New Child and Family Services Reviews

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How well are states doing in achieving safety, permanency and well-being for the children and families served by their child welfare programs? How well are the systems that promote better outcomes—such as case review systems and quality assurance systems—functioning? These are the questions to be examined through the new child and family services review process.

These new reviews will focus on assessing both the outcomes achieved for children and families and the systems that support improved outcomes. This emphasis on results is a major departure from previous federal review processes, which focused on whether states were in compliance with certain procedural requirements as evidenced by complete and accurate case documentation.

The outcomes focus of the new reviews is paired with an emphasis on involving states as partners in a continuous quality improvement process. States assess their own strengths and weaknesses at each stage of the review process. And unlike previous review processes, when weaknesses are identified, states have the opportunity to make improvements before they are penalized.

In designing the new review process, the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) engaged in extensive consultation with national organizations, and piloted the process in 14 states. Comments were received on proposed regulations, which were published in the Federal Register in September of 1998. The content of the final rule, published on January 25, 2000, reflected the comments received on the proposed rule and the lessons learned from the pilots and the consultation process. The new rule calls for all states to undergo a review within four years from the effective date, March 25, 2000.

The Focus of Reviews

The new reviews will focus on seven outcomes—divided among the broad areas of safety, permanency and well-being as well as seven systemic factors. The seven outcomes are as follows:

Safety
- Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible.

Permanency
- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- The continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved for children.

Child & Family Well Being
- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Systemic factors are related to state agencies' capacity to deliver services leading to improved outcomes for children and families. Since all seven areas are State Plan requirements, the review process focuses on whether these systems are in place and functioning as required by federal regulations and statutes. The seven systemic factors are:

- Statewide information system
- Case review system
- Quality assurance system
- Staff training
- Service array
- Agency responsiveness to the community
- Foster and adoptive parent recruitment, licensing and retention
The Review Process

Child and family service reviews will be conducted in two stages—a statewide assessment and a subsequent on-site review. Six months prior to the on-site review, ACF will transmit to a state its data profile showing its performance on indicators of safety and permanency. During the statewide assessment, states and external partners work together to analyze the outcomes achieved and to examine the systems in place within the state.

This analysis will be an opportunity for states to look behind the numbers to examine what is happening to children and families in the state. Reports will be due 60 days before the on-site review is scheduled.

To prepare for the on-site review, ACF reviews the statewide assessment and prepares their own preliminary assessment. ACF personnel will also work with states to identify state-specific issues. In addition, ACF and states will work together to determine the location of review sites and the size and composition of the sample for the on-site review.

During the on-site review, a joint federal and state team, including external stakeholders, will conduct intensive reviews of 30-50 cases at three locations in the state, including the largest metropolitan area. The team will also conduct stakeholder interviews in various locations to obtain input on outcomes and to evaluate system performance. The review team presents preliminary findings at an exit conference, and a final report is sent to the state within 30 days that identifies which of the seven outcomes and seven systemic factors are in or out of substantial conformity with applicable requirements.

A critical aspect of the new review process is the next step. If a state is not in substantial conformity on any of the fourteen outcomes and systemic factors, penalties will be determined. However, these penalties will be suspended if the state develops and implements a program improvement plan designed to correct the areas of non-conformity.

Substantial Conformity

For each of the outcomes and systemic factors, a number of performance indicators will be evaluated. Performance on these indicators will be used to determine whether States are in substantial conformity on each outcome and systemic factor.

On Outcomes...

There are two types of indicators for each of the seven outcomes:

- statewide data indicators, which will compare state performance to national standards
- on-site indicators, which will be examined in individual cases on site and rated as a "strength" or an "area needing improvement"

ACF has identified six statewide data indicators that will be used to assess substantial conformity on safety and permanency outcomes.

These indicators are:

- recurrence of maltreatment
- child abuse or neglect by foster care provider
- foster care reunification
- stability of foster care placements
- length of time to achieve permanency goal of adoption
- length of time to achieve permanency goal of reunification

To assess substantial conformity, state performance on these indicators will be compared to a national standard. Standards will be developed through a process that involves compiling data from each of 51 jurisdictions for multiple time periods and arraying those data to identify the 75th percentile of performance. That number will be established as the national standard and will be held steady through the first round of reviews.

All of the statewide data indicators for any given outcome must meet the national standard in order for the state to be in substantial conformity on that outcome.

Use of on-site indicators to assess substantial conformity is somewhat more complex:

- Four of the seven outcomes have only one or two associated on-site indicators. In these cases, all of the indicators must be rated as "strengths" for the outcome to be considered "substantially achieved".
- Three outcomes have three or more on-site indicators. For these outcomes to be "substantially achieved" no more than one of the indicators can be rated an "area needing improvement".
- In the first round of reviews, 90% of the cases must be judged to have substantially achieved an outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity on that outcome. In subsequent reviews, that figure increases to 95%.

On systemic factors...

The seven systemic factors will be reviewed on site and through the statewide assessment. Between one and five State IV-B plan requirements will be assessed for each systemic factor.

For the systemic factors with one State plan requirement, that requirement must be in place and functioning as described. Systemic factors with two to five State plan requirements will be determined to be in substantial conformity if no more than one of the requirements fails to function at the level described in the requirement.


Program Improvement Plans

ACF will work with states that find that they are not in substantial conformity on the outcomes or systemic factors to develop a program improvement plan. According to federal regulations, program improvement plans must set forth the action steps that will be taken to correct identified weaknesses. In addition, program improvement plans must also establish benchmarks that will be used to measure the State's progress in implementing the steps in the plan, and means of evaluating their effectiveness.

For example, one of the pilot states identified high levels of repeat maltreatment as a concern. In response, the state has developed a safety assessment tool and conducted intensive training in its use throughout the state. The pilot state is working with their federal regional office and with resource centers to develop a means of measuring the impact of the new assessment tool on safety outcomes.

If a state's data indicators do not meet the national standard, its program improvement plan must define the percentage increase towards the national standard that the state will achieve. The program improvement plans must also address the state's need for federal technical assistance, which will be provided through federal regional offices and federally funded Resource Centers, or through other sources identified by the state. If the state implements the plan as agreed and successfully completes the plan, penalties will be rescinded.

The new review process provides an opportunity for states to examine their outcomes and their systems and to make improvements over time. Their aim is to spur continual effort to assess and improve performance, resulting in state systems that are more effective in meeting the needs of children and families.
In this issue of “Permanency Planning Today” – our semi-annual newsletter – we approach some of the critical themes intrinsic to Promising Best Practices in Permanency Planning. This is also my first edition of the Newsletter as the new Director of the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning. I would be remiss in beginning my tenure as Director if I did not acknowledge the significant contributions made to the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning by our former Director, Sarah Greenblatt. Sarah, the NRC Director for the past five years, resigned in March to relocate out of New York. Sarah’s dedication and commitment to children, youth, and families is obvious to anyone who has known and worked with her. Under her watch, the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning grew and became recognized for its high quality of training and technical assistance to states and tribal regions and for promoting high quality standards of practice to insure permanency for all children. Sarah’s energy and commitment to Permanency has been a tremendous asset to the Center. We will miss her, we thank her for all of her hard work and commitment, and we wish her well in her new role at Casey Family Services in Connecticut.

As the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work moves forward, I hope as Director to creatively address the emerging issues and concerns related to the provision of quality foster care services and effective permanency planning for children, youth, and families. The Center has as its mission to assist States and Tribe in building child welfare capacity and to work toward implementation of federal legislation and policies. We will focus on disseminating information about model programs, best practices, and innovative strategies to serve children, youth, and families, which reflect culturally, competent, family-centered, and community-based child welfare practices. We promise also to convene multiple opportunities for diverse perspectives to be heard.

In examining “best practices” we have selected a mix of articles for this issue of “Permanency Planning Today” related to promising best practices in a changing environment. Our first article, which is re-printed from a recent Newsletter from our colleagues at the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement at the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, focuses on the Child and Family Services Review process initiated by the Administration on Children and Families this year.

Our second feature by Lorrie Lutz, one of our NRCFCPP consultants, provides a comprehensive overview of the important and emerging discussion on Dual Licensure for foster and adoptive parents.

Joy Bailey highlights the innovation of a Task Centered Team Approach to Service Delivery and offers advice and recommendations for organizational transformation toward a task-centered team approach to service delivery.

Bernadette Blunt and Catherine Nelson, two parents who have been involved in the child welfare system provide tips for involving parents in agency operations.

Sara McNeely, from Minnesota offers recommendations and shares her state's efforts to move toward a philosophy of Family Group Decision Making.

Judy Blunt, our Center's Assistant Director, shares with readers an overview of her collaborative work with CWLA in writing about Permanency Practice Strategic Action Planning Forums.

Professor Hilda Rivera reflects on developing working connections with the community, offering some practical guidelines for implementation.

This issue of Permanency Planning Today is rounded out with a review of States, Tribes, and Regions where we have provided technical assistance and training and a article by Myrna Lumbsden, Information Specialist at the Center which highlights new publications which may be of interest to our readers.

We hope that our readers will let us know what you think of this issue. This issue has a new look, a new logo, and hope in the next few months to share some new ideas with our constituents. We welcome your comments, your suggestions for future issues, and your own ideas and articles for submission.

I will personally look forward to working with and getting to know each of you in my new role at the center and urge you to let us know how we can be most helpful to you and the work that you do with children, youth, and families.

Gerald P. Mallon, DSW
NRCFCPP Director
The National Resource Center for Foster Care & Permanency Planning is available to assist States as they are developing their Program Improvement Plans. The National Resource Center can provide support with technical assistance and training in areas where the State has identified the most need.

Several States have already completed their CFSR:
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Georgia
- Minnesota
- New York
- North Carolina
- Oregon
- Vermont

Several others will have completed the CFSR by the end of the summer:
- Florida
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- South Dakota

In 2002, fifteen additional States will be reviewed:
- Alabama
- Alaska
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Montana
- Michigan
- Nebraska
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Tennessee
- Texas
- West Virginia
- Wyoming

The National Resource Center for Foster Care & Permanency Planning is here to help you to help children, youth and families — please feel free to call us!
The Background

Historical child welfare practice did not allow foster parents to adopt or strongly discouraged them from doing so through written and unwritten rules. As recently as the early 1970’s, most public adoption agencies had policies against practice of foster parent adoption. Some of the concerns historically expressed by public agency staff about foster parents adopting children in their care included:

- Fear of losing their valuable cadre of foster families.
- Fear that foster families hoping to adopt, would undermine attempts to attain the primary goal of family reunification.
- Historical licensure processes based on a foster families' ability to provide temporary care, not a lifetime commitment.
- Decisions to place a child in a particular foster home frequently were based on available space and not because a foster family was determined to be the best possible match for a particular child. (1)

For these reasons and others, a child who became freed for adoption and who was doing well living with a foster family would have in the past been moved to another family - without allowing the foster parent to have any input into the process of selection of the adoptive family or even continued contact with the child, thus exacerbating the child's experiences with loss, lack of continuity and permanent relationships.

Today, child welfare practice reflects a very different picture. The increasing reality is that foster parents, and not newly recruited adoptive parents, have come to serve as the most consistent and viable option for permanence for children in care. Children are entering our child welfare systems with complex, long-term special needs. As a result, child welfare agencies have found it increasingly difficult to recruit adoptive parents who could meet the needs of children in their custody. The system is counting on foster parents to fill the gap. According to the Children's Bureau Express, 64% of children adopted from the child welfare system are adopted by their foster parents (2) (although not necessarily the families with whom they were first placed). Not only are foster parents adopting children in their care, but also according to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, these adoptive placements are very successful...with 94% remaining intact throughout the life of the child (3). Thus, we are beginning to learn that the promise of permanency for children in the child welfare system who are unable to return to their birth parents lies in many instances with their foster parents - relatives or non-relatives.

In this new conceptualization, some child welfare agencies are beginning to explore the development of "dual licensure" which means that foster parents and adoptive parents walk through the same screening and interview, home study, training and background check process and in the end receive the same "approval" to provide foster and/or adoptive care. Dual licensure allows for a foster parent who has cared for a child for some length of time, to naturally and easily change their role from that of a foster parent to an adoptive parent, without having to go through an entirely new home study and training process.

Patsy Buida, the Foster Care Specialist at the Children's Bureau ACF/DHHS suggests "It (dual licensure) is a tool to maximize use of resource families in a flexible way that lets them decide how to interface with the system and what type of parenting fits their lifestyle-short-term foster care or long term adoption. If a family has committed to and bonded to a child, it makes no sense to search any longer... We need to get more comfortable in doing the best we can with the information we have. Timely permanence is as important, if not more important as a "perfect match". (4)
Emerging Implementation Issues Learned From Dual Licensure Experiences

As in most new processes, there are "lessons to be learned" from those who "led the charge". While every state will have their own struggles and unique experiences, our survey taught us that most states will have to address the following key practice, policy and legislative issues during the implementation of dual licensure.

Child and Family Matching Becomes an Earlier Concern
A consistent theme that arose in discussions with foster care and adoption staff was the difficulty in finding/making the "right" placement match between children and families, if the first placement is truly to be the last/best. Dual licensure encourages earlier placements with resource families who can support the reunification process and also serve as permanency resources if children cannot return to their parents. We learned it may mean that staff will need to become more comfortable making placements with resource families without the same amount of information about the child and the family as was common practice when adoptive or even pre-adoptive placements were made at a later point in the case history.

Family-Centered Practice & Reunification Continue to be a Critically Important Focus
While talking to many survey participants, it became clear that the practice framework for dual licensure needs to be rooted in family-centered principles and strategies - a framework that seeks to preserve children's ties to their families of origin by involving other related or non-related family resources to support that process and serve as backup permanency resources if needed. A family-centered approach with ongoing supervision would assure that dual licensure and placement with resource families would not compromise the reunification process - which was a fear expressed by some survey participants. Survey participants commented that this is both a training and basic values discussion. Many suggested that staff will need to be provided a 'toolbox of resources to support this approach to practice, such as: family-centered assessment instruments, consistent and frequent supervision, a pool of resource families who understand their role as mentor to the birth parents, systems that support open and inclusive case planning with parents and resource families.

Systems Re-organization Supports Dual Licensure and Enhances Continuity of Relationships for Children with Families & Staff
Many states and counties that believe they have been 'successful' in implementing a dual licensure model have found it helpful to reorganize their systems in ways that support earlier planning and decision-making about permanency for children (i.e. Texas, Missouri, Oregon, Colorado and more recently Utah). Rather than having separate foster care and adoptive units, many have combined these units and integrated practice so that a single worker stays with the child regardless of the outcomes of the case, i.e. reunification, guardianship or adoption.

Resource Family Understanding & Support of the Permanency Planning Process is Critical
We learned through our survey that dual licensure is likely to be successfully implemented when resource families understand and can support the process of Permanency Planning - a process which is grounded in the belief that whenever safely possible, reasonable efforts should be made to help children remain with or be returned to their birth families; and that parents, foster parents and agencies must work together to achieve the range of permanency outcomes that may emerge. Many of the issues around implementing dual licensure led survey participants to reiterate that dual licensure must be rooted in open and inclusive practice.

This means several things:
1) That resource families support and even facilitate frequent visitation between the child and their biological family. The more birth parents visit their removed children, the greater chance for successful reunification. However, if the visitation opportunities do not result in successful reunification, the child and parent can be provided the opportunity to shift their relationship through a supervised and healthy process.
2) That resource families see themselves as a support system to the birth family. The way in which the foster parents work with the birth family and support reunification is fundamental to successful reunification or alternative permanency placement. It is critical for the child protection staff be available to help the resource families address the ambiguity and conflict that naturally exists between helping the birth parents succeed and wanting to adopt the child. Social workers also need to be supported in addressing their own ambiguity.
3) That full disclosure is a part of every discussion. Full disclosure encourages open and honest dialogue with biological parents and resource parents, where the rights and responsibilities of each are clearly described. It honors the integrity of the permanency planning process and ensures that birth families and resource families have the same information, thereby allowing them to make informed decisions.

Keep the pool growing: Ongoing recruitment is urgently needed
Most individuals surveyed believe that timely permanency for children is worth the extra demands it places on the system to continually recruit and train new foster parents as resources for children and families. Dual licensure will require intensive efforts on the part of public and private agencies to expand their recruitment efforts and may require a shift in the message about the role of a diverse pool of families who can meet the complex needs of children and families.
**Equity in Regulatory Standards & Due Process for Foster & Pre-Adoptive Families**

Our discussions with survey participants highlighted the differential treatment of foster and adoptive families. If we are expecting that children placed in both foster and adoptive homes be equally safe, then we need to afford them equal protections. If we are asking foster and pre-adoptive parents to take on similar roles, they need to have similar rights and equal preparation. Today they do not. Foster parents go through a rigorous home study and training process to become licensed. Once licensed they are afforded protections and rights under the fair hearing and grievance processes. Adoptive parents are certified or approved—not licensed. While the physical home study and criminal background checks may be comprehensive, many pre-adoptive parents are offered little training or educational support. If their efforts to adopt are denied, they have no access to the appeal or grievance process.

**Examination of Post Adoption Financial Support is Needed**

An issue that frequently arose during interviews is that some states provide lower adoption subsidy rates than foster care rates, which poses barriers to adoption for some families. Several foster parents shared during interviews that the only reason they did not pursue formal adoption was the loss of public support that was equal to the foster care payment. A family that relies on the foster care payment and Medicaid coverage to meet the child's health care needs will struggle with a reduction in these resources. This may impact the stability of the adoptive placement.

**Examining Whether Or Not Dual Licensure Enhances or Impedes Relative Caregivers' Options**

Under the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act, relative and non-relative foster care requires the same licensing rigor. During the survey, many respondents raised concern about how this mandate will impact the practice of dual licensure. Should relatives who are willing to care for a member of their family be asked to go through the process of dual licensure? Does this ultimately serve as a deterrent to relatives' willingness to take on this complicated and difficult care-giving role? If as a result of the implementation of dual licensure, we see a decrease in the number of relatives willing to provide care, the applicability of this model for relatives may need to be reevaluated.

**Next Steps: What Does All This Mean to the Field of Child Welfare?**

Over the past twenty years the child welfare system has been working rigorously to define best practice. Many child welfare agencies across the country have embraced family-centered, strengths focused, culturally responsive work as being the best and most effective way to serve children and families. More recently through the work of Linda Katz (7), the field has added concurrent planning and the use of full disclosure to the list of best practice strategies for child welfare workers. Based on the lessons learned from this survey, it appears that dual licensure may be the next addition to the toolbox of "best practices" for the child welfare system.

4. An excerpt from an interview by Lorrie Lutz with Patsy Buida. (December, 2000). Foster Care Specialist, The Children's Bureau/ACF/DHHS.

For copies of our survey, please see the NRCFCPP or Casey Websites.
Background

Forestdale, Inc. is a multi-service, not-for-profit foster care and adoption organization. Located in Forest Hills, Queens, an outer borough of New York City. The agency has worked with families for over 146 years. For many years the agency used the traditional model of Director overseeing several Supervisors who supervised several Caseworkers. Each caseworker carried total responsibility for a case. That meant working with a birth family, foster family, child/children, courts, schools, medical services, and coordination of community based linkages. This required a skill base including assessment, engagement, knowledge of developmental milestones, addiction issues, domestic violence, special medical populations, City and State regulations, plus testifying in court, handling a myriad of phone calls, correspondence, computers, data entry, paperwork and compliance issues … and if you have been in this field, you know what I am talking about. All the above needed to be done while making a rapid decision that would return a child home or move into an adoption track with ever shortening timeframes (this was pre-ASFA). In addition, the workforce crisis and high staff turnover rates were a nightmare. Staff turnover meant every family had to start over with a new worker who frequently came onto an uncovered caseload. Crisis cases frequently received first attention. The length of stay for children was increasing rather than decreasing. New workers felt ill prepared, isolated, insecure. Supervisors needed to help workers with case decisions based on information that was not always the most informed. The decision to change Forestdale's service delivery approach was an involved process, but we knew that doing so, would help children and families move toward permanency.

Change in Structure

In an attempt to address the internal and external pressures and the labor intensive nature of this process, Forestdale developed the Task-Centered Team Approach. This team would be assigned 50-60 children, (approximately the same number as 20 children per worker), but would only handle a portion of each case. The team would be comprised of a Social Work Manager who had an MSW; a Field Worker with a Bachelor’s degree; and an Office Expediter, who had a Bachelor’s degree plus child welfare experience in this system.

The Social Work Manager

leads the team toward permanency, coaches and mentors the other members of the team but primarily works with the birth parents. This decision was made because the key to returning a child to his/her family is work, which is done, and the partnership, which is formed with the family. The most experienced, skilled worker is necessary to carry out these functions because families can be quite isolated. Highly skilled assessment and engagement skills are essential, as resources are more difficult to secure and timeframes are short. The Manager also represents the agency and testifies in court.

The Field Worker

The Field Worker in this project, was frequently the least seasoned professional on the team members. The Field Worker works with the child and foster family and coordinates the community resources that surround the child. The belief that much of the help available to a child is provided by the foster family plus schools, therapists, tutors and other resources that could be provided without the direct worker delivery led to this decision. (It would be preferable to have skilled MSW’s at both positions.)

The Office Expediter

The Office Expediter position is primarily an office based situation. The worker is there to field phone calls and crisis (a frequent complaint of all families is the unavailability of their worker) and is responsible for all paperwork coordination, timely completion of reports and correspondence. This is also a key swing position in the event of vacancies.

The team works together in the same office, their desks are situated in close proximity to one another, they share information and are supervised weekly as a team by the Director of Permanency (who acts as the Administrative Supervisor of this project). Families have the benefit of availability to all 3 workers, all of whom are familiar with them and no family in 5+ years has had to start over with a totally new worker. This model provides a level of security in sharing casework decisions and safety in dealing with families where aggression is a problem.
Recommendations for the Field

We have found that Task-Centered Team Approach to service delivery has improved our responsiveness to families— and particularly families in crisis (birth families and foster families alike). The shift has also boosted the morale of our staff— helping them to feel more “on top of” their complex caseloads, providing them with a feeling of shared responsibility. The task-centered team approach has benefits for public and private child welfare agencies.

Advantages to the Task-Centered Team Approach:
- A worker is not pulled in several directions; forced to constantly re-prioritize
- A career ladder is possible as Field Worker moves to Office Expeditor
- It is easier to ask questions of teammates
- Team members can travel in pairs when issues of safety arise
- Team members can not be left feeling responsible for sole decision making
- This approach builds camaraderie amongst workers

What it Takes to Make a Team:
- Commitment to overcoming organizational inertia and changing organizational culture at all levels of the organization from the Board to line workers.
- Taking a risk of not succeeding and discarding that which has not been working.
- Preparation of workers, families and the rest of the agency.
- Clear job descriptions, constant clarification, clear boundaries when necessary.
- Training and supervision as a team not individuals.
- Team trust and respect – relying on each other’s judgments.
- Transfer of supervisory power.
- MSWs coaching and mentoring colleagues in team.
- Inclusion of birth families and foster families on the team.

Last Words of Caution

This is an approach that may not work for everyone. The task centered team approach to service delivery is not a panacea but it is presented to encourage agencies to throw out models that no longer work efficiently and create more effective ways to function. Any change is high risk and requires patience for transitional chaos. We have found however that the alternative of staying with something that no longer serves the families or the staff is much riskier.

Tips for Involving Parents in Agency Operations

These tips are offered by Bernadette Blount and Catherine Nelson. Both are parents who have been involved in the child welfare system in New York City. They are involved in an education and training curriculum with the Child Welfare Organizing Project, a New York City-based organization of parents who are working for reform of the child welfare system through parent involvement.

Hiring parents promotes parent involvement in agency operations on policy and practice levels and demonstrates a commitment to clients and the community. Parents who have been involved in the child welfare system can offer important advocacy and support for parents currently in the system. Parents and families are empowered when they work together. The parent advocate acts as a ‘voice’ of his/her community, as a liaison between the agency and the clients, as an organizer for change. Engaging parent advocates in organizing and in service delivery opens up another avenue for interaction with parents.

By promoting ongoing communication between workers and parents, parents have a better chance of understanding and being informed of their participation in Service Planning and Case Reviews. Parents need to know ahead of time how to participate fully and what to expect from the reviews. They also need follow up contact and information.

Let parents know what their rights are regarding quality and quantity of visitation. For example, support a parent who wants to celebrate a child’s birthday with a party. Provide support for extra activities like group trips. The agency often becomes a “home away from home”. Make it feel that way for families. Healthy participation in the child’s life will promote more meaningful participation in agency life too.

Facilitating these relationships can help to break down barriers between parents, foster parents and agencies. Parents can offer valuable information about their children and foster parents can ask questions and provide feedback about children they are caring for. There should be ongoing support for these relationships.

Ongoing training and information should be available to staff and parents. Educated parents will be more involved in their children’s lives and agency operations if they understand their rights, responsibilities and expectations. Staff needs up-to-date information to work meaningfully with parents and to be a resource for families.

Helping parents to maneuver various systems such as family court, housing subsidies and public assistance supports agency efforts to reunite families and plan for permanency. Agencies should be resources to preserve and reunite families in any way a family needs.

Offer resources, time and support to work with parents. They are the best people to ask about their own family’s needs. If you want to involve them in the agency, ask them how they want to be involved. Real dialogue and follow through will make parents feel trusted and respected as an important part of the process.
Worker and administrators are always looking for novel approaches to working more effectively with children, youth, and families. In Minnesota, one approach, which we found to work was to increase our use of the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Approach.

Utilizing the Title IV-B2 Time Limited Reunification Services (TLRS) grants to states allowed Minnesota to try a new approach for working with families. The Minnesota Department of Human Services solicited grant applications from county and tribal social service agencies to use Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) to plan for and support a child’s return home from placement.

We issued eight grants to individual county agencies and to regional groups of counties and tribes. In all, 21 counties and three tribes are represented. Family Group Decision Making meetings are offered to the families of children who are in placement because of maltreatment, delinquency, the child’s mental health needs, or the child’s developmental disability. Of the eight projects, one is focusing on sibling groups in placement and two are focused on recruiting bilingual facilitators.

The primary outcomes of this project* focus on three areas:
Child Safety
Reunification
Permanency

Child Safety is measured by whether or not the child experiences maltreatment after reunification or, for children who are not reunified, some other permanent home is established.

Reunification measures the number of children who return home (to either parent or the person who was providing primary care), who subsequently live with another relative, and those who move to non-relative care.

Permanency measures the number and length of subsequent placements.

Each grantee was required to set additional goals and outcomes as a means of monitoring their practice with children and families. The evaluation process is just beginning and results will be available in September 2002.

The grantee projects were initiated the first half of 2000. Here are some of the things we have learned about startup that could be useful to others:

♦ Grantees are in various stages of implementation ranging from facilitators and workers being trained to workers regularly making referrals to FGDM. It is important for us to remain flexible to allow each agency to pace its implementation in the same way that we expect workers to be sensitive and flexible to a family’s process.

♦ We allowed for a three-month planning phase to bring stakeholders on board, to provide training for facilitators and referring workers, and to develop forms and procedures. Some grantees would have benefited from an additional two or three months for planning. Although it’s easy to get bogged down in the planning process and delay the first FGDM meeting until everything and everyone is ready, it’s helpful to have ample time for the preparation and information sharing phases of implementing a new program.

We don’t think it’s necessary to have more than six months planning process– at some point you just need to jump in and get started.

♦ Every grantee has had families referred for FGDM, however referrals are lower than expected. One reason for this is the reticence of service providers and families about FGDM processes and results. For service providers, this reticence is to “change” and is important to consider when implementing FGDM. FGDM requires a shift to relating to family members as team members and to trusting the family’s abilities to successfully plan for their child’s care. For families, FGDM also requires a shift to relating to their family members as team members who want to help them plan for their child’s care, and to trusting the service provider’s intentions.

In addition, some parents and children are embarrassed to talk about their problems with other family members and have not experienced a supportive family environment in the past.
Training was one of our biggest needs, and the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning at Hunter College School of Social Work supported our training efforts by covering part of the cost of the training. We contracted with Jim Nice and Patricia Evans to provide training on FGDM basics (we call this FGDM orientation) for referring workers, other agency staff and other stakeholders. Since February 2000 Patricia and Jim have trained about 500 people in Minnesota, including child protection and children’s mental health workers, probation agents, community based service providers, county attorneys, facilitators, supervisors and managers.

The Department also provided training for facilitators and coordinators. FGDM facilitators receive a total of five days of training. One day is the FGDM orientation mentioned above. The other four days are based on mediation skills training and include how to address issues of chemical use, domestic violence, child abuse, data privacy, and mental health that arise during the FGDM meeting and preparation for the meeting. Minnesota now has a pool of 175 community and agency based FGDM facilitators around the state.

Both the FGDM orientation training and the facilitator training will be incorporated onto our Minnesota Child Welfare Training System (MCWTS) by the end of the year. The MCWTS provides fundamental and advanced child welfare training to county and tribal agency workers.

This project has created a lot of excitement in Minnesota for Family Group Decision Making and what it offers families and workers. Although this grant money can be used only for time limited reunification services, the effects of this project are being felt across the service continuum and in communities. Grantees are using local dollars to conduct FGDM meetings for families who do not meet the criteria for this grant, and counties who are not part of this grant process are also implementing FGDM. It is changing our work with families and with each other. Grantees report that workers are approaching families with more confidence in the family’s skills and ability to change and care for their children. Workers are seeing hope for some families where they didn’t before. In addition, families who hear about FGDM from others are now starting to refer themselves to FGDM.

* Please note that this project had specific outcomes which may not reflect the overall scope of the federal outcomes for children.

Renewing Our Commitment to Permanency for Children: Permanency Practice Strategic Action Planning Forums

by Judy Blunt, Assistant Director, NRCFCPP

History .........................

In many ways the key to moving children and families toward safety and permanency is for child welfare agencies to institutionalize a safety-focused, family-centered, and community-based approach as the cornerstone of service delivery. Quality services require a policy, fiscal and organizational environments that facilitates effective practice.

In an effort to keep the promise of permanency vital and strong, the Child Welfare League of America - CWLA and National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work have formed a collaborative to offer hands-on assistance to state/local jurisdictions in planning to implement the permanency provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (P.L., 105-89). The purpose of the project is to help public and private child welfare agencies, in collaboration with the courts, legal professionals, and community-based service providers, to meet the safety and permanency provisions of the new law, while maintaining the integrity of family-centered, culturally competent, community-based child welfare practice.

This initiative grew out of a two-day launching conference, funded by the Johnson Foundation, NRCFCPP and CWLA, in October of 1998, at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. During this conference, the group revisited what had been learned about permanency planning over the past two decades and discussed current opportunities and challenges to achieving positive timely permanency outcomes. This discussion shaped a report entitled: Renewing Our Commitment to Permanency for Children: Wingspread Conference Summary Report: An Issue Brief (CWLA, 2000).
The participants of this first conference agreed that effective permanency planning required comprehensive assessment and reasoned decision making about the safety, permanency, and well-being of vulnerable children. They further stressed that it required individualized, case by case assessments and interventions that balance the time needed for continuity of relationships, secure attachments, and the child's ability to tolerate separation and loss. Advocating for a balanced approach to casework and legal practice in child welfare as the intent of both ASFA and the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, the participants of this seminal conference further agreed that the goals of both these legal mandates could best be met through family-centered, culturally competent, community-based practice approaches that are open, inclusive, and facilitate consideration of the range of permanency options available to each child, youth, and family.

Using the metaphor of “The Team River” to guide the flow of the discussion of permanency, the Permanency Practice Strategic Action Planning Forum initiative took the shape of a series of forums, which focused on improving multi-agency planning and decision making regarding permanency practice on behalf of children in out-of-home care or who were at high risk of entering care.

There have been five forums in geographically strategic sites around the country to date. The first was held April 1999 in Washington, DC; the second in Austin, Texas on September 13-15, 1999; the third in Denver, CO on October 27-29, 1999; the fourth in Portland, OR on December 8-10, 1999; and the fifth forum in Miami, FL on January 26-28, 2000.

The next two forums will be held in the Fall of 2001.

Objectives

There are several objectives in this collaboration:

• To recognize the urgent need for timely decision-making for children in out of home care and to renew our commitment to achieving permanency for them.
• To build consensus regarding successful permanency outcomes and options for children and their families.
• To learn about best practice strategies for achieving successful permanency outcomes for children.
• To build capacity for multi-agency, collaborative planning and problem-solving.
• To leave the forum with a community-specific plan and a clear strategy for improving permanency planning for children.
• To identify the internal and external resources and supports needed to accomplish strategic action plans and goals.

In the next few months, the National Resource Center will be focusing on, or collaborating with the following organization on these issues and many others:

Casey Family Programs
Child Welfare League of America
National Association of Foster Parents
ARCH
Institute for Families in Society

Please let us know about your state’s interests and needs.
Contact:
Gary Mallon
Center Director
(212) 452-7043
or via e-mail at mrengmal@aol.com
Participants

Guided by a comprehensive Participant Handbook, the forum includes participants from states, counties, and municipalities attending as part of a jurisdictional team. The teams are comprised of individuals representing groups or organizations that play a key role in achieving permanency for children. They come together to learn, discuss and plan ways to achieve permanency for children in their jurisdiction.

The public child welfare agency from each jurisdiction is invited to assemble a team to participate in the forum. Each jurisdiction may have a maximum of eight team members. Directors have some flexibility in selecting their teams. For example, teams may be newly formed or may be drawn from existing collaborative efforts, such as court improvement projects, state or citywide permanency projects.

Prior to the Forum, each team is asked to complete a brief self-assessment survey questionnaire to see what the foster care demographics related to permanency outcomes and practice looks like in each jurisdiction.

Format

The format for the two-and-one-half day forum includes learning activities and large and small group work for the teams. Trainers with direct experience with the highlighted methods and strategies for achieving timely permanency, guide participants in discussions and action planning exercises. There are opportunities to engage in activities designed to apply the information to their individual jurisdiction's needs.

This forum is an active process and as such every state team leaves the training with a plan that identifies short and long term steps that they can take to achieve better permanency outcomes and meet the mandates of ASFA in their community.

Teams are matched with project consultants who act as facilitators, catalysts, and motivators for stakeholders to continue their strategic action planning and implementation process.

One of the end products to share with colleagues is the creation of two 'Toolboxes for Permanency': Using Visitation to Support Permanency, and Expanding the Role of Foster Parents in Achieving Permanency. These user friendly guides provide additional information to administrators, program managers, supervisors, and workers on a range of permanency options and methods. Each guide includes a revised and expanded definition of permanency and a full review of a specific permanency practice method.

We believe that as a result of our Renewing Our Commitment project, states and counties will be better prepared to continue to plan for and implement permanency programs and practices that both meet the requirements of the new law and address the needs and concerns of individual children, youth, and families.

For more information about the NRCFCPP and CWLA Permanency Practice Strategic Action Planning Forums, contact:

- Judy Blunt at 212 452-7436 or via e-mail at jblunt@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu
- Millicent Williams at 202-942-0253 or via e-mail at mwills@cwlac.org

For copies of Renewing Our Commitment to Permanency for Children: Wingspread Conference Summary Report: An Issue Brief (CWLA, 2000), or Toolboxes for Permanency (2001) contact the CWLA via the Internet at www.cwla.org

For copies of NRCFCPP’s Tools for Permanency see our website at http://guthrie.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp

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What’s New at the Center?

The Child Welfare Fund and the Hite Foundation have made generous contributions to fund scholarship programs for five students at the Hunter College School of Social Work. The Child Welfare Scholars are focusing on Systemic Change in Child Welfare, while the Hite Fellows are committed to Permanency Planning for children.
A recent interim report by the Citizen's Committee for Children (C.C.C.) (1) highlights the salient findings from a study conducted on the neighborhood-based services plan spearheaded by the Administration of Children's Services in New York City. Although the report focused solely on data gathered from communities in the Bronx, the implications for this community-based initiative reach far beyond the borders of this New York City borough. Whether we want to accept it or not, people in the community have opinions, perceptions, and attitudes toward child welfare agencies. Sometimes a solid wall between the agency and the community has been built, and nobody wins. Developing working community connections has deep implications for the manner in which child welfare agencies do their work. Working together, both the child welfare agency and the community, gains by sharing the responsibility and resources for their children and families. Undoubtedly, the development of working connections with the community can bring tremendous benefits. Some of these are:

- Improvement of the child welfare agency's ability to recruit, train, support, and retain neighborhood-based foster care which is culturally and linguistically sensitive to the needs of the community.
- Enhancement of a community network of formal and informal services which is available to the children and families.
- Increase the community's understanding of the child welfare agency's mission and role, thus improving the agency's image.
- Development of collaborative relationships with diverse community organizations.

**How can child welfare agencies develop working connections with the community?**

There is no question that the development of meaningful connections with the community is necessary to do our work efficiently and effectively. The question is how we can put this into practice. Certainly, the process of developing collaborative connections with members of the community can be slow and challenging. Nevertheless, it is an important and rewarding process. The following are some practical guidelines on how your agency can develop successful and lasting connections with the community.

* Define the Community
Be open to diverse communities within the agency's neighborhood and take into account that a community can be defined as a group of people that share a common location, interest, and/or identification.

* Get yourself and your agency known in the community
It is important that you raise public visibility by promoting and practicing the agency's mission and commitment to children and families. Steady outreach and networking activities are vital. For example, organize an open house, bring agency brochures to neighborhood events, attend community board meetings, visit other agencies and meet with community leaders.

* Promote community involvement
Invite community members to be active by taking a role in your agency. Recognize that they bring unique expertise and that their work can make a difference for children in the community. Diverse community members can serve many important functions such as members of advisory boards, recruiters of foster parents, and bridges to other organizations in the neighborhood.

* Break down barriers
In order for your agency to connect genuinely with the community, it is crucial to establish an ongoing dialogue and address any negative opinions and concerns that are sometimes spread about child welfare agencies. The development of mechanisms such as surveys and focus groups for obtaining honest feedback from the community is very critical. It is equally important to create systems to effectively review the feedback received from the community and to address questions and concerns in a kindly and timely manner. Also, never forget to show appreciation.

* What do child welfare agencies need to get started?
One of the most important things needed to begin developing working and meaningful connections with the community is the commitment of child welfare leadership (including administrators and workers). It is necessary to
Where Have We Been:

Training & Technical Assistance by NRCFCPP Consultants & Staff

The National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work has as its mission to provide training, technical assistance (TA) and information to increase the capacity of child welfare agencies to provide children with safe, permanent families in supportive communities.

Our Center staff and a national network of diverse consultants with varying levels of skill, professional and life experience, and perspectives on child welfare systems change, provide training and technical assistance to states and tribes all over the country.

We thought it might be interesting for our readers to see where and on what topics have we trained since our last Newsletter:

We have worked with close to 20 states over the first 6 months our second program year - providing telephone technical assistance, planning efforts for work ahead, and of course, numerous on-site training and technical assistance events. The majority of our requests have involved planning for and provision of Training and Technical Assistance around concurrent permanency planning, family group conferencing, recruitment and retention of foster/adoptive resource parents, and policy review and development related to permanency planning and ASFA, MEPA, ICWA and relative care legislation. We have provided TA with one state related to Child and Family Service Reviews and plan to focus more attention on this critical area in the next six months.

The following is a summary of the Training and technical assistance (T/TA) requests we have received and provided during the first 6 months of our second program year.

Providing preventive and foster care services to children and families in the neighborhoods where they live represents a positive movement toward keeping children safe, increasing family stability, and keeping families together. Implementing neighborhood-based services reforms, suggests that child welfare organizations must take bold and necessary steps to reduce length of stay in foster care and focus attention to services necessary to reunify children with their families. The success of these efforts depend largely on the availability of quality support services that contribute to family well-being, including substance abuse services, health and mental health treatment, job training and employment, child care and affordable housing. The success of community based approaches also depend on the commitment of sufficient funding that supports this work.

**Puerto Rico**

*San Juan, PR*
Elba Montalvo consultant to the NRCFCPP from the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families provided 2.5 days of technical assistance to determine Training and Technical Assistance needs of the Department of Family Services and the Judges who hear child welfare cases. Dr. Hilda Rivera, Faculty at the Hunter College School of Social Work and NRC Consultant will be focusing on extending our work in Puerto Rico during the summer months.

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**Maine**

*Augusta, ME*
Rose Alma Senatore has participated in 4 half-day meetings to plan for their state's Child and Family Services Review and a Concurrent Planning initiative. She has worked collaboratively with the Region I Office and the NRC for Organizational Improvement. Ms. Senatore will continue to work with the Maine Training Academy to design ASFA and Permanency Planning training for the non-profit agencies in Maine; as well as working with the Child Welfare Director and her staff to begin to develop Concurrent Planning policy and practice expectations.

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**Rhode Island**

*Providence, RI*
Rose Alma Senatore continues to provide technical assistance with the Department of Children and Families in collaboration with the Region I Office and the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice. She is helping with strategic planning for implementation of family-centered, concurrent planning policy development, and training of staff.

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**New York**

*Albany, NY*
Sarah Greenblatt participated in the planning of 2 state-wide video conferences, broadcasted from Albany on Concurrent Permanency Planning. The video conferences involved an on-site rehearsal the day before each presentation. Ms. Greenblatt prepared the annotated agenda and the overhead power points with the guidance of the NY State Staff. Jan Flory from the Children's Aid Society in NYC participated in both video-conferences as a consultant with the NRC; during the second video conference two resource families and a resource family trainer participated in the first half.

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**New York**

*Syracuse, NY*
Stephanie Boyd Serafin provided one day of training and technical assistance with the NY State Region II Office of Children and Family Services and the Salvation Army, which received a federal grant to implement a region-wide concurrent planning initiative.

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**New York**

*Buffalo, NY*
Rose Alma Senatore provided two days of on-site training on Concurrent Permanency Planning for Erie County DSS Symposium.

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**Connecticut**

*Hartford, CT*
Sarah Greenblatt facilitated a one-day on-site session with the Department of Children and Families Administrative Case Reviewers on the elements of Concurrent Planning and the special role the Administrative Case Reviewers have in promoting timely and meaningful permanency planning.

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**Maine**

*Augusta, ME*
Dee Unterbach, Robin Brown-Manning, and our center's Associate Director, Stephanie Boyd Serafin provided a series of training in Concurrent Permanency Planning for Caseworkers in Baltimore Maryland.

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**Virginia**

*Fairfax County, VA*
The Center is planning to provide 5 days of on-site T/TA with Fairfax County Department of Social Services to plan and implement an approach to concurrent permanency planning. The County will then contract with the Center to provide an additional 12 days of on-site T/TA to assist supervisors in developing a curriculum as well as targeted and on-going training/support for casework staff. The project will include follow-up TA to sustain the changes made through training. Laura Williams conducted this training and technical assistance for the Center.
### North Dakota
**Bismark & Minot, ND**

Sarah Greenblatt provided 4 days of T/TA with the State of North Dakota to facilitate discussions regarding planning with agency leadership for the Child and Family Service Reviews and Training with supervisors and line staff related to Concurrent Planning.

### Illinois

**Teleconference Call on Concurrent Planning**

Sarah Greenblatt joined an all day meeting in Chicago Illinois by telephone for two hours to provide technical assistance regarding the State's plans for Concurrent Planning.

### Tennessee

**Nashville, TN**

Stephanie Boyd Serafin provided one day of on-site Technical Assistance to determine what the State of Tennessee needs in the way of training related to permanency planning and concurrent planning. Rose Alma Senatore also participated in the training.

### Mississippi

**Philadelphia, MS**

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Gary Mallon and a co-facilitator from Utah Children and Family Services will provide training for new case managers who will be providing wrap-around services through a SAMHSA contract for the Choctaw Tribe.

### North Carolina

**Raleigh, NC**

Rose Alma Senatore conducted a training for administrators and supervisors on Concurrent Permanency Planning issues.

### Texas

**Teleconference calls**

Sarah Greenblatt participated in a series of teleconference calls aimed at continuing permanency planning initiatives.

### New Mexico

**Albuquerque, NM**

Patricia Evans provided two workshops on Family Group Decision-Making for a Court Improvement and Department sponsored conference.

### New Mexico

**Albuquerque, NM**

Rose Alma Senatore will work with a team that includes Patricia Evans and Rose Wentz to plan policy and implement training related to Concurrent Planning and Family Group Decision-Making.

### Utah

**Salt Lake City, UT**

Lorrie Lutz provided training related to Integrated Service Planning within the practice context of Concurrent Planning for supervisors. She will provide follow-up training on April 26-27, 2001.

### Wyoming

**Casper, Cheyenne, Rock Springs, & Riverton, WY**

Janysce Fenton represented the NRCFCPP at a series of 4 one-day, on-site Concurrent Planning trainings throughout the state. She partnered with the American Bar Association National Resource Center for Court and Judicial Issues to provide this training.
In all we have visited 20 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico during these past six months. During the next six months we plan on devoting a great deal of our training and technical assistance energies to helping states prepare for or respond to Child and Family Services Reviews, but we will also continue to assist states and tribes by providing individual training and technical assistance in a variety of areas.

Consult our website at: www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp for a listing of these topical areas.

If we haven't been to your state, and you think that would like for us to provide training and technical assistance, please contact:

Stephanie Boyd Serafin
Associate Director
by phone at 212 452-7049
or via e-mail at: stephanie.serafin@hunter.cuny.edu
to explore the possibility.

We look forward to working with you and your state to make the promise of permanency a reality for all children and youth.
New Publications
Myrna Lumbsden
Information Specialist NRCFCPP

The National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work has as part of its mission to disseminate information in the form of print publications (books, magazines, journals, special reports), videos, Power Point presentations, and other resources to increase the capacity of child welfare agencies to provide children with safe, permanent families in supportive communities.

Our Center staff receives numerous publications every week from all over the country and we thought it might be interesting for our readers to know what new publications have recently come out.

Building the Child Welfare Team
“Promising Practices”
2001 Phone Poll Results
Published by University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Services, Institute for Child & Family Policy
For copies call: (207) 780-5310 or contact them via e-mail at www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa

This report highlights the results of a poll that shows that child welfare managers, supervisors, and workers generally have some understanding of the intent of ASFA and have received some training on its requirements and implementation. The report provides some interesting next step recommendations for states.

Child Protection: Building Community Partnerships
Published by John F. Kennedy School of Government
For copies call: (617) 495-1461 or contact them via e-mail at ksgwww.harvard.edu/socpol

A report from a working group of public and private child welfare administrators designed to craft a more effective approach for keeping children safe from maltreatment.

Published by the Citizen’s Committee for Children
For copies call: (212) 673-1800, or contact them via e-mail at infor@kfnyc.org

A report outlining several of the preliminary findings from a study that surveyed neighborhood based approaches to working with families in New York City.

Families in Society:
The Journal of Contemporary Human Services,
May-June, 2001, Volume 82, Number 3.
Special Issue on the Strengths Perspective
Edited by Dennis Saleebey
For copies contact the journal at fis@alliance.org

An excellent collection of articles which speak to the inherent strengths in individuals and families. These papers present a melange of approaches to practice, teaching, and scholarly inquiry, several provide actual case examples and assessment instruments.

Making Reasonable Efforts:
A Permanent Home for Every Child
Published by the Youth Law Center
For copies call: The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation at (212) 551-9100 or contact them via e-mail at info@youthlawcenter.com

An updated and particularly excellent publication based on earlier work which provides guidelines for attorneys, judges, and social services personnel to assist them in defining, providing, and enforcing reasonable efforts to enable children to safely remain at home or rejoin their families if possible. The guidebook has three parts: Guidelines for Attorneys, Guidelines for Judges, and Guidelines for Child Welfare Agencies, a discussion of principles follows each guideline.

Practice Manual for Concurrent Permanency Planning:
From Resilience to ALERT to Permanency
Published by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, University of Minnesota, School of Social Work
For copies call: (612) 624-4231 or contact them via e-mail at cascw@che.umn.edu

A practice manual that supports decision-making with families using a resilience model.

Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping
Spring, 2001, Volume 7, Number 2
Special Issue on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
Edited by Catherine C. Goodman
For copies on the journal call: (562) 985-4626 or contact them via e-mail at www.csulb.edu/dept/socialwkr/reflections

A wonderful medley of personal narratives that brings together many voices of grandparents and professionals. The first section represents the voices of grandparents and their family members. The second section presents the voices of professionals in many roles: administration, practice, research, and education.
Bridging the Gap
Workday Proceedings:
Permanency Planning
with Drug Affected Families
This report was prepared by our Assistant Director, Judy Blunt. It summarizes the proceedings, recommendations and supporting research from a workday held at the Center to address collaboration opportunities between child welfare and substance abuse treatment service systems. The report is available from the NRCFCPP for $8.

Listening to Youth Report
The Listening to Youth Report captures the experiences of youth formerly in foster care and their recommendations about how to improve the system and strengthen services. This report describes the projects’ goals and methodology, lists the interview questions and the moving, thought-provoking youth responses, and provides recommendations for change offered by the former youth in care. A copy of the report can be purchased from NRCFCPP for $5.

Where Can I Find More Information?
The following is a listing of reports, summaries and materials available through the NRCFCPP, unless otherwise noted. Copies can be obtained by contacting: Myrna Lumbsden, Information Specialist (212) 452-7431, e-mail: mlumbsde@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu