

October 2007

Supporting Families, Fostering Healthy Development

A Community's Concern: Monitoring Outcomes of Preventive Services



Earlier this year, the New York City Administration for Children's Services launched a new initiative to build coalitions of community organizations to improve outcomes for children in the child welfare system. In this essay, Chapin Hall Research Fellow Fred Wulczyn suggests what needs to be done to effectively monitor preventive services delivered by private providers. For starters, he argues for a clear focus on outcomes and for attention to be paid to both process and quality of care. www.chapinhall.org/article

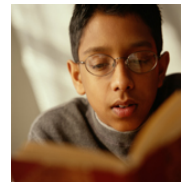
Keeping Families Together Act - H.R. 687 and S. 382

Legislation to help prevent the tragic practice of parents' giving legal custody of their seriously emotionally disturbed children to State agencies in order to obtain mental health services for those children has been introduced in both the House and Senate. This legislation, introduced by Representatives Jim Ramstad (R-MN), Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), and Pete Stark (D-CA) in the House and Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) in the Senate, would provide grants to states to establish interagency systems of care for children and adolescents with serious mental health conditions. Additionally, this legislation would establish a federal interagency task force to examine mental health issues in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The House bill, H.R. 687, currently has 42 cosponsors and the Senate bill, S. 382, has 19 cosponsors.

Head Start's Benefits Likely Outweigh Program Costs

Head Start is a \$6.78 billion program that provides early childhood education and other services to almost 1 million American children from low-income families. A new Society for Research in Child Development brief reviews the program and its benefits and finds that the short- and long-term benefits to children offer an economic case for increased investment in early childhood education. www.srccd.org/documents/policy

New: Early Learning Pays Off and Tools to Measure Quality



The Foundation for Child Development has two great recent briefs:

- Effects of a Preschool and School-Age Intervention on Adult Health and Well Being: Evidence from the Chicago Longitudinal Study -- the Chicago Parent-Child Centers showed that quality early learning is strongly linked to increased educational attainment, economic well-being and health status in adulthood. www.fcd-us.org/resources
- Building a Science of Classrooms which offers a system for measuring quality in pre-K through grade 3. www.fcd-us.org/resources

CDC Public Awareness Campaign Focuses on Child Development

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have launched a public awareness campaign, "*Learn the Signs. Act Early.*" The campaign aims to help child care providers and health care professionals educate parents about child development and autism spectrum disorders. All materials are free and available online in both English and Spanish. www.cdc.gov/actearly

Supporting Growth & Development of Babies in Child Care: What Does the Research Say?

Most infants and toddlers will spend some time in non-parental care during their early years, and research shows that secure relationships with parents and caregivers are of primary importance for cognitive, social, and emotional development. This Center for Law and Social Policy/ZERO TO THREE brief reviews existing research to make the case that state policies can promote quality early childhood experiences and promote healthy growth and development for kids in child care. www.clasp.org/publications/supporting_babies.pdf

Fatherhood Organizations

Includes national organizations that provide information and resources for and about fathers and their important role in the lives of children. www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/

Trends

Food Insecure

One in eight U.S. households with infants (12.5 percent) reports being "food insecure," according to a new analysis by Child Trends. "Food insecure" is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods." Child Trends' findings are presented in a new research brief, Food Insecurity and Overweight among Infants and Toddlers: New Insights into a Troubling Linkage, by Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew, Ph.D., Martha Zaslow, Ph.D., Randolph Capps, Ph.D., and Allison Horowitz, B.A. The brief also links food insecurity with maternal depression, poor parenting, and-paradoxically-overweight toddlers. www.childtrends.org/files/Child_Trends-2007

Funding Opportunities and Sustainability


Grant: For capital investments in community-based organizations to expand capacity and support to child care centers that serve low-income families.

Funder: Rosie's For All Kids Foundation.

Eligibility: Nonprofits. Deadline: Open for letters of intent.

Amount: \$15,000 to \$30,000. Contact: www.forallkids.org

How to Plan a Site Visit: Inviting Policymakers to See Your Work with Infants, Toddlers & Their Families

If a picture is worth a thousand words, showing someone your work firsthand can be worth even more. This advocacy tool from ZERO TO THREE helps  early childhood workers learn about how site visits can connect policymakers' decisions to the faces of infants, toddlers, and families in the community. For more information, join the ZERO TO THREE Policy Network (it's free). And visit the site to try out the interactive "baby brain map" and new School Readiness Interactive tools. www.zerotothree.org

Family Center Advocacy Update

On Thursday, September 6 representatives from Allegheny, Cameron, Chester, Lancaster and McKean Counties met with Deputy Secretary of the Office of Children Youth and Families Richard Gold. It was a great meeting and we were particularly happy that four parents were able to attend and share first-hand about the life-changing impact of their family center. (They also presented a gift of art from a parent to Deputy Secretary Gold) We then discussed how we work with our county Children and Youth Services (aka Children, Youth and Families) to help prevent child abuse and work to help families who are part of the system to become capable parents.

Finally, we shared the positive outcomes and results that the Family Center Initiative has had in Pennsylvania.

Deputy Secretary Gold in turn shared his vision to be a “100% change agent.” He frankly stated that he is not interested in simply funding what has always been funded, but wants to promote those programs and strategies which can show their effectiveness. He also stressed again the importance of listening, respecting and responding to the parent (“consumer”) voice as we constantly improve our services. He shared a vision for funding services that would help prevent child abuse – not just respond once children are in placement. This is exciting news for us!

Of course, every meeting also creates more work! Dep. Secretary Gold challenged us to broaden our view of how services are funded and to broaden the impact of our work. More to come on these challenges....

That afternoon, Family Center representatives attended a meeting of the Protect Our Children Committee (POCC). POCC is a broad stakeholder group with “A collective vision and voice dedicated to preventing child abuse and the victimization of children.” POCC has come together to create a package of funding proposals that the group believes would further their vision. Lee and I have been attending meetings and sharing the vision of the Family Center Initiative over the past few months. Members of POCC have become excited about our work and we were invited to prepare a Program Revision Request (PRR). A PRR is a proposal that includes information about a program and the needs the program would like to address. The PRR is presented to Administration officials such as Deputy Secretary Gold, Deputy Secretary Harriet Dichter (Office of Child Development and Early Learning), Secretary Department of Public Welfare Estelle Richman, and then on to officials in Governor Rendell’s administration. The hope is that the Governor would then consider this information when creating the proposed budget.

Curricular Resources

Parent Materials for Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome

The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome has developed new educational materials for parents based on extensive clinical trials with more than 4,000 parents in maternity departments, pediatric offices, prenatal classes, and nurse home visiting programs. In addition to randomized clinical trials, focus groups of parents were used to help develop the latest *Period of PURPLE Crying* booklet and DVD. PURPLE is the acronym for the characteristics of infant crying:

- P: Peak of crying
- U: Unexpected
- R: Resistant to soothing
- P: Pain-like face
- L: Long bouts
- E: Evening crying common

Designed to create a cultural change in the way parents view crying, the materials can help parents understand the frustrating features of the crying that can lead to shaking or other types of abuse.

www.dontshake.com/Subject.aspx?categoryID=13&PageName=UnderstandInfantCrying.htm

Web Resources

Online Resource for Relative Caregivers

Approximately 1 in 12 children in this country live in a household headed by a grandparent or other relative. Although the benefits of kinship care are many, such care often raises complicated, overwhelming legal questions for relative caregivers.

To provide a one-stop shop for caregivers, attorneys, judges, and other child-serving practitioners working with kinship families, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law has launched the Kinship Care Legal Resource Center. The online toolkit provides information and resources on topics including: financial assistance for kinship care providers, including subsidized guardianship; statutory preferences for relative placement; and state policies regarding medical consent, educational consent and school enrollment, and licensing standards.

www.abanet.org/child/kinshipcare.shtml

Resources – Outcomes Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

Using the Friends National Resource Center

The FRIENDS National Resource Center is funded by Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau to promote the purposes of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program. CBCAP dollars are designed to support community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand and enhance initiatives for the prevention of child abuse. In Pennsylvania CBCAP dollars provide support for state funded Family Centers.

As recipients of CBCAP dollars, Family Centers can access training & technical assistance from FRIENDS on topics including:

- Evidence Based & Evidence Informed Practices
- Evaluating Participant Outcomes
- Peer Review
- Parent Leadership
- Prevention's role in Child and Family Service Reviews
- Respite services
- Diverse populations
- Leveraging Funding

There is a wealth of valuable information available on the FRIENDS website. You can access that web site at: www.friendsnrc.org. Many evaluation-related products including guidebooks, fact sheets, and evaluation tools have been developed and can be viewed at <http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/initiative.htm>

The *Evaluation Toolkit & Logic Model Builder* was conceptualized and developed as a team effort with staff from FRIENDS, Child Welfare Information Gateway, the Children's Bureau, CBCAP grantees, parent leaders, and child abuse prevention programs. You can access these valuable resources at:

Demonstration Evaluation Toolkit

<http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/toolkit/index.htm>

Logic Model Builder

www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/developing/toolkit/ or

<http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/toolkit/builder.html>

MIS Changes:

A new feature will soon be available to Family Center Director and Family Center Data Entry roles! The Case Transfer Module will allow Family Centers to transfer records from one worker to another instantly! More information, including a step-by-step user guide will be coming soon.

A special thank you to the people who volunteered to test this feature:

Bucks County (Bristol Borough/Kelly FC)	Chris Devine
Cameron County	Holly Manginell Kris Fapore
Columbia (Benton FC)	Allison Williams Ashley Mensch
Erie County	Randy Pruchnicki
Lackawanna (Scranton FC)	Carlene Gula
Lancaster County	Rose Dejesus
Lehigh (Central & Jefferson FC)	Connie Sentz
Luzerne (Greater Nanticoke Area FC)	Diane Klish Joni Turner
Luzerne (Pittston FC)	Ann Marie Adonizio
Montgomery (Norristown FC)	Virginia Kirk

We will soon be soliciting your help to create a FC MIS panel of Directors and staff that use MIS. We will meet by phone to discuss what upgrades and enhancements are important to your Family Center.

PAT Training

We hope you have received information about the training available in November for PAT, *Born to Learn Three Years to Kindergarten Entry*. The OCYF program office will support any budget revisions your Family Center would need to allow staff to attend this training. Please direct any questions regarding budget revision requests to Holly Kuch at 717-214-6765 or hkuch@state.pa.us. If you have any questions about the training please call Becky Blue at 717-763-1661 extension 162.

University of Pittsburgh Sponsored-Training

The 2007-2008 Family Center Training Calendar for professional and skills development was sent to Family Center staff in regular mail and e-mail versions. Please contact your county liaison if you have any questions.

Please remember that Family Center staff members are welcome to attend any training offered by the University's Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (CWTP.) If you have any questions about workshops and training, please contact your county's liaison listed below. Thanks.

Family Centers Program Contact Information

Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program
403 East Winding Hill Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717.795.9048

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