other hand, one of their normative developmental tasks is to separate from adults, identify their own identities and values, and make their own decisions. This is difficult enough for teens who grow up in safe and secure families of origin. For young people who have experienced abuse and neglect, who have been disappointed by adults, and who don't know who or how to trust, this becomes even more problematic. "Normal" teenage rebellion is heightened by the young person's distrust of the adults around him or her, and is often misunderstood by the adults who have no history with the individual teen and his or her behavioral and emotional life.

Add to this the difficulty all teenagers have in comprehending the abstract nature of a word like "permanence" when they are developmentally operating within a structure of concrete

thought that is normal for their age. Then pile on the fact that many teens are living in situations they know are not permanent, and surely would not want to consider that way - whether foster care with strangers, group home, or institution. The accumulation of these dynamics heightens the complexity of the tasks related to achieving permanency for youth.

In order to further practice, in June 2004, the NRCFCPPP and the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice at Casey Family Services co-sponsored a meeting of experts in the field of youth permanency to develop a framework and measurements that can be used by public child welfare agencies throughout the country to improve practice. We included youth at this meeting, and found that even adults who believe strongly that young people should have a voice in the decisions about their lives and their futures were sometimes hesitant to fully embrace that voice. However, adults and youth wrestled with the meaning of permanence, and we believe that together we developed a framework for practice, combined with a way to measure results, that can be particularly helpful to States seeking to improve permanency outcomes for young people. The framework is now being used in several States to guide agencies attempting to improve the way they work with and for the young people in their care.

The Framework, originally published in the Fall 2004 issue of *Permanency Planning Today*, includes one definition of permanence. It is now available on the NRCFCPPP website. In the time since the framework was written, we have continued to learn more about the need for young people to be partners in developing and achieving their own definition of permanence. The box "Youth-Defined Permanency" provides some ideas on what permanence means for young people. We encourage you to think about this issue and engage children and youth in care to understand what permanence means to them as individuals, in helping to define and describe what a permanent outcome will look like for them.

Gerald P. Mallon, DSW

It's been almost one year since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf Coast. I have visited New Orleans several times, and I continue to be overwhelmed with the way these storms have impacted this beautiful area of our country.

Visit our website at
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/disaster_relief.html#summit
for presentations from the 2006 AdoptUsKids Summit, Extraordinary Services in Extraordinary Times - Recovery and Reform.



ADULTISM AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

by **Jorge Velázquez Jr.** and **Maria Garin-Jones**



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In 1988, the William T. Grant Foundation released a report that found the picture painted by adult culture of youth in our society as pervasively negative.

The commission wrote:

There is a portrait of youth that is not only misleading, but harmful. We ought to correct the record out of a sense of fairness, as well as accuracy. These young people desperately need a chance to get started in responsible careers. Instead, they are frequently saddled with the image of being uninterested and unwilling to assume responsibility. Complaining about youth is all too common.¹

If young people had been asked what they thought about this perception of them in 1988, they would have told you they were misunderstood and unfairly treated.

In the decade since this report, what has changed about adult society's view of youth and youth culture? Are young people and teens treated fairly? More importantly, what are we doing to help service providers develop an understanding of and respect for the strengths and abilities of the individual? This is at the core of youth work and cultural competence – understanding and respecting the culture of youth.

Adult Power Over Young Lives

In discussing youth and cultural competence, we must understand the tremendous power adults have over the lives of young people – particularly youth involved with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems. Nearly every aspect of their lives – where they sleep, who they see, what contact they have with their own families, and in some cases the food they eat and the clothes they wear – is decided by adults.

Adults usually exert their influence and authority without regard for the experiences, feelings, or opinions of youth. This form of social control, coupled with the negative perceptions of young people that are prevalent in our society, leads to adultism.² Adultism occurs when adults have both a negative view of young people and the ability to exert control over the lives of youth.

Consider the implications of “adultist” attitudes on young people who are involved with youth-serving systems:

- Adults assume young people are not capable of helping themselves, so they do “for” them. Also known as dysfunctional rescuing, this form of adultism results in lost opportunities for young people to take on new challenges, learn, and develop.
Solution: The alternative to dysfunctional rescuing lies in helping the young person accomplish his or her goals and make healthy decisions.
- Adults may blame young people for the challenges they experience without regard for the environments in which they have grown up. As a result, young people don't have the support they need and lose their motivation to participate in planning that directly affects their lives.
Solution: Ultimately, adults and young people need to engage in open dialogue about what is occurring in the lives of youth and explore the available options. With this type of connection, both youth and adults can take responsibility for their choices.
- Adults may not make efforts to spend time with youth and learn about youth culture. When adults avoid contact with youth, programs and services are based on adult needs, and young people feel alienated from adults.
Solution: Adults need to make an effort to spend time with young people. Making contact ensures that young people and adults have opportunities to learn about each other and develop relationships.

Adultism is cyclical, occurring in the context of the interactions and relationships that adults and youth have with each other. Confronted with adultism, many young people in the care of social service institutions and youth-serving systems feel powerless and in some cases become angry, resentful, and disengaged. Adults may respond by becoming more authoritarian, exercising more control over the young person's life.

Culture is the thoughts, ideas, behavior patterns, customs, values, skills, languages, arts, and religion or faith of a particular

group or individual.³ A young person who has been rejected or abused by his or her family and is subsequently labeled as a threat or danger to others will likely experience isolation and disconnection from his or her culture and identity. In many cases, youth in detention or a controlled institutional environment are stripped of their culture – and thus some of the basic strengths that may be useful to service providers as they develop service plans. When the voices of youth are not heard and staff are not trained or sensitized to the unique social challenges that young people face, these inflexible service systems help create youth who have, essentially, lost all hope for their future.

Breaking the Cycle

What can we do to value youth culture and break the vicious cycle of adultism and youth culture incompetence?

Develop an understanding of youth culture. Make an effort to learn about young people by asking questions and exploring the different facets that are central in their lives.

Demonstrate sensitivity in interactions with youth. Communicate openly and respectfully, refraining from judgment, and thinking about the ways in which our own values affect our relationships with youth.

Develop cultural competence in our work and our interactions with young people. Focus on understanding and valuing the unique talents and unlimited potential that young people offer. Ask questions about culturally competent policies and practices in youth and juvenile services, and inform institutions and systems of care. Assess sources of personal resistance and discomfort.

Most importantly, we can tap into the tremendous energy generated by youth and adults working in partnership. In working together and developing relationships, youth and adults are uniquely positioned to galvanize investment in collective goals, hopes, and dreams and promote cultural competence.

Jorge Velázquez was Director of CWLA's Cultural Competence Division; Maria Garin-Jones was Director of Youth Services for CWLA.

Notes:

1 William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship. (1988). *The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America*. Washington, DC: Author.

2 Adapted from Academy for Educational Development, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. (1995). *Advancing Youth Development – A Curriculum for Youth Workers*. Draft prepared by author in collaboration with National Network for Youth.

3 Definition adopted by CWLA in 1991 and revised in 2001. Available online at www.cwla.org/programs/culturalcompetence.



Child Welfare Information Gateway
PROTECTING CHILDREN ■ STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

The Child Welfare Information Gateway, formerly the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information and the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, provides access to information and resources to help protect children and strengthen families. Its website at www.childwelfare.gov provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, and online databases covering a wide range of topics from prevention to permanency, including child welfare, child abuse and neglect, adoption, search and reunion, and much more.

The topical navigation list makes it easy to find relevant material on any aspect of child welfare along the continuum services:

- family-centered practice
- preventing child abuse and neglect
- responding to child abuse and neglect
- supporting and preserving families
- out-of-home care
- achieving and maintaining permanency
- adoption
- system-wide issues such as cultural competence, assessment, service array, laws and policies, courts, workforce and training, funding, statistics, and systems reform

The Gateway also makes available resources that can connect you with a vast array of information. Their home page provides easy access to powerful tools such as:

- National Adoption Directory, which includes State-by-State contact information for a variety of adoption-related organizations and services including public and licensed private adoption agencies, support groups, State reunion registries, and more.
- Library search, which provides abstracts of materials contained in the collection of close to 50,000 items, with new items added every month. Items selected include peer-reviewed articles, books, evaluation reports, grantee final reports, and program reports.
- Publications Search, which searches on documents that Child Welfare Information Gateway distributes, which include factsheets, bulletins, and research summaries either produced by Information Gateway or other organizations.
- State statutes search, which can help you locate State laws on issues related to child abuse and neglect, child welfare, and adoption.

Child Welfare Information Gateway is a Service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Race Matters in Child Welfare

by **Dennette Derezotes**

Our country has often been described as a melting pot of people from all over the world. A melting pot suggests that all of the components combine together to create something new – a unified whole more than the sum of its parts. However, even as we create a new whole, peoples are unique, with different cultures, histories, strengths and needs, and when we provide services to the whole, we may fail to consider important characteristics of the children and families who we encounter in our efforts.

Throughout the country today black children are overrepresented in the child welfare system in every state. Native American children – Indians, Hawaiians and Alaskans – are all overrepresented in the jurisdictions in which they reside. Latino children are overrepresented in over 10 states. But this information does not fully describe the disproportionality of minority children in the child welfare system. Asians and Pacific Islanders tend to be underrepresented in the child welfare system. And, if we look more closely at Latino representation throughout the country we see that Latinos are overrepresented in some jurisdictions and underrepresented in others.

What are the reasons for this disproportional representation of minority children in the child welfare system? What is the “most appropriate” representation of any group of children in the child welfare system? These are very complex issues that are heightened by the understanding that definitions of abuse and neglect in the child welfare system differ from state to state, which means that the states define who should be within their child welfare systems differently. The Race Matters Consortium (The Consortium) is a national multi-system initiative that promotes strategies that prevent, intervene and eliminate adverse disproportionality and disparities in the child welfare system. Its members com-

prise a national think tank of concerned experts in social work research, practice, public policy, and philanthropy who critically examine the issues related to racial and ethnic disparities and influence policy and practice through education and consultation.

In our examination of the child welfare system we recognize that there are several factors that can impact child welfare system involvement:

Federal and State Policies Guide All Child Welfare Efforts

Policy guidelines determine the parameters within which we work. One example of the importance of how policies are crafted is a very critical child welfare issue – the delicate balance between strengthening and supporting families while protecting children as opposed to choosing one over the other as a priority for child welfare practice. One can easily imagine that a focus on either while neglecting the other would result in very different policies and consequent practices.

Program Administration Affects Casework Practice

Individual state, regional and county offices as well as private agencies implement policies within their own guidelines. This impacts the way workers execute their jobs (i.e. the priority of the administrator becomes the priority of the worker).

Community Configurations are Diverse

Communities are set up in very different ways and have a wide disparity of resources from one to another. Communities that are rich in resources are better equipped to support families. Community composition and availability of resources can impact the way in which a family experiences the child welfare system.

Individual and Family Factors are Unique

Families are diverse. Depending on their internal resources and strengths, families may need different types and levels of external resources. We must consider what we know about the things that strengthen families to work effectively. Families live within the environment of their culture. Do children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds have the same experiences within their families and within their cultures? Children and youth of different racial and ethnic groups may require alternative services to meet their needs. Within families and cultures, each child is unique. Are each child’s needs being addressed within the child welfare system?

The Consortium works to attempt to address as many of these issues as they can, but it is a very large undertaking with multiple dimensions. We are constantly expanding our thoughts and ideas to incorporate new information, people and perspectives. We welcome all interested to join our efforts. More information can be obtained at our website: www.racemattersconsortium.org.



Another national effort, the Casey/Center for the Study of Social Policy Alliance for Racial Equity (The Alliance), has identified six dimensions at which it is necessary to work to bring about change for children and families of color involved with child welfare system. Each dimension is significant, yet is insufficient to achieve the overall goal on its own. The six dimensions are:

1 Legislation, policy change & finance reform:

By increasing awareness among national and state legislators about the relationships between disproportionality/ disparities and structural racism and how existing child welfare policies contribute to racial/ethnic disparities, a policy and finance environment can be created that is supportive of achieving racial equity as an outcome.

2 Research, evaluation & data-based decision-making:

Through research and evaluation, the identification of promising practices and evidence-based solutions can be established. This includes the establishment of partnerships with youth, parents, community agencies, universities, child welfare agencies and family courts, and other stakeholders who will help compile, analyze, report and utilize disproportionality and disparity data.

3 Youth, parent & community partnership & development:

The active engagement of parents, youth, and children of color (including extended families, tribal members, caregivers, and others who are significant in the life of the child and family) as true partners to shape family assessments, case planning, case service design, and the case decision-making process is essential. In this way, the cultural strengths of children, youth and families of color can be taken into consideration, decreasing the influence of negative racial/ethnic stereotypes in ways that acknowledge the adverse impact that structural racism has on family outcomes and ultimately changing agency policies and practices.

4 Public will & communication:

Raising public awareness and will to reduce disproportionality and disparity can be accomplished by developing a well-designed communications message and distribution strategy that raises the

level of discussion, concern and action across communities that is centered on addressing the issues of race, race relations and inequity related to child welfare.

5 Human service workforce development:

Agencies must learn to identify and train culturally competent workers that possess eclectic skills, and provide adequate supervisory supports to provide for their continued development and retention in the workforce.

6 Practice change (site-based implementation):

Improving policies and practices at the key decision making points in the case flow of children through the child welfare system by identifying, designing and utilizing culturally appropriate assessment and decision-making tools, programs and strategies.

What this suggests for everyone who is providing services to children and families is that there are efforts that we can all participate in to make differences in the lives of children and families of color who are involved with the child welfare system. Whether your efforts impact just one or several of these dimensions, know that you are having an impact. It's the work of combining all of these together that will best serve to meet the needs of children and families of color.



Family-centered programs and practices serve the unique needs of children and their families within their communities. At its core, this work requires knowing the

unique strengths and needs of not only the families, but the communities within which they live; and using this information to create positive outcomes for the children and their families.

If you believe that the children and families of color receiving child welfare services experience disproportional representation or disparate treatment, look more closely. There are steps that you can take to begin to address the issues.

1 Pay attention to ongoing agency cultural competence assessment, training and technical assistance to ensure racial equity in agency functioning and outcomes.

Does your agency reflect the community it serves? Does it understand not only the child abuse and neglect challenges of its constituents, but also the culture within which they live? What is being done to support new members of the community that represent different racial and ethnic backgrounds than have traditionally been serviced?

Develop policies, ongoing evaluation, and ongoing training to ensure that the Agency is able to meet the diverse needs of the population it serves. These ongoing efforts should be reflected throughout the systems of the agency - barring none. If individuals developing policies, allocating finances, greeting customers or providing services do not understand the needs, strengths and culture of the individuals entering its doors, they run a great risk of ineffectively providing services.

2 Develop and maintain a vehicle to measure racial equity in agency functioning and outcomes.

How does your agency evaluate if individuals and families of various races, ethnicities and cultures are being served adequately? One essential step that provides agencies with the ability to examine if there are differences in how people are treated by race or ethnicity is actually examining services and outcomes by each of the racial and ethnic groups to determine their representation within the system, the types of difficulties with abuse and neglect they have, the types of services offered them, and the



3 Identify program goals to ensure program activities work to accomplish the identified goals.

Understand clearly what your program goals are. Develop and track program activities to ensure that they serve to meet your identified program goals. Recognize that children and families of various backgrounds may require different activities to meet these same goals. Examine the effectiveness of your work by racial and ethnic group on a regular basis. In quality assurance efforts, clearly define the program goals before tracking them by race and ethnicity.

4 Identify practices that will better serve the needs of the children and families through the ongoing examination of racially sensitive monitoring structures.

Once you have established clear program goals that meet the needs of the children and families within your service area, it is important to track not only program activities, but also outcomes, services and unmet needs by race. If children of different races have disparate outcomes, don't assume that you under-

stand the causality. Examine what is going on more closely to determine if the current service delivery methods meet the needs of the people of different communities. If they don't, search for new practices to better serve them.

So, when you walk down the hall at your agency, look around to see what types of cultural influence exist. Ask yourself if who and what you see is reflective of the communities you serve. Is the office inviting to individuals of different racial and ethnic groups? Would they feel comfortable walking through the front doors? Are there staff who can communicate with them in a manner and language that they would understand? If you pass that test, look more closely at the tools that you have to serve them - your policies, your programs, your practices. Are they culturally relevant? Sometimes its hard for us to know what we don't know, about other people, about other cultures, about other races. The best place to start is to ask with an open mind and a willingness to hear.

Dennette Derezotes is the Executive Director of the Race Matters Consortium.

types of outcomes they have. Using a decision point approach to track data related to the case flow of children entering and within the system, one can begin to isolate in which areas of the system disproportionality and disparities arise. Once that has been established, looking closer at the decision points can help one understand the differences more clearly.



National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning

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The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work, in collaboration with our partners at the Child Welfare League of America and the National Indian Child Welfare Association, is a training, technical assistance, and information services organization dedicated to help strengthen the capacity of State, local, Tribal and other publicly administered or supported child welfare agencies to: institutionalize a safety-focused, family-centered, and community-based approach to meet the needs of children, youth and families. The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning is a service of the Children's Bureau - ACF/DHHS.

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Visit nrcfcppp.org for cutting edge information services to State, Tribal, and other publicly supported child welfare agencies to promote family-centered practices that support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children while meeting the needs of their families. While you're there, sign up for Weekly Update, our free electronic newsletter that brings you the latest in items of interest to child welfare professionals, foster and adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, and others who care about family-centered practice, foster care and permanency planning.



TIDBITS FROM THE STATES

LOOKING FOR A NEW IDEA OR A FRESH APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM? CHECK OUT THESE IDEAS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY. CONTACT THE NRCFCPPP FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY THAT INTEREST YOU.

EL PASO COUNTY (COLORADO):

"Anchor families" share holidays or special occasions with youth in out-of-home care, helping them as any parent would with such things as tax forms or college applications, or providing advice in person or on the phone. Anchor families may become adoptive families. Youth want permanent homes and families at any age.

MAINE:

School Transfer Policy and Practice for Children in Care provides child welfare caseworkers with guidelines and strategies that support positive educational outcomes for children in the custody of the State. It includes strategies that guide the enrollment in and transfer between schools that ensure a smooth transition to a new school that is sensitive to the individual needs of each child. Find at <http://www.abanet.org/child/rclji/education/home.html>

ILLINOIS:

Foster Kids Are Our Kids. This new recruitment campaign includes a website, brochures, posters, and television spots, and is available in both English and Spanish. <http://www.fosterkidsareourkids.org/>

MICHIGAN:

Created by a former foster youth at the Foster Education Resource Network, this guide contains a great deal of helpful information for foster youth planning on continuing their education after high school graduation. It includes a college preparation checklist, a listing of higher education institutions, information on financial aid, and many other resources that are valuable for youth that are planning on going to college. The information in this guide is specific to the state of Michigan, but it could easily be adapted to fit for other states. http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/publications/pdfs/2005_2006_Student_Guide.pdf

MINNESOTA:

The Minnesota Department of Human Services created a guide to assist social service agencies in performing relative searches when a child is removed from the home. Benefits of relative placement, cultural considerations in identifying and finding relatives, and the supervisor's role in supporting relative search efforts are discussed. Examples of how different agencies in the United States have developed systems to successfully identify and locate relatives are provided. Download at http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/publications/documents/pub/DHS_id_052669.pdf

NEW HAMPSHIRE:

Monthly payments to foster families are provided through an "auto pay" system. It is presumed eligibility, so there is no monthly invoice to process. Once a child is authorized for a foster home, the payment continues automatically each month until the social worker closes the authorization. If there is an overpayment, it is deducted against the next child placed in the home; if it is the last payment, there is a recoupment. NH also has an automated phone system where foster parents can call and verify that the check is coming, been paid, etc.

UTAH:

Just for Youth website, for young people in the state. It includes sections for youth in foster care and alumni and for foster parents. <http://www.justforyouth.utah.gov/>

WASHINGTON:

Helping Foster Children Achieve Educational Stability and Success: A Field Guide for Information Sharing. This Guide from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Casey Family Programs was designed to improve communication between school staff and people who support the academic success of students in foster care. This booklet clarifies what information can be shared and with whom. It provides basic information on the information sharing law in Washington State at the time of its writing (2004). A great model for other states seeking to improve the educational stability, continuity, and success for children who are in foster care. http://www.wa-schoolcounselor.org/documents/Field_Guide_DRAFT_rev%5b1%5d_.pdf

State legislation, regulations, and policies on many child welfare issues show considerable variation. The NRCFCPPP provides state-by-state comparisons in many areas, as do other organizations.

Check out our website at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/state-policies.html to find out how your state - and others - handles issues like training for kinship caregivers, sibling placements and visiting, and levels of care.

Resources for Permanency Planning Today

Books

On Your Own Without a Net: The Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations

This new book is a product of the MacArthur Foundation Network on Transitions to Adulthood. The book documents special challenges facing seven vulnerable populations during the transition to adulthood: foster care youth, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth formerly in the criminal justice system, runaway and homeless youth, special education students, youth people in the mental health system, and youth with physical disabilities. For more information and ordering, see the Transitions to Adulthood website at

<http://www.transad.pop.upenn.edu/research/woutnet.htm>

Working With Traumatized Children in Child Welfare

The understanding and treatment of traumatized children in out-of-home care is the focus of this book, which provides a framework for understanding childhood separation, loss, and trauma, as well as a variety of helping interventions that focus on specific populations or treatments. The book is divided into three main sections:

- Early chapters examine the impact of trauma on the child welfare population, including principles of neurodevelopment and parental and social conditions that contribute to childhood trauma.
- Chapters on treatment cover ethnically sensitive practice, children with disabilities, animal-assisted therapy, adolescent mothers, and eye-movement desensitization.
- A final section of the book discusses proposals for improved collaboration between the child welfare and mental health systems.

Working with Traumatized Children in Child Welfare was edited by Nancy Boyd Webb, and contributing authors included a number of experts in child welfare and mental health. It was published by Guilford Publications and is available through their website:

<http://www.guilford.com>

Widening the Circle: The Practice and Evaluation of Family Group Conferencing with Children, Youths, and Their Families

Family Group Conferencing (FGC) safeguards children by broadening the group of people who are committed to their safety. This book shows how FGC can empower the family group to develop and implement a plan for safeguarding children and other family members, with the support of the child welfare agency and other community organizations. The book offers direction to child welfare workers on how to work with family groups and their service providers.

The four sections address different aspects of FGC:

- Setting up and carrying out the conference
- Initiating and sustaining an FGC program
- Evaluating conferencing
- FGC as an alternative to traditional child welfare methods

This book was edited by Joan Pennell and Gary Anderson and published by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

It is available through the NASW website: www.naswpress.org

Books cont'd

Beyond Common Sense: Child Welfare, Child Well-Being, and the Evidence for Policy Reform

Safety, Permanency, Well-Being: This volume suggests that finding a place for well-being on the list of outcomes established to manage the child welfare system is not as easy as it first appears. Instead, policy should be evidence-based, and policymakers should cultivate a basic understanding of incidence in the public health tradition, as well as a commitment to what works clinically. Using data from Chapin Hall's Center for State Foster Care and Adoption Data, the book also offers an unprecedented profile of children as they enter the child welfare system. By Fred Wulczyn, Richard P. Barth, Ying-Ying T. Yuan, Brenda Jones Harden, and John Landsverk. It can be ordered by following the link from:

http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1408&L2=61&L3=129

Videos

Reunited

This video is being distributed to all child welfare agencies throughout Oregon. It captures frank talk of parents who were able to overcome their problems and work with the child welfare agency in order to be reunited with their children. Most of the parents in the 25 minute video were using methamphetamines when their children entered the child welfare system. Other agencies or individuals can purchase the video at cost - and are encouraged to then make copies and share it. Order from the distributor's website:

<http://www.accbo.com/asfvideo/>

Fostering in the Future

When children spend more time than necessary in foster care, it is often due in part to delays, limited information and poor communication in the nation's juvenile and family courts. This DVD from the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care portrays the causes and consequences of court-based delays and explains how the Commission's recommendations can improve the ability of courts to move children quickly out of the legal limbo of foster care and into safe, permanent homes.

Order from: <http://pewfostercare.org>

Knowing Who You Are

In this 24-minute video from Casey Family Programs, 23 individuals (youth in care, alumni, child welfare professionals, birth families, and resource families) share their perspectives about why race and ethnicity matter and the importance of integrating racial and ethnic identity into child welfare practice. Also available at this site: a facilitator's guide and a viewer's guide.

<http://www.casey.org/Resources/Projects/REI/KnowingWhoYouAreVideo.htm>

Resources for Permanency Planning Today

Curriculum

Promoting Permanency Through Worker/Parent Visits

This one day competency-based curriculum from NRCFCPPP helps workers structure their visits with family to promote safety, well being and permanency. It provides a review of what has been learned from the CFSR about the relationship between worker/parent visits and placement stability and permanence. It provides workers seven developmental checklists and questions to assess safety and well being. Workers learn how to use a four step process to organize their visitation with family. It is a companion to another NRCFCPPP curriculum, Promoting Placement Stability and Permanency through Caseworker/Child Visits.

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/family-child-visiting.html

Legal Resource Manual for Foster Parents

This four-module curriculum was prepared by Regina Deihl, J.D., Legal Advocates for Permanent Parenting, Cecilia Fiermonte, J.D., American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, and Dianne Kocer and Karen Jorgenson of the National Foster Parent Association, with the support of the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning. It is based on the manual of the same name, published by the NFPA and described below.

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/other-issues-in-child-welfare.html



Guides

Best Practice Guidelines: Children Missing from Care

This publication from the Child Welfare League of America provides direction to child placement agencies responsible for children in out-of-home care on the issue of children who go missing from care. It discusses prevention, response, and resolution of missing-from-care episodes, and was prepared in conjunction with guidelines for law enforcement agencies.

Order online at <http://www.cwla.org/pubs/default.htm>

Service Array in Child Welfare

The National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement offers a process and a set of guides child welfare agencies can use, in conjunction with community collaboratives, to assess and enhance their service array. The documents provide an overview description of the process, and include the actual methods used to assess the service array, report the results, and prepare a resource development plan.

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/servicearray.htm>

Understanding Substance Abuse and Facilitating Recovery: A Guide for Child Welfare Workers

The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare released this publication to help child welfare workers recognize the impact of substance abuse on families. The brief discusses the relationship of alcohol and drugs to families in the child welfare system; provides information on the biological, psychological, and social processes of alcohol and drug addiction to help staff recognize when substance abuse is a risk factor in their cases; describes strategies to facilitate and support alcohol and drug treatment and recovery; and explains the benefits of partnering with substance abuse treatment and dependency court systems to improve outcomes for children of parents with substance use disorders.

<http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/products.asp>

LOOKING FOR TRAINING MATERIALS?

The NRCFCPPP (www.nrcfcppp.org) offers free, downloadable curricula you can use as is, or modify to suit your needs. Topics include:

↑ Assessing Adult Relatives as Preferred Caregivers in Permanency Planning - to be used in coordination with your existing state laws, policies and best practices regarding safety and family study assessments, placement, permanency planning efforts, child and family well-

being initiatives and foster/adoptive family licensing/approval procedures.

↑ Concurrent Permanency Planning (English and Spanish) - to enhance understanding of concurrent planning concepts and practices as a framework for child welfare practice; to expand knowledge and skills of engaging vulnerable families respect, empathy, genuineness and full disclosure; to increase differential assessment skills

and the ability to think critically about case potential and progress; to enhance professionalism and professional competence in helping families engage in the process of change; and to enhance understanding of benefits and stages of family meetings to address safety, permanency and developmental well-being.

↑ Legal Resource Manual for Foster Parents - four-module training curricu-

LOOKING FOR TRAINING MATERIALS? -cont'd

lum based on the Legal Resource Manual for Foster Parents developed for the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA)

↑ Promoting Placement Stability and Permanency through Caseworker/Child Visits - a one-day curriculum intended to be part of either pre-service or ongoing training within a child welfare organization. It builds on the concepts of attachment, strengths-based assessment and planning, child and youth development, effective interviewing and organizing contacts. Includes seven developmental checklists for caseworkers to use as they begin to more intentionally structure their visits to focus on safety, permanence, and well being.

↑ Promoting Permanency through Worker/Parent Visits - a one-day competency-based curriculum that helps workers structure their visits with fami-

lies to promote safety, well being and permanency.

↑ Sibling Practice - enhances understanding of issues concerning siblings in out-of-home care.

Visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway at www.childwelfare.gov to find the latest in training materials and resources relevant to child welfare. Websites, technical reports, curricula and other training materials are available in the following categories:

⇒ Training for Caseworkers - General training such as core training, legal processes, casework practice (including assessment and family involvement and engagement), child protective services (including foster and kinship care and permanency planning), and adoption.

⇒ Training for Supervisors and Administrators - Includes funding, supervision, personnel, and strategic planning and leadership.

⇒ Training for Birth, Foster, Kinship, and Adoptive Parents - Parenting skills and training for foster and adoptive parents.

⇒ Training for Other Professionals and Community Members - General trainings include prevention, family support, and mandatory reporting. Trainings for specific professions are designed for advocates, lawyers and judges, public health workers, and teachers.

⇒ Specialized Professional Training - Includes training on working with adolescents, developmental disabilities, family group conferencing, fatherhood involvement, sexual abuse, and other topics.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS ... ROUND TWO

In January 2000, the Department of Health and Human Services announced important child welfare regulations to improve outcomes for abused and neglected children, children in foster care, and children awaiting adoption. The regulations hold States accountable for services to at-risk children and their families with a results-oriented approach in Federal monitoring of State child welfare programs. Under the regulation, States are assessed for compliance with Federal requirements for child protective services, foster care, adoption and family preservation and support services under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act.

The reviews cover two areas: outcomes for children and families in terms of safety, permanency and child and family well-being; and the administration of State programs that directly affect the capacity to deliver services leading to improved outcomes. The first round of reviews was held over a three-year period ending in fiscal year 2003. Since then, federal staff have been working with States to increase compliance with child and family outcomes and systemic requirements through Program Improvement Plans (PIPs). As states complete their PIPs and a year of data is compiled for each state which does not overlap the PIP, the Children's Bureau is preparing to re-visit each state to determine the State's current level of conformity with Federal requirements.

CHANGES IN OUTCOME MEASURES - COMPOSITES

The biggest change occurs in the way certain outcomes in permanency will be measured. In the first round, single measurements were used to determine whether States were in compliance with

national standards. This time, composites of measures in four permanency outcomes will provide a fuller picture of each State's performance in the following areas:

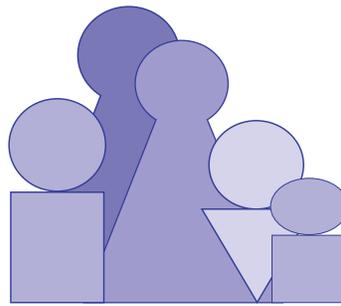
- timeliness and permanence of reunification
- timeliness of adoptions
- achieving permanency for children in foster care for longer periods of time
- placement stability

These composites, which are weighted, will give reviewers and States a better understanding of the extent to which these outcomes are achieved.

The National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology, a Service of the Children's Bureau, is offering a toolkit designed to help States understand how data are reported and used in the CFSR process. Visit www.nrcfwdt.org to find the toolkit, which is updated as additional information and tools are developed and released.

HOW WE CAN HELP

The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning is one of the ten resource centers funded by the Children's Bureau/ACF/DHHS that can help states prepare for the second round of reviews and assist in implementing program improvement plans (PIPs) that are frequently the outcome of the reviews. Visit our website at www.nrcfppp.org for information on our training and technical assistance services as well as more about the CFSRs.



Best of Weekly Update

A FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD: STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE PERMANENCE FOR OLDER FOSTER CHILDREN & YOUTH

From the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Family to Family Initiative. This tool is organized into four major sections: Section I presents the characteristics of older children and youth in care for two years or more. Section II details the problems that keep older foster children and youth from living permanently with families. Section III describes an emerging youth permanency philosophy. Section IV makes recommendations, describes action steps for change, and suggests concrete ways to achieve permanence for youth.

<http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/familytofamily/>

CHILDREN'S BUREAU WEBSITE

The revamped Children's Bureau website offers access to information on promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. Users are now able to search the entire site by topic, locate Children's Bureau-sponsored conferences, and find details about the Children's Bureau's various Divisions. Other enhancements include: new sections, such as Training and Technical Assistance, Frequently Requested Information, Statistics and Research, and Federal and State Reporting Systems; Information Memoranda and Program Instructions that can be sorted by topic or year (in the Laws and Policies section); Full text of all 52 Statewide Assessments, Child and Family Services Reviews, Key Findings From the Child and Family Services Reviews, and Program Improvement Plans that can be searched and downloaded (in the Child Welfare Monitoring section); and Links to specific research funded by the Children's Bureau.

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/>

EDUCATION ISSUES WEBPAGE

The Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues offers this page dedicated to the topic of educational needs of vulnerable children, including those in foster care or homeless. You can search by type of document and/or by states.

<http://www.abanet.org/child/rclji/education/home.html>

The NRCFCPPP publishes an electronic newsletter each week that keeps subscribers informed about new Internet-based publications, conferences & other events of interest to child welfare professionals. This section lists some of the valuable resources we have highlighted over the past few months.

CHILD WELFARE MATTERS: COPING WITH DISASTERS

The Spring issue of the newsletter of the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement is devoted to ways agencies can prepare for, respond to, and cope with natural disasters. Also posted - additional resources on secondary trauma.

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/newsletter.htm>

TRIBAL STATE RELATIONS

This publication from the Child Welfare Information Gateway describes how States and Tribes can work together more effectively to protect the safety, permanency, and well-being of American Indian/Alaska Native children. The issue brief, which was developed in partnership with the National Indian Child Welfare Association, examines: Factors affecting Tribal-State relations in child welfare; Components of successful Tribal-State relations; Examples of promising practices in Tribal-State relations

http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue_briefs/tribal_state/index.cfm

NRCFCPPP WEBCASTS & TELECONFERENCES

www.nrcfcppp.org

The NRCFCPPP continues to archive our free webcasts and teleconferences with state program managers on our website. Webcasts offered so far this year are:

- * "Helping Children, Youth, Families and Professionals Deal with Post Traumatic Stress from Natural Disasters"
- * "Building Positive Collaborations and Relationships Between Tribes and States to Work Effectively with Children, Youth, and Families"

We have also archived the following teleconferences:

- * three on meeting the health care needs of children and families involved with the child welfare system
- * Educational Stability for Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care
- * Siblings: Critical Life-Long Connections
- * Use of Psychotropic Medications for Children in the Child Welfare System

Visit our site for a full list of archived events.

CHARTING A COURSE

Chapin Hall Center for Children and the National Conference of State Legislatures are sponsoring a series of free web-assisted audio-conferences designed for state lawmakers, legislative staff, policy makers and child welfare administrators and others to learn about state child welfare related policy developments. Topics covered include grandparent/kinship care, keeping kids in foster care after 18, special education and foster care, home visitation and promoting stability in foster care placement. Webcasts are archived for continued access.

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/cwaudio06.htm>