



# CASCW NEWS

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Center for Advanced Studies  
in Child Welfare  
School of Social Work  
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<http://ssw.che.umn.edu/cascw/>

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## CASCW NEWS

Editor-in-Chief: Esther Wattenberg  
Editing and Design: Renee Albert

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### A SPECIAL INSERT:

## Domestic Violence and the Effects on Children

*A Q & A with Jeffrey Edleson and Sandra Beeman*

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## A New Initiative for the State's Child Welfare System:

Alternative Response Program: Reaching out to support families

The Alternative Response Program provides county child protection workers with the flexibility to best meet children's and families' needs. For an estimated 70 percent of families reported to the child protection system, this family assessment approach may be more appropriate and effective.

Through this program, county social workers examine child safety and maltreatment risks but also identify family strengths and needs. This holistic approach enables them to better support families and refer them to the community resources they need to improve their parenting skills.

Building on these strengths and calling in family resources, such as relatives or friends who can help solve problems or provide assistance, will enable parents to raise their children in safe, healthy, nurturing environments.

The Alternative Response Program is voluntary. The Alternative Response Program approach or following the more traditional investigative approach to respond to child abuse and neglect reports.

Children are safest when the community – churches, schools neighbors, recreation centers, community social service centers – provide support and early intervention for struggling families. The Alternative Response Program seeks to ensure families have supportive community networks that offer longer term assistance to help them raise their children.

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*CASCW News is produced by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare and supported by Title IV-E Funds, through the Minnesota Department of Human Services*

## IV-E Alumni News

### Ann Turnlund

Upon graduation, Ann was hired as a social services program advisor to the Adoption and Guardianship Unit at the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Her primary responsibilities were to increase adoption opportunities for hard to place children, to develop, distribute and analyze county & state ward reports and to provide technical assistance to county and private agencies on behalf of children who wait for permanent homes.

Last September, she accepted a new position at the department for the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System. As program advisor, she is currently planning and implementing standardized training for county and tribal foster, adoptive and kinship providers. Ann's committed to making quality training more available to parents, especially in Greater Minnesota, for the sake of children.

**Bernadette Benner** is currently working with Ramsey County's pilot program called Alternative Response. Alternative Response is a voluntary program on the part of the family, which may include a family assessment and services approach under which the agency assesses the risk of abuse and neglect. In addition, the agency will assess the service needs of the family and arrange for appropriate services, diversions, referral for services, or other response identified in the plan (dept of human services). From June, 1999 until Sept. 2000, Bernadette Benner was the Minor Mother's Social Worker.

## A Study: Career Paths and Contributions of Four Cohorts of IV-E Funded MSW Child Welfare Graduates

by Sandra Robin and David Hollister

For the last decade the federal government has provided financial support through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to schools of social work to provide professional education in child welfare. This study looks at the first four cohorts of graduates who received IV-E funding from the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota. Data on MSW graduates from 1993 – 1996 (N=73), as well as survey responses (N=32), were analyzed to ascertain dimensions of their career development in, and contributions to, child welfare social work. Results indicate that the vast majority of graduates funded by IV-E dollars became employed in and stayed in child welfare focused social work, with a strong percentage in public child welfare services, and that these social work-educated social workers are actively involved in shaping the practice, policies and administration of child welfare services.

For further information, please contact Sandy Robin via e-mail at [srobin@che.umn.edu](mailto:srobin@che.umn.edu) or Dave Hollister at [dhollist@che.umn.edu](mailto:dhollist@che.umn.edu).

The proceedings from  
"Sovereignty: The Heart of the Matter"  
conference are now available!  
Contact Anne Preston at (612) 624-4231  
to request a copy today!

## Alternative Response

con't from Page 1

It allows enough flexibility to meet the range of children's and families' needs when a child abuse and neglect are reported.

It meets individual families' needs to ensure child safety and well being.

It elicits broader community participation in supporting families and keeping children safe.

An estimated 11, 000 families over four years will benefit from the Alternative Response Program in Minnesota.

20 counties will participate in a research project to monitor and evaluate the impact of this approach to families. The program is under the direction of David Thompson, Minnesota Department of Human Services 651-296-2612.

For more information please call the Minnesota Department of Human Services Alternative Response Program at 651-297-4124 or 651-296-2612. For TTY communications, contact the Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529.

## -Faculty News-

**Jeffrey Edleson** received the "Pioneer Award" from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges for his work on integrating the work of child protection services, domestic violence program and the juvenile courts. The award was given at the First National Summit on Effective Intervention in Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence held at Jackson Hole, WY on September 24 - 27, 2000.

**Nancy Johnston**, CASCW IV-E Scholar Program Coordinator was a member of the site team for reaccreditation of the School of Social Work at the University of Eastern Washington in late October. Nancy also had the opportunity to visit with faculty and staff supported by Title IV-E funds and the Idaho Child Welfare Research and Training Center.

**Cari Michaels**, Director, Child Abuse Prevention Studies presented "Global Violence Prevention: An Interactive Website about Family Violence at the Minnesota Conference on Social Work Education, October 13, 2000. Cari also received \$10,000 for a project entitled "Child Abuse Prevention: Building an Interdisciplinary Perspective". This grant supports the creation of a campus-wide interdisciplinary task force that will sponsor a seminar series on child abuse research and education.

CASCW Director **Esther Wattenberg** recently published a paper entitled "The Practice Field's Perspective on the Usefulness and Limitations of a Risk Assessment Tool for Mandates in Concurrent Planning" in the proceedings of the Thirteenth National Roundtable on Child Protective Services Risk Assessment, held in San Francisco in July 1999. A copy of this paper is available by accessing the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare's web-site at [ssw.che.umn.edu/cascw](http://ssw.che.umn.edu/cascw) (PDF format) or by calling (612) 624-4231.

CASCW

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, 205 Peters Hall, 1404 Gortner Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108 (612) 624-4231.



## Upcoming Events

### December 1, 2000 - Supervisor's Forum The Adversarial Court Room: The Supervisor's Role in Supporting the Child Protection Worker

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Freeman Commons, 205 Hubert H. Humphrey Center  
301 - 19th Avenue South  
West Bank Minneapolis Campus, University of Minnesota



*Esther Wattenberg, Director*  
*Jean Quam, Ex-Officio*  
*Sandra Robin, Associate Director*  
*Nancy Johnston, IV-E Scholar Program Coordinator*  
*Maura Sullivan, Field Director*  
*Renee Albert, Executive Assistant*  
*Anne Preston, Office Specialist*

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