

*Sponsored by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare
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PROFILES OF RURAL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE TRAINEESHIP RECIPIENTS

❖ Ten rural county child welfare workers have been awarded full or partial child welfare traineeships supported by a \$75,000 per year, two-year grant received from the Children's Bureau; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; United States DHHS. Recipients will matriculate into the School of Social Work, Fall 1996. Eight rural counties/tribal reservations are represented among the incoming scholars. The following have been awarded traineeships:

- ◆ **Krista Armitage**, Child Protection Worker, Mahnomon County Human Services;
- ◆ **Rosemary Cyr**, Child Protection Worker, Clay County Social Services;
- ◆ **Donna Demarais**, Bilingual Child Protection Specialist, Watonwan County Human Services;
- ◆ **Laura Gustafson**, Child Protection Worker, Olmsted County Social Services;
- ◆ **Marden Holden**, Social Worker, Clearwater County Department of Human Services;
- ◆ **Angela Johnson**, Child Protection Worker, Mahnomon County Human Services;
- ◆ **Bruce Johnson**, Social Worker, the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe;
- ◆ **Susie Lomas**, Chemical Dependency Coordinator and Social Worker, Migrant Health Services;
- ◆ **Mark Sherman**, Family Therapist, Freeborn County Human Services; and
- ◆ **Diane White**, Child Protection Worker, Cass County Social Services.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AN ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT: 1992 & 1993

by **Sandra Beeman, PhD**

❖ Assistant Professor **Sandra Beeman** recently completed a report for the Minnesota Department of Human Services based on her analysis of data on children in out-of-home placement in 1992 and 1993. Some selected highlights follow:

- ◆ Among children who left care in 1993, African-American children had the lowest median days in care (11 days), followed by American Indian children (28 days) and White children (29 days). Asian/Pacific Islander children had the highest median days in care.
- ◆ Children with known disabilities spent over seven times the number of days in care as children with no known disabilities.
- ◆ Of all children who left care in 1993,

75% spent six months or less in out-of-home care.

- ◆ Of those children who left out-of-home care in 1993, 84.5% had experienced only one episode during 1993.

- ◆ From 1992 to 1993, the total number of emergency shelter placements increased by 31.5% while costs increased by 7.4%. Family foster care placements increased by 6.8% while costs increased by 6.4%. In contrast, the number of residential and group home placements increased by 9.5% while costs increased by 18.3%.

- ◆ African-American and American Indian children were significantly more likely to be placed in kinship foster care than were White children or Asian/Pacific Islander children. Children of younger ages at placement were significantly more likely to be placed in kinship foster care than nonkinship foster care.

To receive a copy of the full report call Laura Baugh at (612) 626-8202.

FORTHCOMING MATERIALS

Highlights from featured speaker Dr. **John Landsverk's** presentation on April 11th, "The Mental Health Needs of Children in Foster Care: A Case of Benign Neglect?" are being prepared. The panel discussion "Setting the Agenda for the Mental Health Needs of Abused and Neglected Children" followed. Panelists included: ◆ **Anne Damon**, Assistant Commissioner, Children's Initiative, MN DHS; ◆ **Byron Egeland**, Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development, U of MN; ◆ **Anne Gearity**, Clinical Social Worker in Independent Practice; ◆ **Brian Guidera**, Hennepin County Children and Family Services; ◆ **Linda Nelson**, Children's Mental Health, MN DHS; and ◆ **Denise Revels Robinson**, Director, Family and Children's Services, MN DHS.

If you wish to receive a copy of the highlights when available, contact Mary Kaye LaPointe at (612) 625-6550.

FACULTY NEWS

◆ Professor **Jeffrey Edleson** has been appointed to the National Council of the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, Philadelphia, PA. Professor Edleson's article "A Call for Collaboration between Child Welfare and Domestic Violence Constituencies," co-authored with **Susan Schechter** (University of Iowa), was published in Protecting Children. He also co-edited the Sage Series on Violence against Women, and co-edited and contributed to Volume 3: Future Interventions with Battered Women and Their Families: Visions for Policy, Practice, and Research, available in July 1996.

◆ A competitive submission by Assistant Professor **Sandra Beeman** and Professor **Jeffrey Edleson** has been chosen as a presentation topic for the National Conference on Children Exposed to Family Violence, June 6-8, in Austin, Texas. The selection of their paper, "The Response of the Child Protection System to the Overlap of Child Maltreatment and Violence against Women," led to an offer for both faculty to contribute to the conference, sponsored by the Institute of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Texas at Austin; Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute; and the American Psychological Association.

◆ Associate Professor **Jane Gilgun** was recently appointed as a member of the Child Abuse and Neglect Consultative Committee at the University of Minnesota Hospital and Clinic, and was elected to the Board of Directors of the Grant Hussy Foundation.

◆ **Nancy Johnston**, Assistant Director of CASCW, was a member of a panel discussing "Gearing Up for What's Ahead," sponsored by the Minnesota Extension Service and College of Human Ecology, held in St. Paul on February 18, 1996.

◆ **Ron Rooney**, Associate Director of CASCW, co-authored an article with **Anthony Bibus III** (Augsburg College). The article, "Multiple Lenses: Ethnically Sensitive Practice with Involuntary Clients Who Are Having

Difficulties with Drugs or Alcohol," appears in the Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 4 (2). In other news, the Center extends congratulations to Professor Rooney who attended the Rose Bowl to watch his son, Chris, play for Northwestern!

◆ Professor **Esther Wattenberg**, Director of CASCW, will present "Critical Reflections on School-Linked Services: An Agenda for School Social Workers" at the Spring Conference of the Minnesota School Social Workers' Association, "School-Community Collaboration: Something Old or Something New?" Friday, May 3, 1996, in Chanhassen. On April 2nd, Wattenberg presented observations on issues in child abuse and neglect for Minnesota's Public Radio (MPR) station inauguration of a series on maltreated children. **Mark Toogood**, with the Guardian Ad Litem Program, Hennepin County, and a graduated IV-E Scholar, also presented along with Dr. **Carolyn Levitt**, Director, Midwest Children's Resource Center. Wattenberg will be presenting "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child...What Are the Piercing Realities Behind This Oft-Quoted Aphorism?" This contribution will be made April 24th to a forum organized by the Washington County Guardian Ad Litem Program.

◆ **Sonia Davila-Williams**, Field Coordinator; Professor **Ron Rooney**; and Associate Professor **Oliver Williams** were named President's Distinguished Faculty Mentors in 1995. Each is paired with a high-ability college freshman of color to provide mentoring, support, and academic guidance.

WINTER QUARTER JOB SEARCH SEMINAR

❖ MSW student and CASCW Graduate Assistant **Debbie Raucher** planned and coordinated a Winter Quarter Job Search Seminar on February 21st. Center Director Esther Wattenberg gave an introduction. Panelists included:

◆ **Curt Peterson**, Supervisor, Hennepin County Child Protection; ◆ **Gail Wirtnin**, Director, Ramsey County Personnel;

◆ **Sheila Kuran**, College of Human Ecology Career Services, University of Minnesota; and ◆ **Hunter Roe**, CASCW alumna.

Panelists provided handouts on the Minnesota Merit System and summaries of several Minnesota County Human Services Departments' hiring practices, general and county-specific job search guidance, information on preparing for written and oral county examinations, and pre-licensure study advice. Written and oral feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

NOTICE OF RESEARCH AWARDS

◆ Doctoral student **Laura Boisen**, CASCW Research Assistant, has been awarded a \$2,500 grant to support her dissertation work on kinship foster care placement, "Kinship Foster Care: How It Influences the Relationship between Birth Parents and Kin Providers." The grant is a Title IV-E Dissertation Project Award that provides funds for doctoral dissertations on Title IV-E children and their families.

◆ **Geraldine Kearse Brookins** has received a \$15,000 grant from the W.T. Grant Foundation to support the second working conference for the APA Task Force, "Poverty, Family Processes, and Child Development."

◆ Associate Professor **Jane Gilgun** was awarded \$49,000 from the Allina Foundation for a project entitled "Clinical Instruments for Psychotherapy with Sexually Aggressive Children." In this project Professor Gilgun and a team of practitioner-researchers will conduct reliability and validity studies on a set of instruments that Gilgun and colleagues developed on a previous project and is based on Gilgun's ten years of research on violent behaviors and on research and theory on risks, assets, and protective factors.

◆ CASCW has been awarded an \$8,000 grant from Olmsted County to conduct a study of children in multiple placements.

SEHLIN LECTURE: A VISIT FROM DOLORES NORTON, PhD

❖ The Center co-sponsored a Winter Quarter lecture and consultation with **Dolores Norton**, PhD, on Friday, February 23rd. Professor Norton, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, gave the lecture "Parent/Child Linguistic Interaction Related to Social/Psychological and Cognitive Development in Inner City African-American Children: An Ethnographic Longitudinal Approach" in the Cowles Auditorium, Hubert H. Humphrey Center, Minneapolis.

Professor Norton's research project is a longitudinal videotaped study of inner city African-American children and their families from birth through age 13.

Dr. Norton, whose research has made an outstanding contribution towards understanding the early experiences of African-American children in high-risk environments, attended a luncheon with faculty and community members prior to the lecture to informally discuss the issues being raised around initiatives in safeguarding the well-being of children in the child welfare system.

NOTICE OF AVAILABLE MATERIALS

◆ Proceedings from the Center-sponsored November 7th roundtable discussion on the Child Protection Protocol Bill (Laws of Minnesota 1995, Chapter 187) are now available. Please contact Laura Baugh at (612) 626-8202 if you would like a copy of the proceedings.

◆ **Kristin A. Moore**, PhD and **Barbara W. Sugland**, ScD have graciously agreed to make their Child Trends, Inc. report "Next Steps and Best Bets: Approaches to Preventing Adolescent Childbearing" available. The report was prepared for the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation with funding provided by the Kaiser Foundation. Please contact Laura Baugh at (612) 626-8202 to request a copy.

STATE UNIVERSITIES MEETING

❖ A meeting with representatives from Social Work Departments of five Minnesota State Universities took place March 1st in the Campus Club, Coffman Memorial Union, Minneapolis. Participants shared observations on current legislative initiatives, trends in child welfare practice and the implications for families and children, the continuing search for innovative models of practice, and recommendations for improving child welfare content in social work curricula within the State University system.

The following participated in the exchange:

- ◆ **Anthony Bibus**, Augsburg College;
- ◆ **John Collins**, Winona State;
- ◆ **Mary Ann Reitmeir**, Bemidji State;
- ◆ **Sandy Robin**, St. Cloud State; and
- ◆ **Ruth Ylvisaker**, Winona State.

The meeting, chaired by **Esther Wattenberg**, included **Nancy Johnston**, **Jean Quam**, and **Nan Kalke** from the University of Minnesota, School of Social Work Faculty.

CHILD WELFARE SCHOLARS & ALUMNI NEWS

◆ **Marshall Brown**, 1995-96 Bush/IV-E Child Welfare Scholar, has been promoted to Director of the Human Services Department at the White Earth Reservation. Brown is one of the Center's distance-education students attending classes at the Moorhead site. He has worked extensively with American Indian families and children since 1976.

◆ **Helen Washington**, Bush/IV-E Child Welfare alumna, was promoted to Supervisor in Hennepin County's Children and Family Services Department.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND MENTORING

❖ Dr. **Oliver Williams** facilitated two meetings with the School of Social Work's African-American students. Academic support needs, tutoring, mentoring, guidance, and opportunities for interaction were among the topics covered at the February

1st and 29th meetings in the Campus Club, Coffman Memorial Union, Minneapolis. A third meeting, to be held at Professor Williams' home, is planned for April.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

by **Esther Wattenberg**

❖ This is "child abuse and prevention" month. Children's advocates in Minnesota are mounting forums, study groups, workshops, and presentations to scrutinize the complicated network of responses that have been developed for maltreated children. A central question is at the core: Can we do better? Can we assure safety, stability, permanency, and a nurturing family life for children brought to the attention of a fragmented child welfare system?

Having just returned from a national meeting sponsored by the Child Welfare League, the premier nongovernmental research and policy agency in the country, one perceives a dark note of pessimism: the political will to reach down to the most vulnerable children and their high-risk families with extended resources is in doubt.

Although, at this writing, the fate of the child welfare authorization is unclear (it has been coupled with welfare reform--a confusing and peculiar linkage), three distinct possibilities appear on the horizon:

- ◆ Child welfare services will be funded through a block grant to the states with an overall reduction of 25% in funding;
- ◆ Entitlement, i.e., a federal guarantee of services if eligibility is established, will be eliminated;
- ◆ The federal role in maintaining standards and guarding against discriminatory practices will be sharply curtailed.

In Minnesota, as in the rest of the country, child welfare agencies are gearing up for major downsizing. In large urban counties, particularly Hennepin and Ramsey, the response has been to look to the "Community" to pick up the slack.

The language for building a "community-based" child welfare system is reassuring, and it is assumed that the grassroots level can provide family support and services for all who need them. Further, that neighborhood compassion will prevail.

But advocates must be on guard. The concepts supporting a community-based system are undeniable. But the translation into action is imprecise and unpredictable. We are haunted by a previous community failure.

In the 1970s the mentally ill and disabled were poured into selected neighborhoods in the de-institutionalization movement. The theory advanced has a familiar ring: local communities know best how to care for vulnerable populations. Homelessness and a continuing struggle to deny location of facilities in neighborhoods (the NIMBY phenomenon--Not In My Backyard) is still the mute evidence of that failed implementation of a theory.

The agenda for this month's attention to the

issues in child abuse and neglect should be focused on careful inquiries into the role of government and the reliability and capacity of neighborhoods to respond to children at risk.

Can we do better with reduced resources? Can a reduced public agency role assure not only safety but the well-being of children? Is there a generous and competent community ready to respond to the bleak circumstances of children, who, by the accident of birth, are neglected, abused, sexually violated, and abandoned?

A further editorial comment:

With the search for relatives to provide permanency for children in out-of-home

care, interstate child welfare issues have become prominent. Wattenberg addressed this critical issue in a piece written for the Minneapolis Star Tribune, A21, Saturday, March 2, 1996. The following was noted:

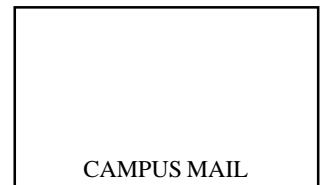
The rush to a child welfare block grant system, granting each state the power to decide its own priorities, will leave interstate problems unattended. The role of the federal government, here, is indispensable. An adequate budget to support interstate services is essential.

We now provide more money to track interstate commerce than we do to protect the lives of children shipped across state lines.

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This publication is available in alternative formats, upon request. Please contact the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, 425 Ford Hall, 224 Church Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 (612) 626-8202.

**Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare
School of Social Work
University of Minnesota
425 Ford Hall
224 Church Street SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-8202
<http://ssw.che.umn.edu/cascw/>**



Center Staff

*Esther Wattenberg, Director
Jean Quam, Ex Officio
Ronald Rooney, Associate Director
Nancy Johnston, Assistant Director
Sandra Beeman, Research Associate
Maura Sullivan, Field Director
Laura Baugh, Administrative Assistant
Laura Boisen, Graduate Assistant
Susan Bullerdick, Graduate Assistant
David Chollar, Graduate Assistant*

CASCW News

**Editor in Chief: Esther Wattenberg
Editing and Design: Laura Baugh**