

1: About Child Welfare Issues | Connecticut Voices for Children

Child welfare is a wicked problem. By "wicked," we mean it is a problem that defies ordinary solutions. 1 It is wicked because as the priorities of the government change, definitions of the source of the problem shift between fixing the blame on inadequate and irresponsible parenting versus tying it to the stresses of the larger social environment.

The new law seeks to get single mothers off welfare through a combination of job training, work requirements, child care subsidies, and child support enforcement. Cutting the welfare rolls is, in turn, supposed to save the taxpayer money while enhancing the self-respect of single mothers and their children. Like countless earlier attempts at welfare reform, the new law is unlikely to change much. Judging by the experience of states that have already established compulsory training programs and work requirements, it will not save the taxpayer much money. Nor will it move many single mothers off the welfare rolls. The reason is simple: They turn to welfare because they cannot get jobs that pay any better than welfare. Since the new law will not do much to change this fact, it will not get many single mothers off welfare. Nor can most single mothers earn enough to cover their expenses. The only way most welfare recipients can keep their families together is to combine work and welfare. Yet if they report that they are working, the welfare department will soon reduce their checks by almost the full amount of their earnings, leaving them as desperate as before. The only way most recipients can make ends meet, therefore, is to supplement their welfare checks without telling the welfare department. Welfare benefits have always been low, and their purchasing power has fallen steadily since the mids. Most people assume that low benefits just force recipients to live frugally. But low benefits have another, more sinister effect that neither conservatives nor liberals like to acknowledge: Conservatives ignore this problem because admitting that welfare recipients cannot survive without cheating would weaken the case for cutting benefits. Liberals ignore the problem because admitting that welfare recipients cheat for any reason whatever reduces public sympathy for their plight. In reality, however, welfare mothers operate on the same moral principles as most other Americans. They think their first obligation is to care for their children, and they assume this means providing food, shelter, heat, electricity, furniture, clothes, and an occasional treat. Since welfare seldom gives recipients who follow the rules enough money to pay for these necessities, they feel entitled to break the rules. Welfare recipients also think that working ought to make them better off. Since the welfare system does not allow them to keep what they earn if they report their earnings, they feel entitled to ignore the reporting requirement. This feeling is not confined to second-generation welfare recipients in poor neighborhoods -- the so-called underclass. It is shared by mainstream recipients who have finished high school, held jobs, gotten married, had children, and ended up on welfare only when their husbands left them. It is a feeling bred by a system whose rules are incompatible with everyday American morality, not by the peculiar characteristics of welfare recipients. We picked this particular city because its benefit levels, which were 60 to 75 percent of the federal poverty line, were within a few dollars of the national average. To see how families could get by on so little money, Edin conducted intensive interviews with 25 welfare families. Previous experience suggested that if she simply drew a random sample of welfare recipients, went to their homes, and asked them to describe their income and expenditures, she would get a lot of refusals, a lot of evasion, and a lot of budgets in which income was insufficient to cover expenditures. She therefore took a different tack, asking acquaintances who knew welfare recipients in different capacities to introduce her to one or two recipients and convince them she was trustworthy. All but 4 of the 29 mothers she contacted in this way agreed to be interviewed. The most obvious differences were that Edin did not interview any teenage mothers and undersampled unwed mothers. Unlike larger and more representative samples of welfare recipients, however, her 25 mothers provided income and expenditure data that made sense. In particular, they reported enough income, both legal and illegal, to cover their expenses. All 25 supplemented their checks with income from other sources. None reported all her extra income to the welfare department, and only two reported any of it. Not reporting outside income is illegal, but the chances of being caught are low. Furthermore, even if a recipient is caught, she cannot be cut off the rolls or prosecuted for fraud unless the state can show that she intended to break the law, which it seldom can. A recipient who gets caught cheating is

supposed to repay her excess benefits, but so long as she remains on welfare the state can only reduce her monthly check by 10 percent. Their checks were seldom enough to pay even their rent and utility bills, much less their other expenses. Welfare mothers are not miracle workers. Like everyone else, they must pay not only for shelter, heat, and electricity but for clothing, laundry, school supplies, transportation, furniture, appliances, and family emergencies. Most welfare families also need some cash for groceries. Figure 1 shows how these particular mothers made ends meet. They got 57 percent of their income from food stamps and AFDC. Roughly half the rest came from work of various kinds. The remainder came from absent fathers, boyfriends, relatives, and student loans. The work these mothers did was extraordinarily diverse. They could presumably have earned more if they had sold crack on the street, but they sold only to acquaintances, which was much less risky. But welfare benefits also increase with family size. There was no evidence that small families found it easier to live on their checks than large ones. If anything, the opposite was true, because large families with older mothers were more likely to live in public housing. Welfare recipients who lived in public housing came much closer to balancing their budgets than mothers living elsewhere. None actually got by on this amount, but they came a lot closer than those in private housing. Of the 17 mothers in private housing, only two had anything left from their AFDC check after paying their rent and utility bills. These welfare mothers did not live extravagantly. The poverty line is an arbitrary threshold, set 25 years ago as a matter of political convenience, but surveys suggest that most Americans think the threshold is too low, not too high. The Gallup survey regularly asks Americans: What is the smallest amount of money a family of four husband, wife, and two children needs each week to get along in this community? None of the other 22 mothers reported expenditures totaling more than percent of the poverty line, even when we include Food Stamps. Half lived in very bad neighborhoods. Half lived in badly run-down apartments, where the heat and hot water were frequently out of order, the roof leaked, plaster was falling off the walls, or windows fit so badly that the wind blew through the apartment in the winter. One in three did without a telephone, and one in three reported spending nothing whatever on entertainment. Many said their food budgets were too tight for fresh fruit or vegetables. Only one had a working car. It is true that all these welfare mothers had color television sets, and that a third had video recorders -- extravagances that often offend intellectuals who rely on books for entertainment. But because both TV sets and video recorders last a long time, they cost only a few dollars a month. Since they provided both the mothers and their children with free entertainment, the mothers were willing to forego almost any other comfort such as reliable hot water or fresh vegetables to ensure that they had a working television. Without one, their lives would have been unimaginably bleak. These mothers also bought a few other things that would raise conservative eyebrows. More than half used cigarettes or alcohol. From an economic viewpoint, however, these little luxuries were of minor importance: It is important to remember, however, that these neighborhoods are not just run down, dirty, and short on amenities. They are also dangerous. White and Hispanic welfare mothers are particularly reluctant to live in these neighborhoods, because they are overwhelmingly black. But some black mothers also paid higher rent to live in safer neighborhoods. Because of the way Edin drew her sample, we suspect that her 25 mothers had somewhat more outside income than the average welfare mother in their city. We doubt, however, that the difference was large. These case workers all agreed that when a recipient lived in private housing her rent consumed most of her check and that utility bills consumed the rest. They therefore assumed that most recipients in private housing had additional unreported income. Many case workers also felt moral scruples about preventing welfare recipients from supplementing their checks, since they believed it was impossible to live on what welfare paid. Perhaps because case workers habitually ignored all but the most flagrant evidence of cheating, officials further up in the welfare hierarchy all seemed to believe that most recipients lived on their checks. After two years in the neighborhood Sharff concluded that almost every man, woman, and older child participated in the underground economy and that no welfare recipient reported such income to the welfare department. Food, clothing, laundry, appliances, furniture, and transportation cost about the same amount in every major city. Even rent varies less than many people imagine. In , for example, low-income families in Midwestern metropolitan areas with 1. The situation may be different in rural areas. Edin interviewed a small number of welfare mothers in rural Minnesota, where the combined value of AFDC and Food Stamps is 25

percent higher and rent is typically about half what it is in the city we studied. Those who supplemented their checks also earned far less than their big-city counterparts. We would expect to find the same pattern in depressed rural areas of other high-benefit states. In the rural South, however, making ends meet on AFDC is probably even more difficult than it is in our Midwestern city. Furthermore, opportunities for supplementing AFDC are probably more limited in rural areas than in big cities. If a welfare mother gets any kind of job in a rural area, her neighbors soon know about it, which probably means her case worker knows too. What Do National Surveys Show? About a quarter of the original CES sample either refused to participate at all or refused to provide complete income data. Among welfare households, we estimate that about half refused to cooperate fully. We assume, though we cannot prove, that the welfare recipients who refused to cooperate were especially likely to have outside income they did not want to report. Of the households that reported having received income from AFDC during the previous 12 months, 83 percent also reported income from other sources. Half these welfare households included more than one adult. In most cases these adults were probably not part of the AFDC recipient unit, so their income did not count for the purpose of calculating welfare benefits.

2: Home - Child Welfare Information Gateway

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), founded in 1853, is a voluntary association of over 1,000 public and private nonprofit organizations that serve at-risk children and their families. The organization traces its roots to the White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, which recommended the creation of the (U.S.

This chapter reviews the foundations for the development of child abuse and neglect law and policy and describes the current environment of laws and policies related to child abuse and neglect at both the federal and state levels. Also discussed is the evaluation and analysis of these laws and policies. Related research needs are detailed as well. Policy change in the child protection arena frequently has resulted from a synergistic set of factors: Thus, for example, it was these factors that led to federal legislative policy reform making voluntary home visiting more widely available through Section 5010 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program is designed to strengthen and improve related programs and activities, improve coordination of services for at-risk communities, and identify and provide evidence-based home visiting programs that can improve outcomes for families residing in at-risk communities. Regulations and protocols are typical results of the process of implementing laws at the state and local levels. Examples are the recommendations for policy reform issued in the early to mids by the U. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, , p. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, focuses on the broad federal government response to child abuse and neglect. Included as well are four pages of recommendations for improving federally supported research and evaluation related to child abuse and neglect. At its core, the debate around the development of laws and policies to help prevent child abuse and neglect involves questions of public value Pecora et al. It also involves trade-offs entailed in law making between public benefit and private interests. How can policy promote fairness in child protective interventions, recognizing, for example, that some families come from different cultures whose practices may not coincide with what is covered by child protection laws? What is the appropriate balance between the due process rights of parents not to have child abuse or neglect case records preserved by child protection agencies in cases that are very old or in which a report of abuse or neglect was not substantiated and the authority of states to maintain appropriate central registries of child abuse and neglect case-related data that might later be used as part of child protection efforts? The development of child abuse and neglect laws and policies should include the application of reason, evidence, and an evaluative framework to such decisions Pecora et al. The application of reason refers to public discourse by practitioners, advocates, researchers, and legislators Pecora et al. The evidence for passing laws and changing public policy is derived from a variety of sources, some explicitly guided by research and scientific evidence and others reflecting social consensus about legitimate government activity. For example, even though research evidence suggests that lengthy incarceration for acts of violence is not always necessary for community safety, it is widely supported by citizens because of the societal functions of punishment for wrongdoing and justice for victims. Research helps answer questions when those answers are critical to effective implementation. Is banning the behavior targeted in legislation, such as certain forms of corporal punishment that are most likely to cause serious injury to a child, likely to reduce the rate of child abuse and neglect-related fatalities? Are there sufficient resources to educate those persons included in a law as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, and what is the impact of changing the requirements for who must report or what must be reported? Is there sufficient public support for changing the definition of what constitutes child abuse and neglect under state law? Given these complexities, the research design needed to evaluate laws and policies is not always the same as the design one would use to evaluate practice interventions. Although some laws and policies can be evaluated by random assignment e. Furthermore, simply studying the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the aggregate such as at the state or national level is unlikely to aid in determining and attributing its potential causes. Another difficulty in evaluating laws and policies related to child abuse and neglect is that adherence to a law, such as a mandatory reporting law, often is predicated on public knowledge, understanding, and support that frequently vary across practitioner

disciplines, as well as within and among states. Finally, many of the changes in child abuse and neglect laws and policies over the last few decades have been incremental changes to existing legislation such as the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act [CAPTA]. In those cases, what is needed in terms of law and policy analysis or evaluation is research on the implementation and augmentation of the law or policy, rather than the core law or policy itself. Given these difficulties in conducting analyses of laws and policies and the fact that laws and policies vary by state, the paucity of research in this area is unsurprising. They also designate those who must report suspected child abuse and neglect, or make all citizens with reason to suspect abuse and neglect mandated reporters. State laws addressing the abuse and neglect of children were passed in all 50 states following the amendments to the Social Security Act that required all states to include child protection in their child welfare systems Myers, In , passage of CAPTA 1 established state responsibilities for child protection and supported the execution of these responsibilities with new federal money for state programs and national research. As discussed below, CAPTA provided a federal definition of child abuse and neglect and set into motion a series of reforms of state laws, policies, and practices. This center was subsequently made an office with, unfortunately, far fewer staff, as a part of reorganization within the department. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2 a blue-ribbon expert panel, but after releasing four reports, it was disbanded and never revived. Some support for child abuse and neglect research has continued to be provided by the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect. However, policy-related research continues to be extremely underdeveloped. Some policy changes appear never to be questioned, even in the absence of evidence to support their wisdom. These changes include instituting or broadening the scope of mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Policy research could and should assess the likely consequences before policy changes are made—for example, when a definition of abuse or neglect is broadened to include children who are witnesses to or otherwise exposed to domestic violence in the home. Since the NRC report was issued, a variety of controversies have arisen that strongly suggest the need for additional policy-related research. These include, for example, concerns about racial and socioeconomic bias in the making of child abuse and neglect reports Drake and Zuravin, ; Drake et al. It is critical that legislators and program administrators support research designed to carefully examine the federal and state laws that guide responses to child abuse and neglect and build a new knowledge base to guide the implementation of policy changes. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act In , CAPTA 3 authorized, among other things, very modest funds for a state grant program focused on initial child protective intervention in cases of suspected abuse or neglect; Congress has since appropriated these funds annually. CAPTA has been reauthorized every years since CWIG, a , and reauthorizations have nearly always modified or added new eligibility conditions; as a result, the language of state laws has undergone continual changes to comply with CAPTA. The committee knows of no research on how states and counties respond to reports of abuse or neglect involving older teens, or on what child protection agency practices best address youth aged 16 or 17 who are reported as suspected victims for the first time. The CAPTA limitation on who a perpetrator of abuse and neglect may be results in many states having skewed data on child abuse, especially child sexual abuse, because only intrafamilial incidents may be reported in many states. In one of its periodic congressional reauthorizations, CAPTA also gave states the option of mandating reporting of only those acts, or failures to act, of alleged abuse and neglect that are recent and that have resulted in physical or emotional harm to the child that is considered serious. Although few states have such limiting language in their definitions of what must be reported, there is no evidence on whether this limiting language results in abused and neglected children falling through the cracks or whether child protective services agencies receive large numbers of reports in which the harm to children is not considered serious. Likewise, the committee has seen no research on how the CAPTA definition of sexual abuse, which was broadened to include acts related to the production of child pornography, statutory rape, and prostitution of children, has affected the protection of those children. Given the wider recognition of and concern about child sexual victimization, research on the impact of states having this broadened language on reportable sex crimes involving children would be most helpful. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, The Baby Doe provision of CAPTA remains in effect, but the committee could find no research on the frequency, outcomes, or cost of handling these cases. There are occasionally

religious reasons for withholding treatment e. CAPTA requires states to have processes in place whereby a court can order treatment in these circumstances. The committee is unaware of research related to any of these issues. To obtain CAPTA funding to support their child protective services programs, states must comply with congressionally mandated eligibility conditions. Not counting the Baby Doe protection of severely disabled newborns response requirement described above, CAPTA currently includes more than 20 requirements for state laws or statewide programs that must be met for a state to receive an annual State Grant. During the years since these provisions were incorporated into federal law, little to no investment has been made in studying how these requirements are best implemented. State legislatures have continually added to these provisions, in different ways. Again, little or no investment has been made in research to learn whether these changes better protect children. Few of these changes to CAPTA have ever been examined scientifically with respect to their positive or negative impact. For example, one change to CAPTA mandated hospital referrals to child protective services when infants are born with and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse, even though the birth of a drug-exposed newborn is generally, in and of itself, not legally considered abuse or neglect. They include 1 a requirement for public disclosure of findings or information in cases of child abuse and neglect-related fatalities or near fatalities, 2 prompt expungement of child protective services records for certain purposes when reports are determined to be unsubstantiated or false, 3 a mechanism for individuals who disagree with an official finding of abuse or neglect to appeal that finding, 4 a requirement for child protective services employees to advise adults accused of abuse or neglect of the allegations made against them at the time of initial contact with child protective services, 5 mandated training of child protective services caseworkers on their legal duties to protect the rights of children and families, and 6 a requirement for every child under age 3 who is substantiated as an abuse or neglect victim to be referred for early intervention services funded under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA. One eligibility requirement of CAPTA that has been studied involves important state citizen oversight of child protective services. Panel examination is supposed to include a review of handling of specific cases and the extent to which child protective services is effectively discharging its responsibilities. Compiling accurate data on other data elements is more difficult, and research is needed to determine how states can better collect these data. Again, a study of best practices for accurately collecting these data would be helpful to the states. The first is a program funded through the U. CAPTA discretionary funding for demonstration projects Although it is very limited, each year CAPTA discretionary funding is used to support individual grants for state and local child abuse and neglect-related projects. Because Congress has listed discrete areas for demonstration funding and will likely add others in the future , it would be helpful to know more about whether the policy reforms suggested by prior congressionally enumerated grant areas have in fact been achieved. Therefore, it would again be helpful to the field if support were provided for a study examining these evaluations and their findings overall. CAPTA lists the areas in which such child abuse and neglect research may be funded. This list of research areas raises two concerns. First, the extremely limited funding appropriated for research under CAPTA means that few of these areas will be topics of research grants. Second, there are many important areas on this list that have never been the subject of any CAPTA or other federal research grant funding, and these issues also need attention. Need for Enhanced Research Funding CAPTA has since been the federal law that most directly relates to, and provides very modest funding for, improved identification and intervention in cases of child abuse and neglect. At each periodic reauthorization of CAPTA, members of Congress have added provisions to the law requiring through additions to State Grant eligibility requirements that state and county child protective services systems do more, but always without providing any increased federal resources. The committee hopes the above discussion will serve as a roadmap for the administration and Congress to enhance the financial support provided under CAPTA. This enhanced funding is needed to expand the national child abuse and neglect research portfolio and provide the added knowledge required to achieve a significantly improved child protection system. See also the detailed discussion of research funding in Chapter 7. Each year since the VCAA became law, millions of dollars have been appropriated to support these activities. The VCAA has continued to be an essential funding mechanism for improvements in government reactions to reported and substantiated child maltreatment, but it is important now to allocate

funds so that Congress can be better informed about the effectiveness of the reforms this law has long supported, which can best be accomplished through rigorous research. The VCAA language about reporting i. The purpose of this legislation is to minimize the trauma experienced by child abuse victims as a result of their involvement in the federal criminal court system. The law authorizes federal judges to take a variety of measures to aid child victims or witnesses. Although this law was intended to reduce system-related child trauma, the committee is unaware of any studies of the implementation of its provisions. It established mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect on Indian lands. Unlike CAPTA, this act includes a prescribed criminal penalty for failing to report abuse and for inhibiting or preventing the making of a report the latter is a provision not found in any of the other federal laws described. Congress also established a special procedure for dealing with these reports, required a unique database for the reports, provided for grants to improve treatment of Native American child abuse victims, and otherwise supported improvements in investigation and other interventions in these child abuse cases. The committee is unaware of any research on the incidence of or responses to child abuse on Indian reservations. The committee urges HHS and the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, to support data collection and studies that can inform Congress on how these laws have or have not reduced child abuse in Indian country or improved the reporting of and intervention in these child abuse cases. CAPTA provides the legal foundation for state and national child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment activities, yet many impacts of CAPTA have not been evaluated through rigorous research. Nevertheless, the funding appropriated for research under the act has been too limited to address more than a few of the research priorities identified, and many key priorities have never received CAPTA or other federal research grant funding. While research has examined the effectiveness of CACs and CASA programs, no research has been conducted on the operation or impact of the federal lands child abuse reporting law. The Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act established mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect on Indian lands, but no research has examined the incidence of or responses to child abuse and neglect on Indian lands. The Indian Child Welfare Act established tribal authority over decisions to place American Indian children in out-of-home care, but little empirical research has examined how the act has been implemented and what effect it has had on the experiences of American Indian children in the child welfare system.

3: Problem Exploration

The Children's Bureau is involved in initiatives and events that provide for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. The following resources provide up-to-date information on a variety of issues related to child welfare.

Designed as a temporary resource for troubled families, the child welfare system was never intended to provide the comprehensive range of social services that are demanded of it today. As increasing numbers of child welfare agencies have failed to meet the needs of the populations they serve, there is a growing recognition that the child welfare system alone cannot provide all of the services needed by the families and children who come into it. Poverty and an array of social problems as well as difficulties inherent in public child welfare systems have made it difficult to provide services to an increasingly diverse and troubled population. Many factors—both internal and external, demographic and structural—contribute to the wide scope of the crisis of a system with diminishing resources and increasing responsibilities. Substance abuse, inadequate housing, health needs, parental incarceration, and racial discrimination are just some of the issues that challenge the capacity of the child welfare system and its staff to provide adequate services to the families and children it serves. Moreover, the child welfare system was never intended to serve the vast numbers of children and families that are involved in the system today. The data released most recently by the Department of Health and Human Services, based on information collected through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System NCANDS, show that child protective service agencies received about 2.1 million reports of possible maltreatment in 2010. There were 1.1 million substantiated cases of maltreatment of children the majority of which involved cases of neglect. About 1,000 children died of abuse or neglect, a rate of 1.1 per 1,000. Furthermore, as of September 2010, there were 400,000 children in foster care and approximately 100,000 waiting to be adopted, nationwide AFCARS. Additionally, the ever-changing racial and ethnic make-up of this country has posed special challenges for child welfare agencies and staff. Racial and ethnic discrimination, and language and cultural barriers to service provision have become commonplace in many social service systems, including public health and education as well as in the judicial and child welfare systems. Identifying the special needs of multiple racial and ethnic groups, and developing practices, programs, and strategies to meet their unique circumstances has proven an overwhelming task for a system that has yet to determine how best to meet the needs of its African-American families, families that have been overrepresented in the system for more than a decade. Finally, the stressful nature of working within the child welfare system has increased in direct response to the issues outlined above. In addition, the increasing tension brought on by media exposure to extreme cases of child abuse and neglect and the resulting onslaught of bad publicity and negative attitudes toward the child welfare system have contributed to burn-out, insecurity, and high turnover among child welfare agency employees. This, in combination with the issues described above, provides a snapshot of a system that is struggling to operate effectively and in the manner in which it was intended. The findings presented in this study suggest that, despite the challenges it faces and the factors that are outside of its control, there are several factors that public child welfare agencies can address to improve child welfare practice and the delivery of services to children and families, including families of color. In addition, several other issues have emerged from the findings presented here that can be used to help inform future child welfare policy. Back to Top 6. These are workforce issues e. Workforce issues While agency administrators may not have control over the types of families and individuals they serve, they do have control over the type of work environment they create and support, and the employees they choose to hire. In this study, several factors related to the workforce were critical to both worker retention and satisfaction, and effective service delivery to children and families. First, there is the issue of support, specifically, administrative support. In order for child welfare staff to feel confident and effective and, one might argue, perform accordingly, they require support from within the agency. This support takes several forms, including administrative support and encouragement, supervision and oversight, strong peer relationships, and manageable caseloads. In agencies in which one or more of these factors was reported absent, participants usually direct service workers talked about feeling overwhelmed and unsure of

their ability to make good decisions. Feeling overwhelmed and lacking confidence, without strong supervisors to whom they could turn for help, workers reported being more likely to substantiate abuse and neglect cases, making decisions based more on their fear of administrative repercussions than on their training and experience. While administrative support and adequate supervision are important aspects of day-to-day practice, they are especially important during times of high stress or media exposure when workers reported feeling great pressure to make quick decisions regarding complicated cases. Related to the issue of administrative support is the development of an infrastructure that allowed for flexible, responsive programming. In some of the sites, agency administrators spoke specifically about making administrative changes that would build a better infrastructure for the child welfare agency that they led. These administrative changes included creating a strong leadership team, bringing in key administrative staff from the outside who had experience in specific areas. In the sites where such administrative changes were occurring, the management staff and in some cases the front-line staff reported that the quality of child welfare service delivery had improved greatly. Second, there is the issue of staff training and experience. Similar to employees in any agency or organization, child welfare agency staff are most effective when they are well educated and well trained. Increasingly, however, to be effective in dealing with more diverse and more troubled families than in previous years, child welfare staff require greater breadth and depth of education and training than in previous years, before the influx of immigrant groups and the proliferation of drugs into society. In addition, over the years, as the child welfare system has come under increasing scrutiny from society and the media regarding its ability to effectively serve children and families, recruiting and retaining competent, well-trained staff has become more difficult. Recent State budget cuts also have taken their toll on child welfare agency staff. In some States, including those in this study, budget cuts have forced agency administrators to lay off or retire their most experienced and highly paid employees, and replace them with younger, less experienced and less expensive workers. These issues have serious implications for the quality of service agencies are able to provide. As one of the only means for workers to stay abreast of new policies and procedures and strategies for dealing with such client-specific issues as mental illness, addiction, and different and varied cultures, it is important that ongoing, agency-sponsored training remain a priority. While most agencies require new workers to participate in agency-sponsored training to familiarize them with agency policies, practices, and operational procedures, participants reported that this training often is insufficient. They reported that training would be more salient for them if it was frequent, ongoing, and of sufficient substance that new skills could be acquired and problems, such as racial bias in decision making, addressed and changed. Participants also reported needing more training in cultural awareness and sensitivity, especially in light of the number of participants who reported having experienced worker bias toward children and families of color. Specifically, participants reported that workers sometimes made decisions based on the race or socio-economic background of a family rather than on the specifics of the case. According to participants, this differential decision-making often results in African-American and impoverished families being more likely to have children removed from the home or parental rights terminated. Again, while most agencies have some training focused on cultural issues, the training sessions are frequently short-term or one-time events that may be insufficient to address such difficult issues as racial or class bias. With regard to worker bias and cultural awareness and sensitivity, it is important to note that, in general, agency administrators were very sensitive to these issues and were willing to address them. However, in most cases, they were somewhat unsure as to how best to address them. In many cases, such characteristics as cultural sensitivity and awareness are difficult to define and so methods to increase them are equally difficult to identify or develop. Even the literature in this area is unclear regarding how best to define and promote cultural sensitivity and awareness in child welfare workers. Similarly, worker bias is difficult to define and, therefore, to detect. In some cases, workers emphatically denied that race or class ever entered into the decision making, while other workers, in the same agency, felt just as strongly that it did. Clearly these issues require additional exploration to determine the extent to which they influence decision making and practice, and how agencies can best manage them. Finally, there is the issue of resources. Agency administrators can provide the strongest support possible to their staff, and also can ensure that only the most highly qualified candidates are hired. If resources are lacking, however, practice will be

compromised. In this study, participants reported needing access to resources both internal and external to the agency. With regard to internal resources, participants reported needing more resources to support foster and adoptive families, including kin. With the passage of ASFA and the subsequent focus on permanency, workers report that the number of children needing foster care and adoptive placements has increased but that the resources available to support finding and maintaining such placements have not. Necessary resources include financial incentives for foster and adoptive families, including more post-adoptive services and more foster and adoptive families. External resources also are important to good practice. With regard to external resources, participants reported that they simply need more resources to serve clients, including financial resources to pay for and agencies to provide mental health and substance abuse services. They also reported needing additional resources to keep families together including relationships with agencies that could provide such basic necessities as food, housing, employment opportunities, and childcare options. Recently, in recognizing their limitations to provide comprehensive services to children and families, agencies have started cultivating more formal and informal relationships with other service providing agencies, including those based in the community. In an attempt to broaden service options for child-welfare involved families, agencies are moving towards contracting out services to local service providing agencies, outsourcing child welfare staff to community-based agencies, and building collaborative relationships with private child-serving agencies. In addition to increasing service options, these strategies also have been effective in meeting the needs of different racial and ethnic groups as many of the community-based service agencies also have a racial or ethnic affiliation and focus. While the child welfare system has been plagued with challenges in recent years, it still plays a central role in the child and family service delivery system. Agencies can be supported to hire competent staff, administration can be supportive, and resources can be made available to provide quality service. Strategies for serving children and families of color Many service delivery strategies were identified in this study that were perceived as or documented to be beneficial for families of color. Some were explicitly designed to address the needs of this population of families; others were created to benefit the child welfare population at large. Interestingly, none were specifically designed to reduce racial disproportionality in the child welfare systems observed in this study. Following are brief descriptions of these service delivery strategies, all of which could be adapted for other child welfare systems to address the needs of children and families of color. Kinship care and subsidized guardianship. Long heralded as a strength of African-American and other minority families, the use of relatives and fictive kin unrelated persons with whom family has a close relationship as caregivers for children is an important measure for increasing permanency for minority children while simultaneously maintaining ties to their family system. Relatives can be used as caregivers in three distinct ways. One, they can become guardians of children, and thus be legally responsible for the care of the children without the requirements and benefits that are attached to being a foster parent. Providing subsidies to these guardians has proven to be beneficial. Alternatively, relatives can become foster parents. This status would require them to be licensed using the same criteria used for unrelated caregivers, and be regularly monitored by child welfare personnel. Finally, relatives can become adoptive parents of children. As with guardianship, providing subsidies to adoptive relatives has been found to be beneficial. It is important to note that in Illinois subsidized relative placement has resulted in increased permanency for children and reduced racial disproportionality in the child welfare system. Originated in New Zealand, family conferencing calls for the collaboration of multiple parties who have an interest in the well being of the child and family who are involved in the child welfare system. Referred to as the family assessment process in North Carolina which was the site implementing this strategy, this approach brings together biological parents, relatives, neighbors and friends, religious and other supports, as well as professionals with the goal of averting placement. These meetings occur frequently and, as part of the program model, are designed to emphasize the safety, permanency, and well being of the child. Although it is not clear whether family conferencing per se was the factor that reduced racial disproportionality in the North Carolina site, it was a major component of the service delivery strategy in the county in which racial disproportionality was reduced. Recruitment and retention of minority foster and adoptive parents. The majority of the sites identified the recruitment of minority foster and adoptive parents as an important strategy to reduce racial disproportionality. Targeting

recruitment to minority communities, specifically minority social organizations and institutions e. In addition to these recruitment efforts, participants in multiple sites stressed the importance of being more flexible regarding the types of families deemed acceptable, given the diversity of family composition and characteristics of minority communities. Helping potential minority caregivers through the licensing process was also identified as an important strategy. Finally, providing culturally sensitive post-placement services was suggested in order to retain the minority foster and adoptive families involved with the agency. Although concurrent planning is not on the surface a practice that differentially benefits minority families, many participants felt it was effective in reducing the number of minority children remaining in the foster care system. As this practice requires child welfare staff to work for reunification while simultaneously seeking another permanent home for the targeted children, children may not remain in the system as long as when the practices occurred sequentially. Thus, adoption can be explored with relatives or foster parents while the biological parents are receiving rehabilitative services. The other benefit that staff perceived is that children do not have to be removed to another placement if the decision is made to change the permanency goal to adoption or guardianship; they are already in their permanent placement. Despite the thinking that minority families, particularly relatives, may have difficulty with the notion of terminating the rights TPR of the biological families, participants in this study reported that minority relative and foster caregivers were not resistant to TPR and adoption. An agency-wide focus on permanency for all child welfare involved families has the residual impact of fostering permanency for minority families, and therefore reducing their numbers in the child welfare system. Although some participants saw more stringent time limits as creating more difficulties for minority families, the majority felt that focusing on permanency and foster care time limits had a beneficial effect on children.

4: Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare

The child welfare system's mission is to create safe and permanent environments for children and to strengthen family units. It is an immense and complex project.

Codifies provisions of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act ICWA , including provisions regarding tribal jurisdiction, notice of and intervention in child custody proceedings, entitlement of tribal acts and proceedings to full faith and credit, right of indigent parents or custodians to court-appointed counsel, active efforts, evidentiary standards, placement preferences and unsealing of adoption records. Establishes criteria for denial of a petition to transfer a proceeding involving an Indian child to a tribal court. Provides that socioeconomic conditions and the perceived adequacy of tribal social services or judicial systems may not be considered in a determination that good cause exists. Requires that a record of each foster care or adoptive placement of an Indian child be maintained in perpetuity by the Department of Social Services DSS. Clarifies that the director of the DSS may enter into agreements with Indian tribes regarding the care and custody of Indian children, including agreements that provide for the orderly transfer of jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis, for exclusive tribal or state jurisdiction, or for concurrent jurisdiction. Establishes that a tribal customary adoption order has the same force and effect as an order of adoption. Requires the Judicial Council to adopt rules and necessary forms to implement tribal customary adoption as a permanent plan for Indian children. The legislature recognized that, in order to achieve the goals of the federal Act, it is necessary for the state to determine whether children who are the subject of child welfare proceedings in the state court system are Indian children. Laws, HB , Chap. Concerning the placement of a child for adoption, a court, county department or licensed child placement agency may consider the racial or ethnic background, color or national origin of the child or a family who has submitted an application to adopt. Laws, SB , Chap. Encourages the department to enter into agreements with Indian tribes to facilitate the implementation of ICWA. During the session, three Florida African-American legislators began to work with church and civic groups to promote the adoption of Black children through television ads and a streamlined adoption process. Encourages the State to develop, monitor and evaluate projects designed to address problems associated with the child welfare system, especially those affecting Black children. A number of other states and localities have adopted similar programs, including Illinois and New York City. The commission is charged with monitoring existing legislation and programs that affect African-American families, assisting state agencies with designing programs to enhance the social and economic well-being of such families, and facilitating the participation of African-Americans in the development, implementation, and planning of community-based services. The law also does the following: Expands the role of the commission to include establishing working relationships with the departments on Aging, Children and Family Services, Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Corrections, Human Services, Public Aid, Public Health, Transportation, and all other agencies that have an effect on African-American children and families. Requires the commission to monitor existing legislation and programs and assist state agencies in developing programs, services, public policy and research strategies to expand the social and economic well-being of African-American children and families. Requires the commission to facilitate the participation of African-Americans in developing, implementing and planning community-based services. Outlines commission membership and terms. Funds the commission through appropriations made to the previously mentioned state agencies. Acts, HB Sec. Specifies that state policy requires full cooperation with Indian tribes and tribal citizens to ensure the intent and provisions of ICWA are enforced. Requires notice to the tribe and family at every stage of a child welfare proceeding to help parties understand and participate in the legal process. Requires the outcomes-based system to be based on federal and state child welfare outcomes regarding safety, permanency, child and family well-being, public safety, accountability and rehabilitation. Requires the development of a stakeholder panel to provide input into the planning, design, implementation and evaluation. Requires a six-member legislative committee to monitor the service system redesign. Both projects aim to reduce the disproportionate number of minority children in the child welfare system. Laws, LD , Chap. Sets committee membership and required a report, by December 7, , to the Joint Standing Committee

on Judiciary and the Legislative Council. The report must include findings and recommendations and suggested legislation. Acts, SB , Act Sec. Requires a task force to study the disproportionate representation of African-American and other children of color in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in Michigan. Requires a report to the Department of Human Services with administrative and legislative recommendations for appropriate services to reduce disparities and bias and improve long-term outcomes for children of color in the systems. Authorizes grants to Indian tribes for that purpose. Laws, SB 86, Chap. New Mexico N. Specifies the following placement preferences for Indian children taken into state custody: Requires that a hospital ask a person leaving an infant whether the infant has a parent who is a member of an Indian tribe. Requires the hospital to provide the Department of Children, Youth and Families with all available information regarding an infant left pursuant to the Safe Haven for Infants Act. Provides that a parent of an infant left at a hospital shall have standing to participate in all proceedings regarding the child. South Dakota S. Laws, HB , Chapter Allows notice of child custody proceedings subject to the Indian Child Welfare Act to be given to the designated tribal agent for Indian children taken into temporary custody. Defines designated tribal agent as designated by the tribe. Specifies requirements related to the form, timing and content of the notice. Requires the governor to appoint an independent reviewer to analyze compliance with the act by the Department of Social Services, the state attorneys, the Unified Judicial System, and private agencies involved in foster care and adoption. The independent reviewer also will analyze the means by which Indian tribes can assist the state and private agencies in achieving compliance. Specifies commission membership and duties. Requires the commission to review the efforts of the Department of Social Services to enter into agreements with Indian tribes regarding licensing of foster homes, access to federal funding, and contracting of child protection services. Requires the commission to explore and evaluate options to address and resolve identified issues and barriers that prevent or hinder compliance and make recommendations to improve compliance with the federal Indian Child Welfare Act. Opens records and transcripts to the commission pertaining to apparent, alleged or adjudicated abused or neglected children, with provisions for confidentiality. Laws, SB 6, Chap. Requires the Health and Human Services Commission and Department of Family and Protective Services to analyze data regarding child removals and other enforcement actions during state fiscal years and to determine whether enforcement actions were disproportionately initiated against any racial or ethnic group. Requires a report no later than January 1, Requires a remediation plan to prevent racial or ethnic disparities and an evaluation of policies and procedures if the results of the analysis indicate disparate treatment of racial or ethnic groups. Requires a report on the evaluation and remediation plan by July 1, Laws, SB Sec. The Council is to include representatives from agencies including: The Council is directed to review the delivery of public and private child welfare, juvenile justice and mental health services to evaluate the disproportionate rates of use of the services by children who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. The department shall collaborate with the Washington institute for public policy and private sector entities to develop a methodology for the advisory committee to follow in conducting a baseline analysis of data from the child welfare system to determine whether racial disproportionality and racial disparity exist in this system. Requires the Washington institute for public policy to serve as technical staff for the advisory committee. In determining whether racial disproportionality or racial disparity exists, the committee shall utilize existing research and evaluations conducted within Washington state, nationally, and in other states and localities that have similarly analyzed the prevalence of racial disproportionality and disparity in child welfare. Provides that, at a minimum, the advisory committee shall examine and analyze: This analysis shall be disaggregated by racial and ethnic group, and by geographic region. Requires that, not later than January 1, , the secretary shall report the results of the analysis conducted under this act and shall describe the remediation plan required under this act to the appropriate committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over policy and fiscal matters relating to children, families, and human services. Authorizes the department to enter into written agreements with Indian tribes within the state to define the terms under which the tribe may license agencies. Provides that the department and its employees are immune from civil liability for damages arising from such agreements. Creates the Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee to establish a transition plan containing recommendations for the provision of child welfare services, including a model for performance-based contracts to be used by

the department, a method by which clients will access community-based services and methods to address the effects of racial disproportionality. Stipulates that courts are prohibited from placing a Native American child in out-of-home care unless the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, including the testimony of expert witnesses, that the continued custody of the child by the parent would likely result in serious emotional or physical damage. About This NCSL Project The Denver-based child welfare project staff focuses on state policy, tracking legislation and providing research and policy analysis, consultation, and technical assistance specifically geared to the legislative audience. Denver staff can be reached at or childwelfare@ncsl.org.

5: Child Policy - Child Welfare System Faq | Failure To Protect | FRONTLINE | PBS

Failing child welfare is a problem without borders, a reflection of the societal and economic woes that plague families today. From Florida to California, the tragedies unfold.

About Child Welfare Issues Key issues The state of Connecticut bears legal and moral responsibility for the children in its care and custody. As of January , roughly 4, Connecticut children and youth were in the custody of the Department of Children and Families DCF and removed from their homes because they had been abused or neglected by their parents. Many other children and families are receiving services from DCF to avert out-of-home placements. DCF needs to continue its crucial reforms designed to ensure that children -- especially children under 12 -- grow up in families, rather than in expensive institutional and congregate group care. Historically, Connecticut has had one of the highest rates of use of congregate care for young children in the nation. Within the past year, Connecticut has nearly halved the number of children under 12 in congregate care, and has also decreased the percentage of all children in congregate care. In order for the shift to family-based care to be successful, the Department must reinvest a substantial portion of the savings from reducing congregate care in community-based services that will support children returning to the community. To reduce overreliance on congregate care, DCF must do a better job of attracting new foster parents and, perhaps even more significantly, retaining the foster parents it already has. While DCF has devoted great resources for the recruitment of new foster families, it has failed to meet its benchmark for net increase in foster homes. An increase in the share of children placed with relatives will help fill some of the shortage. However, DCF needs to improve the foster parent experience to help make up for the additional shortfall. Increasing the number of foster homes will also help keep more siblings together, place more children closer to their home communities, and may help increase rates of adoption. DCF must better help the children and youth in its care maintain strong relationships with their brothers and sisters. When children are taken into DCF custody, their connections to their families and communities are often traumatically interrupted. For many children and youth in the foster care system, ongoing relationships with their siblings are a vital source of emotional support as they go through difficult times. Ideally, all children in out-of-home care would be placed together with their brothers and sisters unless such placement is not in their best interest. In situations where placing all members of a sibling group together is impossible, DCF should provide for frequent at least weekly visitation to help sustain sibling bonds. Youth in DCF care should be empowered to make decisions about their own lives, both on the system and individual case levels. These boards should be given regular opportunities to engage in discussions with both local and central office staff, including the Commissioner. In addition, DCF should make sure that adolescents are actively and meaningfully involved in their own case planning, as required by federal law. Connecticut must improve the quality of legal representation provided to children and youth in DCF care to ensure that their interests are adequately represented in the Juvenile Court. While Connecticut made some meaningful reforms over the past decade that had the potential to improve the system of legal representation, it risks backsliding on this issue. Unfortunately, because of budgetary pressures, the state made several cutbacks in to attorney compensation and supervision that have the potential to negatively impact the quality of representation provided. Connecticut must devote more resources to ensure high-quality legal representation for children and youth in DCF care. DCF needs to continue to improve services for older youth in the system. Connecticut falls short of ensuring that many vulnerable older youth who "age out" of foster care get a healthy and secure start in life. Each year, approximately 90 youth turn 18 and leave the care of DCF entirely on their own, without any formal family relationships. Without a family to support their transition to adulthood, youth aging out of care are far less likely to graduate from high school, more likely to experience homelessness or involvement with the criminal justice system, and less likely to be earning a living wage than other youth. By strengthening the array of services provided to this population, the state can help ensure that these youth experience a successful transition to adulthood.

6: Wicked Problems Institutes - Wicked Problems of Child Welfare Wicked Problems of Child Welfare

Implications for Policy and Practice. To relate the findings presented here to practice and policy, it is first important to understand a few issues related to the current state of the child welfare system.

This reaffirms the advice that the famed experimental psychologist Walter Dearborn once gave to Urie Bronfenbrenner: Held on the UNC campus at Chapel Hill with financial support from The Jordan Institute on Families, the purpose of the Institute was to promote the use of the recently restored title IV-E waiver authority to conduct innovative child welfare demonstrations and rigorous evaluations of promising solutions. Maximizing Private and Public Return on Investment October , Click here for meeting materials The interconnected nature of wicked problems necessitates an interconnected response that includes scope for local partnerships that are enabled by public-private collaborations. The nature of a wicked problem is such that it cannot readily be resolved by a single discipline or one sector of society. Its goal was to encourage the development of local private agency-university-government partnerships to develop a research-to-practice agenda that could help guide comprehensive child welfare financing reform. The day-2 workshop focused on the elements of successful agency-university-public partnerships and how to develop cooperative research agendas that can help guide the comprehensive reform of state and federal financing of child welfare systems when waiver authority expires in Beyond Safety and Permanence: February , Click here for meeting materials Child well-being is an appropriate metric for evaluating the effectiveness of child welfare interventions to support safe and permanent homes for children. Ambiguity over the appropriate metric for gauging success and uncertainty over the appropriate scope of public interest, i. Issues regarding measurement and scope have been pondered and debated ever since the creation of the U. Whether you believe that social and emotional well-being is the desired outcome for which child welfare agencies should be held accountable or simply a lens through which more basic achievements in child safety and family permanence can be monitored, there is general agreement about the importance of valid and reliable assessments of child well-being, which can take into account the perspectives of parents, teachers, substitute caregivers and particularly the viewpoint of the individual child or adolescent. The grand challenge of integrating the three aims of child safety, family permanence, and child and adolescent well-being was explored in presentations and talks by Rob Geen Annie E. The day-2 workshop built on the lessons learned from all three WPIs to identify appropriate metrics of child well-being, generate key research questions that should be answered in preparation for comprehensive reform of federal child welfare financing, target the most promising albeit incomplete solutions that can be tested under IV-E waiver authority, and lay the foundation for building the kinds of agency-university-public partnerships that can execute this vision in the states with the member agencies of CHSA. Meeting the Grand Challenges of Child Welfare March , Child Welfare Practice Based Research Network Even though the WPI series was never intended to achieve consensus on problem definitions or to generate definitive solutions, the original prospectus envisioned on-going agency-university partnerships and associated publications that would emerge out of these Institutes and could help inform a public education and policy advocacy campaign aimed at encouraging the following: Strengthen the implementation and evaluation of existing IV-E waiver demonstrations and promote the use of the remaining waivers to establish a solid evidence base for comprehensive federal child welfare financing reform when waiver authority expires in September ; Demonstrate successful models of agency-university-public partnerships that can chart a future direction for practice-based research and evidence-informed innovation in the states, which integrate the three child welfare aims of safety, permanence, and well-being; and Recommend practice and policy steps that can be taken to promote child well-being by supporting preventive, in-care, and after-care services that minimize the social-emotional traumas associated with child maltreatment, foster care removal, and transition to family permanence. The briefing informed Congressional staff the Wicked Problems series and highlighted the eight grand challenges that emerged from the three Wicked Problems Institutes. The purpose of the collaboration will be to develop and evaluate promising solutions that can help set a new direction for building innovative, evidence-based and sustainable child welfare programs across the country. The agency-university partners will

meet together at the fourth Wicked Problems Institute, which will be held March , in Washington, DC. The purpose of the next Institute is to highlight some of the existing agency-university collaborations that are underway and to identify opportunities for new waivers and partnerships to address one or more of the following Grand Challenges: Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development, Thousand Oaks, CA: Fostering innovations through title IV-E waiver demonstrations. The entrepreneurial university in the twenty-first century. The University of North Carolina Press.

7: Current Initiatives & Issues | Children's Bureau | ACF

Computer problems plaguing child welfare system. The SACWIS system, which started six months late and has cost \$13 million more than budgeted, is a key tool in getting the Department of Human.

The following resources provide up-to-date information on a variety of issues related to child welfare: The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute provides links to toolkits, stories, and workforce development resources to support child welfare practitioners, supervisors, managers, leaders, students, faculty, researchers, policymakers, and other professionals. Adoption Excellence Awards - The Adoption Excellence Awards are designed to recognize excellence in achieving the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being of children in out-of-home care. May Is National Foster Care Month - National Foster Care Month in May provides an opportunity for people all across the nation to get involved, whether as foster parents, volunteers, mentors, employers or in other ways. November is National Adoption Month - The purpose of National Adoption Month is to raise awareness about children in foster care nationwide waiting for permanent families. Report to Congress on Effectiveness of Citizen Review Panels - This report to Congress presents the findings of a study to determine the effectiveness of citizen review panels and also includes a description of state compliance with reporting requirements and how states respond to and implement citizen review panel recommendations. Report to Congress on the Effectiveness of CAPTA State Programs and Technical Assistance - This report to Congress provides an overview of how the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have targeted their Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act funds and how those choices evolve in response to ongoing assessments of state performance in ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families involved in the child welfare system. Report to Congress on Immunity from Prosecution for Mandated Reporters - This report to Congress provides an overview of information collected from professionals in the field affected by immunity issues related to the response and investigation of child maltreatment and also summarizes state statutes on immunity. Jacqueline Bertrand and Dr. Rebecca Wolf of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC , describes programs and materials available from the CDC that can assist foster and adoptive parents with the identification of and referrals for children with developmental disabilities. Early Identification of Developmental Disabilities: Rebecca Wolf of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC , describes programs and materials available from the CDC that can assist child welfare directors and providers with the identification of and referrals for children with developmental disabilities. First Annual Report to Congress - This report summarizes the activities of the 53 regional partnerships grants for addressing the needs of families with methamphetamine or other substance abuse problems who come to the attention of the child welfare system. In addition, the Medicare website also offers a number of publications regarding MMA that may help recipients make decisions regarding their coverage. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services CMS has identified various scenarios that certain groups of Medicare beneficiaries might encounter in trying to access the new prescription drug benefits, and has provided guidance on how to respond to inquiries regarding these circumstances. They have also provided contact information for Regional Assistance Centers that can help answer other questions that might arise. As these new scenarios are submitted and answered, they will be added to those that are currently in the chart. Comprehensive Family Assessment Guidelines for Child Welfare - These guidelines address the components of comprehensive family assessment, show the linkages to service planning and service provision, and illustrate how child welfare agencies can support their use. These guidelines are provided as an initial framework to facilitate efforts to move the child welfare community towards comprehensive assessment as a best practice. It is hoped that the resources on these pages will help States and jurisdictions with developing comprehensive disaster preparedness plans and in protecting children and families by responding to emergencies quickly and effectively. The resources are organized by preparedness before a disaster , response the immediate aftermath , and recovery the long-term reconstruction and healing phase. The Importance of Fathers in the Healthy Development of Children - This manual addresses both the opportunities and challenges that CPS caseworkers encounter while working with fathers. Focus on Older Children - Report to

Congress on the challenges for older children in foster care to achieve permanency and promising strategies being employed across the country to address these issues. A Report to Congress on Interjurisdictional Adoption of Children in Foster Care - Describes the nature, scope, and impact of interjurisdictional adoption placement efforts and the strategies that improve outcomes for children in foster care who are placed for adoption in other jurisdictions.

8: Social Problems Related to Families and Child Welfare: by Cassidy Marshall on Prezi

In October , HHS created the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare to further study parents' substance abuse problems and their effects on the child welfare system.Â» Are.

For National Professional Social Work Month, we took an informal survey of some of our advisors and contributors on what they consider to be the top five social justice issues facing social workers today. There were many different responses, but the issues that follow were the ones that showed up most frequently on the lists. We asked individual social workers to write an essay about each issue. Read those essays about the challenges our survey respondents regarded as the most serious that society faces today and compare them to your own list. Growing up in the late s and early s, the power of the people to transform society and work toward greater gender, racial, and ethnic equality was clear. During my undergraduate years, I learned that social workers active in the progressive movement were at the forefront of policies that reduced working hours, restricted child labor, and created public health clinics to improve conditions for low-income families. These models for how we can change our society shaped my involvement in organizations to end violence against women and work toward the empowerment of diverse groups. My path as a social worker is not unique. Regardless of our setting, all social workers are engaged in work related to oppression and social injustice. We do this work while living and working in a society where groups have mobilized to restrict or eliminate existing rights such as public education for immigrants and the children of immigrants, domestic partnerships for gay men and lesbians, and access to reproductive healthcare for adolescent women. Surviving and thriving as a social worker requires that we have a true appreciation for human diversity and understand how social identities affect access to resources. Throughout our history, social workers have been agents of both liberation and oppression. During the same era that we founded social settlements, we were involved in the incarceration of Native American children in boarding schools. Our approach to diversity within our communities will influence whether we work toward social exclusion or inclusion. Will we work toward the rejection, tolerance, acceptance, or celebration of the different groups that make up our communities? If we are to work toward social justice, we need to engage in the work involved in celebrating difference and diversity. I use the word celebrate based on its original meanings, which refers to honor, respect, or recognize. We must move beyond tolerating or accepting those who are different from ourselves to a position of cultural humility that requires us to question our own background and experiences to work in partnership with others. When working from this perspective, we, as social workers, must be engaged in ongoing self-assessment and awareness of how power differences affect our ability to be genuinely helpful. This process is an essential element of social justice work. Celebrating diversity means working as an ally and advocating for marginalized and oppressed groups. We are allies to others when we can recognize and use the sources of our privilege to advance the rights of those who do not share our own identities or backgrounds. We need to ask ourselves how we can use the knowledge we have of unjust practices toward individuals and groups in society to work toward changes to improve their situation. Our knowledge and experience can be used to join with others and create new movements to reduce poverty, improve access to healthcare, support families, and eliminate discrimination on the basis of our social identities. The United States is becoming an increasingly multiracial, multicultural, and multiethnic society. At the same time, conditions of economic inequality by gender and race have not improved. These trends in the substance and structure of society challenge our profession to evaluate how we address these demographic shifts. It is our responsibility as social workers to strategically use our position and privilege to work toward greater equality. There is no other ethical choice. She has more than 25 years of experience as a social worker and educator in multiethnic communities. Child Welfare By Judith M. I am deeply concerned that we continue to fail the children who are abused, neglected, and just plain unwanted. Since the start of our modern-day foster care system in the mids, when Charles Loring Brace started the Orphan Train Movement to resettle orphaned children from New York City to states in the Midwest and beyond, there have been numerous efforts to get it right. We have strategically planned, privatized, transformed systems, thought outside the box, been accountable, computerized, wrapped around,

and done more with less. Without the occasional sensationalized child death, I suspect these families would fall off the radar altogether. Some prefer to keep these images far away, finding comfort in denial. While we are a country of people who profess to love their children, there were 3 million reports of child maltreatment in Experts believe this represents only one third of actual incidents. More than , reports were found indicating a rate of 2. As long as no injuries result, parents may hit their children with impunity. Four children die from maltreatment every day, a number largely undercounted. Neglect, often associated with poverty, leads to slightly more child deaths each year than abuse. According to the census, We are a wealthy country not just in money but in talent and brains. Surely we can muster the will to develop and support a top-notch child welfare system? Lobby hard for loan forgiveness for social workers willing to specialize in child welfare. Enlarge the sphere of influence for social workers by running for a local, state, or federal office—or electing a colleague. Our children have only a handful of years to be children, only a brief period to build the foundation for a productive and satisfying adulthood. I must admit, I felt pretty good about this, as I traveled to and from the gym, ate my yogurt and veggies, and took the stairs at work. This blissful denial lasted all of one day. The next day, while attending a health disparity task force meeting, I was brought back to reality: You can live in the healthiest state in the country and still be surrounded by desperate need. Why, in a nation of so much, is my zip code dying? Why is employee-sponsored health insurance disappearing? Why are the numbers of uninsured African Americans, Hispanics, and immigrants so disproportionate to that of Caucasians? Why is the number of uninsured children—8. Although these are questions without simple answers, social workers have a tradition of striving for solutions. To begin, we must understand who are most affected by the disparity in health insurance coverage. Also at high risk of being uninsured are minorities and immigrants. The recent escalation in the number of uninsured individuals is largely attributed to a continuing decline in employee-sponsored insurance ESI. Even when employers do offer insurance, employees frequently cannot afford the skyrocketing premiums. The consequences for those who cannot afford or are not offered health insurance are life-altering. KCMU has found that they are less likely to receive preventive care, such as mammograms, and are more likely to be hospitalized for avoidable conditions. These misguided attempts to contain costs by denying treatment of minor conditions often result in the development of problems that are both more expensive and more serious. Those without insurance are likely to have problems paying medical bills—nearly one quarter are contacted by collection agencies. Most importantly, the Institute of Medicine estimates that 18, Americans die prematurely each year because they lack health insurance. These inequalities are not inevitable. Solutions do exist and can be created with an eye to both effectiveness and cost containment. Policies can be implemented to locate and enroll individuals who are eligible for public programs, while eligibility for these programs can also be expanded to cast a wider net. ESI premiums can be lowered, and employers with a certain number of employees can be required to pay a set percentage of their payroll on health benefits. Affordable health insurance plans can also be made available to small employers. It was not hyperbole for the public health worker to say her zip code is dying. Chances are, some of those 18, people who died prematurely—the minorities, the poor, the children—were her neighbors. So long as some zip codes remain endangered, social workers have a mission: Perhaps, then someday the health rankings will be a cause for all zip codes to celebrate. She previously worked in a transitional care unit, and she is currently the patient services manager for the Minnesota Chapter of The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She is also a hospital emergency department social worker. Resources Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved January 17, , from here. Retrieved January 25, , from here. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. In contrast, social workers believe poverty has many complex causes, including low wages, a lack of jobs, racism, sexism, and other forces beyond individual control. We favor helping rather than punishing people and changing rather than protecting a problematic status quo. However, for the past 30 years, the fight against poverty and injustice has been an uphill battle. Indeed, major economic dislocations and victim-blaming public policies have taken their toll on the capacity of the three traditional sources of income—marriage, markets, and the state—to protect people from poverty even when they work hard and play by the rules. Mounting Poverty In , From to , the number of people lacking food security rose from 31 to 35 million; those without health insured soared from 31 to We also know that people cope with the desperate

condition by harming themselves e. Social workers have the know-how and the professional obligation to help people undo negative coping and promote positive copingâ€”both self-advocacy e. A growing consensus holds that exposure to economic hardship and adverse conditions often precedes the rise of individual and social problems rather than the other way around, as previously presumed. Some fear that making individual and social change a fundamental part of our work politicizes a previously objective and unpolitical profession. Since social work cannot avoid the political, it is far better to address these issues explicitly than to pretend they do not exist. The middle ground, if one ever existed, has fast receded. We must decide which side we are on. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. She is the author of *Regulating the Lives of Women: She is currently writing a book on the history of activism among poor and working class women in the United States since The Role of Marriage, Markets and the State*. Retrieved January 2, , from here.

9: The Top 5 Social Justice Issues Facing Social Workers Today

About Child Welfare Issues. Key issues. The state of Connecticut bears legal and moral responsibility for the children in its care and custody. As of January

Home, green home : furniture, paint, flooring, and fabrics. Cross-examining agents The book thief book Magical World of Oz Breathing with Jesus Preparations for the trip to England and Troeltschs sudden death OOPS! I Won Too Much Money Independence movement in Quebec, 1945-1980 Timeline michael crichton Locke 2nd treatise notes Great Northern Railway 1945-1970 Photo Archive Volume 2 Providers as partners A series of unfortunate events the wide window Electronic Study Guide Mac t/a Calculus, Premiere Edition The New Oxford Picture Dictionary CD-ROM (Monolingual Version) Contemporary Africas track record Spontaneous Recognition Taxation and tax planning Interior Spaces of the USA and Canada Vol 6 Freedom and communications. Made in China Engagement Calendar 2002 Discovering deserts Contemporary Parish Prayers A Book of Historical Recipes Anatomy of human breast Franz Marc (Postcard Book) Microwave engineering and applications gandhi Enterprise resource planning book by alexis leon Harley-Davidson Sportsters 1970 to 2000 (Haynes Owners Workshop Manual Series) Death, loss, and bereavement : the role of social work Estelle Hopmeyer Large vs. small muscle mass activity in rhythmic effort Prognosis of women with acute coronary syndromes : an overview Andreja Sinkovic Attala County, Mississippi pioneers Indian baskets of the Northwest Coast Stages of senior care H.L. Mencken and the American mercury adventure. Scenes from a marriage : hospitality and commerce in Boccaccios Tale of Saladin and Torello Cristelle L. The Worshipper of the Image (Dodo Press) Day 5: First steps in recording Famous writers and their books