

***Moving Child Welfare Forward:
Achieving Positive Outcomes for Children, Youth and Families***
Syllabus

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Moving Child Welfare Forward: Achieving Positive Outcomes for Children, Youth and Families

Introduction

This course focuses on the recent emphasis in child welfare on achieving positive outcomes for children, youth and families and explores the impact of performance measurement on child welfare management, supervision and practice. The syllabus, as written, is a forty five hour three credit course, although you can select topics, assignments and in-class activities to tailor the content material into a fifteen hour, one credit course on child welfare if that is more suited to your needs.

Organized into nine classes, material in the syllabus is appropriate for graduate level social welfare classes in Organizational Policy or Child Welfare. While aimed at social welfare programs, you will find that some or all of this content material can be pulled out of the syllabus and included in courses in public administration, research methods, sociology, human services or management.

The nine classes in this syllabus are:

- **An Overview of Child Welfare in America:** examines the evolution of child welfare in America including how the passage of recent legislation is changing child welfare management and clinical practice.
- **Serving Children, Youth and Families -- Practice Perspectives:** introduces current practice models, including permanency planning, kinship care, concurrent planning, family preservation and family centered services, aimed at achieving safety, permanency and well being for children, youth and families.
- **Adolescent Services -- Fostering Connections:** explores the specific needs of adolescents in the child welfare system and practice strategies for youth transitioning out of care.
- **The Child Welfare Team:** introduces approaches to and strategies for building effective partnerships with individuals and organizations in the child welfare network.
- **Court and Agency Perspectives on Child Protection:** presents opportunities, challenges and conflicts faced by the child welfare agency and the courts as they carry out their required activities in child protection cases.
- **Implementing Change in Child Welfare -- Strategies, Tools and Tactics that Work:** enhances skills in building commitment to change on an individual client, team or organizational level.
- **Understanding Child Welfare Data -- Tools and Tips:** builds skills in analyzing, interpreting and applying child welfare data to improve performance.
- **Using Child Welfare Data to Measure Performance:** builds skills in the use of Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) results, measures and data to evaluate the agency's performance in achieving positive outcomes for children, youth and families.
- **Advocacy in Child Welfare:** explores the role of advocacy in child welfare at the casework, organizational, community, state and national levels.

The material for these classes came from a variety of sources, including advice from child welfare educators, trainers and practitioners, proven syllabi from relevant courses and recent training curricula.

Reference syllabi:

- Becker, Irene. (Spring 2003) *Social Work 702D, Seminar in Social Welfare Policy and Services*. San Diego, CA: San Diego State University, School of Social Work.
- Becker, Irene. (Fall 2003) *Social Work 400, Social Work Practice in Child Welfare*. San Diego, CA: San Diego State University, School of Social Work.
- St. Onge, Anita, J.D. and Sahonchik, Kris, J.D. (Spring 2004) *PPM 627: Child and Family Policy and Law*. Portland Maine: University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service.
- Wehrmann, K. (Spring 2003) *Social Work 324: Topics in Contemporary Child Welfare Practice*. Normal, IL: Illinois State University, School of Social Work.

Reference training curricula:

- *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2002, Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service. Available on the internet at: (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>).
- *Collaboration with the Courts*, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published July 2004, Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service. Available on the internet at: (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>).
- *Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being*, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2000, Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service. Available on the internet at: (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/sacwis>)

You may find it helpful to refer to these curricula for detailed learning objectives, activities, instructor's notes and sample materials. The curricula can be viewed/downloaded from the noted websites or can be ordered from the Clearinghouse, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, University of Southern Maine, One Post Office Square, 400 Congress Street, P.O. Box 15010, Portland, ME 04112. Phone: (207) 780-5813; Fax: (207) 780-5817; e-mail: clearing@usm.maine.edu.

Learning Objectives/Course Competencies

Students successfully completing all the classes in this unit will be expected to:

1. Understand the social, political and legislative forces that shaped the child welfare system in the United States

2. Describe current child welfare practice models
3. Explain the role of the courts in the child welfare system
4. Implement productive collaboration approaches at the case, service and organizational levels
5. Apply skills that build commitment to change at the personal, client and organizational levels
6. Locate, interpret and use child welfare data to document state and national progress toward meeting child and family outcomes
7. Employ successful advocacy techniques for casework and policy development/implementation.

Suggested Capstone Assignment

Students will be asked to identify the key themes in the book *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care* and write a 7 page paper analyzing the themes using the practice principles contained in 'A Practice-Based Planning Framework for Bringing the Child Welfare Team Together' (Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, pgs 4.33-4.34, Trainer's Guide, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at:

<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>.) The principles say that child welfare practice should be:

- child focused
- family centered
- comprehensive
- community based
- outcome-based and
- culturally responsive.

Acknowledgements

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Class One: An Overview of Child Welfare in America

Topics

- Class outline, logistics, requirements and expectations
- Influences on American child welfare: past, present and future
- Recent federal legislation impacting child welfare

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete, the student should be able to:

- Identify the major economic factors, policies, legislation and social trends that influenced the development of child welfare in America
- Explain the purpose and major requirements of recent child welfare laws
- Understand the overall outline of the course.

Suggested Assignments

- Read and be prepared to discuss in class *Uniting Welfare and Child Welfare: The El Paso County Department of Human Services* (Source: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, case number C16-03-1701.0.)
- Go to the Administration on Children and Families website (<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/>), select and review a recent piece of federal legislation relating to the field of child welfare and develop a one-page fact sheet on the major requirements of the selected legislation.

Suggested in class activities

- Large group discussion: *Uniting Welfare and Child Welfare: The El Paso County Department of Human Services*.
- Develop a timeline identifying major legislation, economic factors, policies and social trends that influenced the development of child welfare in America.
- Small group exercise – Child Welfare Today and Tomorrow (This exercise is designed to encourage thinking about the child welfare system: its parts, its influences, and gaps. It may be used here as a pre-test and at the end of the course as a post-test to demonstrate learning). Ask each group to:
 - Map the current child welfare system, including all agencies, organizations and governments that work with children, youth and families as understood by the class members. Discuss.
 - Describe an ideal child welfare system and compare it to the current system as described above. Discuss.
 - Discuss possible ways to improve the current system.

IMPORTANT: keep the results of this activity to review with the class at the end of the course.

Suggested Readings

- Bernstein, N. (2001) *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care*. New York: Vintage Books. Part One. This book tells the story of Shirley Wilder's life story and the struggles she faced with the child protective system.

- Cohen, Neil, A. (2000). *Child Welfare: A Multicultural Focus*. 2nd Ed. Chapters 1 and 2: Child Welfare: A Generalist Perspective and Child Welfare History in the United States. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, pp 1 -40. Provides an historical view of the social, political and economic forces that shaped current child welfare practice, policies, legislation and systems.
- Crosson-Tower, Cynthia. (2002). *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*. 5th Ed. Chapter 19: Toward a Better Tomorrow. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 417-429. Discusses societal and system changes needed to more fully address the problem of child abuse and neglect.

Supplemental Reference Material

Readings

- American Public Human Services Association. (2000). *States at Work: Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act, Parts I-III*. Washington, D.C.
- George, L.J. (1997). Why the Need for the Indian Child Welfare Act? *Journal of Multi-Cultural Social Work*, 5, 165-175.

Video

- Oklahoma Department of Human Services. 2001 *MEPA*. Time: 29:58. Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services Division.

On-Line Resources

- <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/> provides information about the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) which is a federal agency funding state, territory, local, and tribal organizations to provide family assistance (welfare), child support, child care, Head Start, child welfare, and other programs relating to children and families.
- <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/> provides information about the Family and Youth Services Bureau which supports local communities in providing services and opportunities to young people.
- <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/> provides information about the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, including child welfare publications, teleconferences and other resources.
- www.rom.ku.edu University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, web-based training on results oriented management, Section1: Policy Context for Child Welfare Practice reviews the policies and legislation that serve as a foundation for today's child welfare programs.

Class Two: Serving Children, Youth and Families -- Practice Perspectives

Topics

- Child welfare practice today with a focus on practice aimed at achieving safety, permanency and well-being for children, youth and families
- Diversity and multiculturalism
- What is a family?
- Involving families in decision-making throughout the casework process

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Identify the major phases in the casework process and the goal of each phase
- Discuss diversity and multiculturalism as they impact child welfare practice
- Explain recent trends in child welfare practice, including concurrent planning, family centered practice, kinship care and permanency planning
- Analyze the impact of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) on child welfare practice.

Suggested Assignments

- Student paper, 3-5 double spaced pages: Students will be asked to define and analyze the impact of ASFA on one aspect of casework practice, i.e., permanency planning, kinship care, family preservation, Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), family centered practice, concurrent planning, tightened time frames.

Suggested In-class Activities

- Video and discussion: *Introduction to Mediation, Family Group Conferencing and Concurrent Planning: Pathways to Permanence*.
- Discuss the major phases of the casework process.
- Small group activity: discuss possible challenges to caseworkers when assessing the needs of and planning services with children and families from diverse cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds.
- Small group activity: A key finding of the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) is that the interactions a family has with the agency have very powerful effects on achieving positive outcomes for children, youth and families. What happens between the caseworker and the family during visits and contacts, how families' needs are assessed and matched to services, the quality of the case planning and effectiveness of strategies used to engage the family can significantly impact outcomes. Break into 3 small groups: engagement, assessment and case planning. Ask each group to answer the following questions and prepare to report their discussion to the class:
 - What is the goal of this phase of the case work process?
 - What is the role of the social worker in this phase of the process?
 - What is the role of the family in this phase of the process?
 - What issues could arise in this phase of the process that could prevent achievement of positive outcomes and how can those issues be avoided?

Ask each small group to debrief with the whole class, process the reports back and then repeat the activity for the three other phases of the casework process, service implementation, monitoring and evaluation and closure.

Suggested Readings

- Bernstein, Nina. (2001). *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care*. New York: Random House. Part two.
- Cohen, Neil, A. (2000). *Child Welfare: A Multicultural Focus*. 2nd Ed. Chapter 3: The Continuum of Child Welfare Services. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 41-86. Describes various problems impacting children, youth and families with an emphasis on changes in the family structure and the increased role of women in the workplace.
- Crosson-Tower, Cynthia. (2002). *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*. 5th Ed. Chapter 16: The Social Worker and the System. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 350-364. Describes a 'typical' day in the life of a child protective worker.
- McCroskey, J. and Meezan, W. (Spring 1998). *The Future of Children: Protecting Children From Abuse and Neglect. Family Centered Services: Approaches and Effectiveness*. Vol. 8, No. 1. Describes an approach to serving children that helps stressed families prevent child abuse/neglect before it begins or enables families to provide appropriate care for their children.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (November 2000) *Rethinking Child Welfare Practice Under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, pp. 28 - 42. Provides a framework for reframing child welfare practice, supervision and management to reflect the intent of ASFA.

Suggested Videos

- Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. *Introduction to Mediation, Family Group Conferencing and Concurrent Planning: Pathways to Permanence*. Time 30:00. The video can be ordered, at no cost, from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, 4288 West Dublin-Granville Rd., Dublin, OH 43017 by calling 1-800-275-3832 or on line at <http://www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org> . Looks at child protective services through the eyes of a former foster child.
- Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute and the Children's Friend and Service of Rhode Island. *Changing Child Welfare Practice*. Time 12:00. This video can be ordered from the Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute, 401.456.4627 or <http://www.ric.edu/cwi>. The cost is \$8.00 for the video and \$10.00 for a dvd plus shipping. This video defines Family Centered Practice and the related benefits to families, children and workers.
- Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute and the Children's Friend and Service of Rhode Island. *Best Practices Approaches*. Time 23:00. This video can be ordered from the Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute, <http://www.ric.edu/cwi> or 401.456.4627. The cost is \$8.00 for the video and \$10.00 for a dvd plus shipping. This video explores the components of Family Centered Practice and provides an understanding of the positive results.

Supplemental Reference Material

Readings

- Brown, A.W., & Bailey, E.B. (Jan./Feb.1997). An Out-of-home Care System in Crisis: Implications for African American Children in the Child Welfare System. *Child Welfare*, Vol. 76, Issue 1.
- Glantz, T. & Herz, L. (July 2004) *Child Welfare Today, Enhancing Child Welfare practice and Outcomes for Children and Families: A Family Centered Approach*, Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute.
- Horejsi, C., Heavy Runner Craig, B., & Pablo, J. (1992). Reactions by Native American Parents to Child Protection Agencies: Cultural and Community Factors. *Child Welfare*, 62(4), 329-342.

On-Line Resources

- www.rom.ku.edu University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, web-based training on results oriented management, Section 3: *Evidence Based Practice for Achieving Outcomes* highlights good practice for promoting outcomes.

Class Three: Adolescent Services -- Fostering Connections

Topics

- Needs of adolescents in the child welfare system
- Practice strategies for youth transitioning out of care

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Describe the child and adolescent development process
- Explain what ‘permanency’ means for adolescents in care
- Employ successful approaches to preparing youth to transition to adulthood
- Value having youth in care involved in their permanency planning process.

Suggested Assignments

- Student paper, 3 double spaced pages: Students will be asked to respond to the questions: ‘Adolescents and children in out of home care need safety, permanency and well-being. Do the needs of these two groups differ? If so, how? and come to class prepared to discuss.
- Analyze and come to class prepared to discuss Lake Snell Parry & Associates study, *Former Foster Children Speak Out About Their Experiences in Foster Care and Priorities for Change in the Foster Care System*.

Suggested In-class Activities

- Small group discussion to identify the phases of adolescent development, adolescent behaviors and emotions and support systems. Ask the groups to think back to the when they were 11-21 and discuss:
 - emotions and behaviors they remember having in early, mid and late adolescence
 - examples of support and guidance they received to help them move through the phases
 - who provided them with support and guidance.Process with the whole class.
- Small group: Discuss the question ‘Do the needs of adolescents and children in out of home care for safety, permanency and well-being differ?’ Include the Lake Snell Parry & Associates reading in this discussion.
- Small group: Using Shirley during her teen years as described in *The Lost Children of Wilder*, discuss ways those working with her could have helped her build lifelong, meaningful connections, such as adoption, legal guardianships, mentoring and relationships with caring, competent adults, siblings and peers, and what the impact such connections may have had on her life.

Suggested Readings

- Bernstein, Nina. (2001). *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care*. New York: Random House. Part three.
- Charles, Kristi, & Nelson, Jennifer. *Permanency Planning: Creating Life Long Connections*. Tulsa, OK . The University of Oklahoma, College of Continuing

Education, National Resource Center for Youth Development. Provides a framework for thinking about the specific needs of older youth in the foster care system.

- Harden, Brenda Jones. (Winter 2004). Safety and Stability for Foster Children: A Developmental Perspective in *The Future of Children: Children, Families and Foster Care*. The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., Vol. 14, No.1., pp.31 -47. Discusses how the presence or absence of family stability influences child development.
- Lake Snell Perry & Associates, Inc. (2004). Former Foster Children Speak Out About Their Experiences in Foster Care and Priorities for Change in the Foster Care System in *The Future of Children Journal*, 1-8, i-v. Comments from former foster children on how the system could be improved.
- Massiniga, Ruth & Pecora, Peter. (Winter 2004) Providing Better Opportunities for Older Children in the Child Welfare System in *The Future of Children: Children, Families and Foster Care*. The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C. Vol. 14, No., pp 151-173. Looks at developmental needs and outcomes of older youths.

Supplemental Reference Material

Readings

- Bernotavicz, F.D., Jordan, PA, Zanghi, M. and Jacobus, M. (2001) *A Competency Model for Adolescent Caseworkers: Partnering with Youth as They Transition to Independence*. Portland, ME: University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service.
- Kessler, Michele. (2004). *The Transition Years: Serving Current and Former Foster Youth Ages Eighteen to Twenty-One*. Tulsa, OK . The University of Oklahoma, National Resource Center for Youth Services.

On-Line Resources

- <http://www.cdipage.com> provides information on child development.
- <http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/> provides information on the National Resource Center for Youth Services, including publications, training opportunities and resources.
- www.theplaceofourown.org provides resource information and answers to questions asked by youth who live(d) in a foster home or a group home and are eager to learn about the possibilities for the future.

Class Four: The Child Welfare Team

Topics

- Who are or should be members of the child welfare team? Why?
- Elements of collaboration at the case, service and organizational levels

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Identify key members of the child welfare team and their role in achieving positive outcomes for children, youth and families
- Implement effective collaboration models, strategies and tactics
- Understand the benefits of cross agency case planning and how to achieve them.

Suggested Assignments

- Student paper, 2 -4 double spaced pages. Describe the primary role and responsibilities of each of these stakeholders in assessing families' needs and matching them to services:
 - child(ren)
 - caseworker
 - families
 - adoptive/foster parents
 - community partners agencies, private organizations and groups)
 - schools
 - tribes
 - health and mental health providers and
 - various levels of government
- Go to <http://www.ncai.org/> and identify the tribes in your state/county. Write a 2 page paper answering the question 'If there are federally recognized tribes in a state, what does that mean for child welfare when implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act and participating in the Child and Family Service Reviews?'

Suggested In-class Activities

- Small group activity: Child welfare agencies do their work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, all of whom should build a shared knowledge, language and values base. Discuss possible strategies and mechanisms a child welfare agency manager might use to assure that community partners are fully committed to a family centered approach to serving children, youth and families. What actions would s/he take to determine if the family centered approach is commonly understood and implemented by community partners? If gaps were uncovered, how could s/he resolve those issues?
- Small group activity: identify key members of the child welfare team and characteristics of successful cross agency case planning and management. Ask students to work in the small groups to answer questions such as :
 - Who needs to be on the child protection team and why?
 - Has the team changed since the implementation of ASFA?

- Is the team for children's services different from the team for adolescent services?
- Thinking back to successful program level collaborative efforts in which you have participated, what characteristics made that collaboration work?
- Thinking back to successful case level collaborative efforts in which you have participated, what characteristics made that collaboration work?
- What obstacles impede successful cross agency case planning and management and how might you overcome such obstacles?
- Introduce 'A Practice-based Planning Framework for Bringing the Child Welfare Team Together' and explain its usefulness in linking effective practice and collaboration. (Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, pgs 4.33-4.34, Trainer's Guide, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>).
- Read Jan's Story (Jan's Story highlights the inter-relationship of domestic violence and child welfare. Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, pgs 3.19-3.20, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>). Ask students to work in the small groups to answer the following questions:
 - How would you summarize the key facts in this story?
 - What practice issues are raised by Jan's case?
 - What are the hoped for outcomes for Jan and her children?
 - With which individuals and agencies will you need to collaborate to support Jan in the achievement of those outcomes?

Process with the whole class.

Suggested Readings

- Bernstein, Nina. (2001). *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care*. New York: Random House. Part four.
- Hoel, James L. (1998). *Cross-systems Collaboration: Tools that Work*. Washington, D.C.: Child Welfare League of America. Presents a collection of effective principles for collaboration.

Supplemental Reference Material

Readings

- Cross, T.A., Earle, K.A., Simmons, D. (2000). Child Abuse and Neglect in Indian Country: Policy Issues. *Families in Society*, Vol. 81, No. 1, pp. 49-58.
- Fox, K.A. (2003). The Collection of Data on the Abuse and Neglect of American Indian Children. *Child Welfare*, 82, 707-726.

Video

- Video: Spaulding for Children. (1995). *Understanding the Indian Child Welfare Act*. Spaulding for Children, National Resource Center for Special Needs Adoption, 16250 Northland Dr., Southfield, MI. #113, \$95. This 17 minutes video presents a

straight forward presentation that highlights the provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

On-Line Resources

- www.aecf.org This is the website for the Annie E. Casey Foundation and presents information on its initiatives, publications and projects..
- www.futureofchildren.org This website provides information about *The Future of Children* publication and other resources.
- <http://www.nicwa.org> Provides information about the National Indian Child Welfare Association, its services and relevant publications.
- <http://www.ncai.org/> This National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) site identifies tribes by state. Click on “Tribal Directory” and then “Indian Nationals in the U.S.” This will provide a list of Bureau of Indian Affairs Regions. Choose your geographic area and you will get a list of tribes in your state and adjacent states.

Class Five: Court and Agency Perspectives on Child Protection

Topics

- Roles, responsibilities, processes
 - Child Welfare Agency
 - Juvenile Court
 - Truancy Court
 - Drug Court
- Using the Courts to enforce and or create policy

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Explain the required and perceived roles and responsibilities of the court in the child protection system and how courts are involved in achieving successful outcomes for children and families
- Define what the courts and child protective agencies identify as their main opportunities, challenges and needs as they carry out their required activities in child welfare cases
- Employ strategies for building positive working relationships between the child welfare agency and the court.

Suggested Assignments

- Read and be prepared to discuss in class the *Child Welfare Services in El Paso County, Colorado: Where Human Services and the Courts Meet* case. (Source: *Collaboration with the Courts*, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published July 2004. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>)
- Student paper, 2 double spaced pages: Students will be asked to select one children's/parent's rights issue (placement with kin, termination of parental rights, making information on biological parents available to adopted children) and describe the practice implications for the child welfare worker.

Suggested In-class Activities

- Guest Speakers: Agency representative and lawyer or judge to discuss what the courts and child protective agencies identify as their vision, role, and responsibilities in the child protection system.
- Small group discussion: Students will be asked to analyze the effectiveness of the Wilder class action lawsuit from the perspective of using the legal system to as a method of bringing about reform. Read this quote from *The Lost Children of Wilder*, p 80. 'There were others who saw themselves as Lowry's collaborators. To many in a younger generation of social workers and parent activists shaped by the civil rights movement, *Wilder* was an electrifying link between their every day struggles and a broader push for systemic reform'. Ask students to divide in to two groups, those that agree and those that disagree with the statement that *Wilder* served as an impetus for reforming the NYC child welfare service delivery system.

Ask each group to spend 30 minutes discussing why the members agree/disagree then report back major discussion points to the whole class.

- Debate the pro's and con's of establishing separate Truancy and Drug Courts.
- Case Discussion: *Child Welfare Services in El Paso County, Colorado: Where Human Services and the Courts Meet*. (2003) Cambridge, MA:Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, C16-03-1702.0.

Suggested Readings

- Bernstein, Nina. (2001). *The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care*. New York: Random House. Part five and postscript.
- Crosson-Tower, Cynthia. (2002). *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*. 5th Ed. Chapter 2: The Family: Roles, Responsibilities and Rights. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 21-41. Defines 'family' and includes a discussion on minority family systems.
- Center for the Future of Children. (Winter 1996). *The Future of Children: The Juvenile Court*. Los Angeles: CA: The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Vol. 6, No.3.
 - Rubin, H. Ted. The Nature of the Court Today, pp. 40-52. This article presents a description of the influences shaping the role, activities and jurisdictions of Juvenile Courts.
 - Hardin, Mark. Responsibilities and Effectiveness of the Juvenile Court in Handling Dependency Cases, pp.111-125. This article describes the expanding role of the Juvenile Court in child protection cases.

Supplemental Reference Material

On-Line Resources

- <http://www.clasp.org> The website of the Center for Law and Social Policy, an organization that focuses on family policy and access to civil legal assistance for low-income families.
- <http://www.ncjfcj.org> The website of the National Council on Juvenile and Family Court Judges, an organization that works to improve the courts of juvenile and family jurisdictions.
- <http://www.childrensrights.org> The website of the Children's Rights which concentrates on promoting and protecting the rights of abused and neglected children in foster care systems.
- <http://www.childrensdefense.org> The website of the Children's Defense Fund, a private, nonprofit organization that provides information and education about the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities.

Class Six: Implementing Change in Child Welfare -- Strategies, Tools and Tactics that Work

Topics

- Understanding the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) as a driving force for change in the child welfare system
- Tactics for problem solving in a child welfare agency
- How to build commitment to change organizationally, personally and on an individual client/family level
- The impact of technology on the job of social workers

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Describe the systemic changes at the federal, state and local level caused by the implementation of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)
- Define the process of building commitment to change
- Assess commitment and resistance to change
- Employ various change motivation strategies and tactics
- Identify potential barriers to change and implement tactics to overcome such barriers
- Understand the impact of technology and office automation on the social worker's tasks and role.

Suggested Assignments

- Read and be prepared to discuss in class the *Family Net: An Automated Child Welfare Information System*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, C16-99-1552-0. Source: *Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being Trainer's Guide*, September 27, 2000. Available on the internet at: (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/sacwis>)
- Ask each student to go to the Administration on Children and Families website (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwrp/index.htm>), select a state and identify the state's performance with regard to the seven outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency, well-being and the seven systemic factors. Come to class prepared to present a summary of the findings and comment on the impact of these findings on children, youth and families involved with the child welfare system.

Suggested In-class Activities

- Guest Speaker: Child welfare supervisor to discuss how the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) has changed the organization and clinical practice.
- Small group discussion on the statement... 'The CFSR is a successful attempt to identify and shape best child welfare practice across the country.' Ask students to divide in to two groups, those that agree and those that disagree with the statement about the impact of the CFSR on practice. Ask each group to spend 30 minutes

- discussing why the members agree/disagree with the statement then report back major discussion points to the whole class.
- Introduce a change management model and supporting theory.
 - Small group activity: applying the phases of change model. Students will be asked to choose one of the professional staff active with Shirley in *The Lost Children of Wilder* and discuss how s/he either did or could have made a change in Shirley's life using the building commitment to change tactics.
 - Facilitated discussion of the *Family Net* Case
 - What are the key 'facts' in the case?
 - What were the goals and expectations for the *Family Net* system?
 - Were the goals met? Why or why not?
 - How did the advent of an automated case management system change the job of the case worker? The supervisor?
 - What major themes or issues emerge from the case?
 - What are the lessons learned from the case that you could apply in your day-to-day work?
 - Small group activity: Ask each person to think of one major change they faced in work, school or personal life and complete a handout 'Change Commitment; Where Are We?' form. (Source: *Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being*, pg 8.23, Trainer's Guide, September 27, 2000. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa> . Form will need to be modified to fit this activity.) Instruct the group that after they have completed the work individually, they will be asked to meet in small groups and share their answers. After each group has had a chance to hear and discuss the changes each group member is addressing (approximately 5-10 minutes), ask the groups to tabulate the number of persons in each phase of their change (The expectation here is that participants will be in all phases of the curve.) Ask each group to choose one change that can be analyzed more fully. Using tactics for addressing resistance, (Source: *Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being*, pgs 8.11 – 8. 12, Trainer's Guide, September 27, 2000. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>) ask each group to determine (for the change they have chosen) the best way to ensure positive commitment to change for all players. Ask the spokesperson for each group to present the results for the change they discussed.
 - Using the Rhode Island Coalition for Family Support and Involvement (RIPIN) Web site (<http://www.ripin.org/100tips.pdf>), look at the "100 Tips for Parents". Apply tactics associated with building commitment to change to the 100 tips and answer the question...will these tips lead to change?

Suggested Readings

- Conner, D. R. (1992). *Managing at the Speed of Change*. New York: Villard. Copyright by O.D. Resources, Inc., Chapters 6 and 9. Provides a model for building commitment to change.
- *Family-Centered Practice: How are we doing?* A Family-Centered Practice Rating Scale tool was designed for use by families, providers, schools and communities to

evaluate and improve how Rhode Island supports families. Useful as model for implementing systemic change. The tool is available on the RIPIN web site, under the Publications link, “Other Publications” section.

Supplemental Reference Material

Readings

- Neuman, K. (2002). From Practice Evaluation to Agency Evaluation: Demonstrating Outcomes to the United Way. *Social Work in Mental Health, 1*, 1-14.

On-Line Resources

- www.ripin.org provides information on the Rhode Island Coalition for Family Support and Involvement.(RIPIN).

Class Seven: Understanding Child Welfare Data -- Tools and Tips

Topics

- Types and uses of performance data (case, compliance, resource and outcome)
- Basic data analysis tools and methods
- Client-focused outcomes

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Identify and describe four types of performance data
- Employ some basic data tools for reading and interpreting data
- Develop and monitor child/family outcomes
- Use data from reports to assess the impact of practice on client outcomes.

Suggested Assignments

- Come to class prepared to develop realistic and measurable client-focused outcomes for the goal of enhancing a family's capacity to provide for their children's needs. (Use the *Focus on Client Outcomes* guidebook. See Suggested Readings.)

Suggested In-class activities

- Small group exercise: Survey class members using the *Assessment of Core Competencies* tool. (Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, pgs 3.15-3.17, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>). The surveys should be anonymous and students should assess their real skills in these areas. Then ask each group to calculate the following:
 - Mean, median, and mode for each survey instrument
 - Mean score per section, all group members
 - Median score per section, all group members
 - Mode score per section, all group members

Compare the results of each group's analysis. Then develop a plan to address the above results. Answer the following questions:

- Which items on the *Assessment of Core Competencies* instrument obtained the highest and lowest scores?
- How could these skills be strengthened?
- Which sections on the *Assessment of Core Competencies* instrument were rated highest or lowest?
- How could these areas be strengthened?
- Small group exercise: Organize the class into a hypothetical child welfare office with some members of the class having "managerial" responsibilities and some "direct practice" duties. Ask each group to list examples of data under each of the four performance measurement types (case, compliance, resource and outcome) and explain the value of each type to a manager and direct service worker. Have each group report out its findings and compare and contrast the results.
- Small group activity: setting client outcomes and measures. Reinforce the building commitment to change tactics then ask the students to read 'Worker Having Difficulty Working with a Family' case study (This case study highlights the issues

a caseworker can face helping a ‘mom’ change her behavior. Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, pg 3.18, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at: <http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>. Ask students to work in small groups to develop specific client –focused outcomes for ‘mom’, one or more indicators for each outcome and an approach to monitoring her progress toward meeting the outcomes. Have each group report out its discussions.

Suggested Readings

- Minnesota Department of Human Services. *Focus on Client Outcomes: a Guidebook for Results-oriented Human Services*. St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Department of Human Services, Community Services Division. (Available from Community Services Division, Department of Human Services, 444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55155-3839). An easy to read introduction to developing client outcomes.
- Yoo, J. (2002). The Relationship Between Organizational Variables and Client Outcomes: A Case Study in Child Welfare. *Administration in Social Work*, 26, 39-61.

Supplemental Reference Materials

Readings

- *Child Welfare Outcomes 2001 - Annual Report* – (2003) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau. This is the fourth in a series of annual reports required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cwo.htm>)
- Weinbach, Robert W. and Grinnel, Richard M., Jr. (2004). *Statistics for Social Workers*. 6th edition. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group, or any recent social welfare statistics text book.

On-Line Resources

- <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/> The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information web site contains data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).
- www.rom.ku.edu University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, web-based training on results oriented management, Section 2: *Managing for Results: Using Data to Inform Program Improvements* provides an on-line, free curriculum on measuring results and using child welfare data to inform day to day decision making.

Class Eight: Using Child Welfare Data to Measure Performance

Topics

- Characteristics of children in care
- The use of Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) results, performance measures and data to evaluate agency performance
- State and national child welfare data

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Locate and use data from the major child welfare data bases
- Analyze what the state and national child welfare data is saying about the performance of the system
- Employ child welfare data to support management decisions and plan future initiatives.

Suggested Assignments

- Using the *Kids Count Data Book* online at <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/>, go to the profile section, select a state and look at the 10 indicators of child well being. Analyze positive and negative changes in the state and national trend line. Can you make any conclusions using these figures? Can you see any trends? Do these numbers surprise you? Do you think these figures could be misleading in any way? Develop a list of questions you would ask to understand the changes in state and national trends. Come to class prepared to present your analysis.
- Using the Children's Bureau website, (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwrp/index.htm>), look up results of the Child and Family Services Reviews for the same state that you looked at in the *Kids Count Data Book* and find out how that state scored on the outcomes measures.
- Review and come to class prepared to discuss the *Hawaii* case study. (This case links data to outcomes and practice and asks the learner to interpret outcomes data using some basic analysis tools. (Source: *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team*, Trainer's Guide, September 27, 2002. Available on the internet at: (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>))
- Find NCANDS, SACWIS, and AFCARS data on line and write a short description of the purpose and types of data contained in each data base.

Suggested in class activities

- Guest Speaker: Child welfare agency administrator/quality assurance director to discuss the state's CFSR results and how the agency is using the results to improve outcomes for children, youth and families.
- Discuss data analysis lessons to be learned raised by the *The Trouble with the Child and Family Service Reviews: the Federal Government's Failed Attempt to Measure Child Welfare System Performance* article.
- Small group activity: In small groups, look at students' individual state analysis from the *Kids Count Data Book* and CFSR results and compare the results to

national statistics for the same items. What conclusions can you draw from these numbers? What decisions can be made based on this data to improve services for children and families in the state(s) or country?

- Small group exercise: In small groups, review the *Hawaii Case Study* and answer the following questions. Ask that a recorder be named who will report back to the large group.

Question 1: (a) What percentage of children in your section had a recurrence of child abuse and neglect in FY 01? In the first quarter of FY 02? (b) How does that figure compare with the national standard? (c) What factors or practice issues could explain this decrease?

Question 2: (a) What percentage of children re-entered foster within twelve months in FY 01? In the first quarter of FY 02? (b) Does the percentage appear to be increasing or decreasing? (c) How do the percentages compare with the national standard? (d) What factors or practice issues could explain this decrease?

Question 3: Finally, what role has substance abuse played in your unit's cases? What data can you provide to demonstrate this?

Bring all the participants back together and begin to gather the small group reports by asking one group to summarize the case situation. Then ask another group to report how it answered question each question. Discuss.

Suggested Readings

- *Kids Count Data Book* . (2004) Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available online at (<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/databook/>). Presents state profiles, data, graphs and changes over time in several indicators for children's well being.
- National Coalition for Child Protection Reform (2003). *The Trouble with the Child and Family Service Reviews: the Federal Government's Failed Attempt to Measure Child Welfare System Performance*. Alexandria, VA. Available on line at: (<http://www.nccpr.org>). Discusses flaws in the CFSR process such as sample size, sample choice, low standards and bias.

Supplemental Reference Materials

Readings

- *Child Maltreatment 2002: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems*. (2004) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. National statistics on child abuse and neglect.

On-Line Resources

- www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb The Children's Bureau website provides access to SACWIS, AFCARS and NCAND data, contains the final reports from the states

that have completed the Federal Review. It contains the review outcomes and the data for each state displayed along with the national standards for each outcome.

- <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov> The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information web site contains data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).
- <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/sacwis/about.htm> contains information about the Statewide Automated Child Welfare System (SACWIS).
- <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/dis/afcars/index.htm> contains information about the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS).

Class Nine: Advocacy in Child Welfare

Topics

- Role of advocacy in child welfare, including ethical considerations
- Successful advocacy techniques
- Advocacy within the child welfare organization: in casework, in policy development and implementation
- External advocacy at community, state, and national levels

Learning Objectives

When this class is complete the student should be able to:

- Understand the role of advocacy in child welfare
- Use child welfare data to inform advocacy discussions
- Discuss advocacy within the child welfare organization in casework and in policy development and implementation
- Employ some successful advocacy techniques for use in casework
- Develop some successful advocacy techniques for use at the community, state and national levels.

Suggested Assignments

- Attend a meeting of a public body, such as Board of Education, State Court of Appeals, legislative committee, or meet with a legislator or state official. Write a 3-5 page paper on the experience. Discuss any social policy that relates to the current agenda item or court case. How could an individual or group have influence on the process you observed? Which building commitment to change tactics could be useful?
- Go to five web sites belonging to an organization concerned with the welfare of children and families that includes advocacy as part of its mission. Write a one page fact sheet on each of them, including name of organization, position on advocacy, methods suggested, target of efforts.
- Imagine you are a child welfare caseworker. In a 3-5 page paper describe the ways in which you might be required to advocate for the children on your caseload. What are the pros and cons of doing so? What issues should you consider before you undertake the effort, including ethical considerations? What would you do? Are you willing to put your employment in jeopardy?

Suggested In-class Activities

- Guest Speaker: Arrange for a child welfare supervisor or manager, a state legislator, a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or some other professional involved in advocating for children to come and talk about what they do and how they help bring about successful outcomes for children and families.
- Identify an issue related to child welfare that is under discussion in the state legislature. Prepare to testify on this issue and, if possible, actually deliver the testimony. Plan a campaign to enlist community/state support for this issue and decide in what ways this support could be demonstrated.

- Small group exercise – Child Welfare Today and Tomorrow (This exercise is designed as a post-test to demonstrate learning; compare to first class results). Ask each group to:
 - Review the map of the current child welfare system and other agencies that affect children, youth and families that students put together during the first class and make a new map based on the class' current understanding of what the child welfare system looks like. Discuss.
 - Describe an ideal child welfare system, and compare to the ideal system created during the first class.
 - Discuss possible ways to improve the current system to make it look more like the ideal model.

Suggested Readings

- Badeau, S.H., Perez, A.G., Lightbourne, W., Gray, E.S., & Gonzalez, L.P.S. (2004) *Five Commentaries: Looking to the Future. Children, Families and Foster Care*, 14, 175-188. Thoughtful discussion of future trends in foster care.
- De Vita, C.J. and Mosher-William, R. (Editors) (2001). *Who Speaks for America's Children? The Role of Child Advocates in Public Policy*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, pp. 3-39; 105-137. A series of essays on the ways advocacy is conducted and the way it influences policy.
- Herbert, Margot P. and Mould, John W. (March 1, 1992). The Advocacy Role in Public Child Welfare. *Child Welfare*, v71, n2, pp. 114 – 139. The role of advocacy in the job of front line child welfare workers.
- Pizzigati, K. and Stuck, E., and Ness, N. (2002). *A Child Advocacy Primer: Experience and Advice from Service Providers, Board leaders, and Consumers*. Washington, D.C.: Child Welfare League of America Inc. An examination of the role of advocacy in service-based organizations.

Supplemental Reference Materials

Readings

- *An Advocate's Guide to the Media*. Children's Defense Fund.
- Hayes, Bill and Degelman, Charles. (1994). *Active Citizenship Today Field Guide*. A joint project of Constitutional Rights Foundation: Los Angeles, CA and Close Up Foundation: Alexandria, VA.
- Haynes, Karen S. and Mickelson, James S. (2003). *Affecting Change: Social Workers in the Political Arena*. 5th Ed. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Hick, Steven and McNutt, John G. (2002). *Advocacy, Activism, and the Internet: Community Organization and Social Policy*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum, Books, Inc.
- Jansson, Bruce (2003). *Becoming an Effective Policy Advocate*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.
- Litzerfeiner, Pat and Petr, Christopher G. (Jul 1997). Case Advocacy in Child Welfare. *Social Work*, Vol. 42, Issue 4, p. 392.
- Pardeck, J.T. (2002). *Children's Rights: Policy and Practice*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.

- Simons, Janet and Jablonski, Donna M.(1990). *An Advocate's Guide to Using Data*. Children's Defense Fund: Washington, D.C.
- Thompson, Joanne J. (July 1994). Social Workers and Politics: Beyond the Hatch Act. *Social Work*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 457-465.

On-Line Resources

- <http://www.americanhumane.org> The website of the American Humane Association (AHA) an organization dedicated to preventing cruelty, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children and animals.
- <http://www.aphsa.org> The website of the American Public Human Services Assn. (APHSA), an organization that educates members of Congress, the media, and the broader public on what is happening in the states around welfare, child welfare, health care reform, and other issues involving families and the elderly.
- <http://www.cwla.org> The website of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), an organization committed to promoting the well-being of children, youth, and their families, and protecting every child from harm.
- <http://www.naswdc.org> provides information about the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).