

December 2007 – Happy Holidays!

Supporting Families, Fostering Healthy Development

Casey Connects: Strategies for Community Engagement.

This newsletter, from the Casey Foundation, provides information on initiatives to promote community engagement. The Plain Talk initiative was designed in the mid-1990s to help educate youth on pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Through many Casey Foundation initiatives, resident engagement strategies have been successful by giving residents a voice in shaping solutions to local challenges and in linking residents together. <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm>

Spotlight on Domestic Violence

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Office on Violence Against Women presents www.enditnow.gov. This online tool contains information and resources for both victims and those seeking to help them. All content, including a public service announcement, is available in both English and Spanish.

Vulnerable Infants and Toddlers in Four Service Systems

This brief compiles the best available data on the characteristics of vulnerable young children in four service systems: Early Head Start (EHS); the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); the child welfare (CW) system; and Part C Early Intervention Programs (Part C). Data reveal that the children and families in these systems look fairly similar on some key dimensions. <http://www.urban.org/publications/411554.html>

The Parenting Imperative: Investing in Parents so Children and Youth Succeed

By strengthening parents and their connections to resources, communities can help children thrive. This new brief from the Family Strengthening Policy Center explains what a "parenting success" strategy looks like and how it can strengthen families and communities. Community groups and family-serving agencies will find best practices and recommendations for how to maximize impact. For funding agencies and policy makers, this brief focuses on creating conditions for communities to respond to the parenting imperative. <http://www.nassembly.org/fspc/documents/FSPPolicyBrief2210-30.pdf>

Parents: Three for Me – Finding Time for Involvement

Research suggests that parental involvement in education is important to student success. The National PTA's Three for Me program calls on parents to dedicate three hours of time to the school over the course of the academic year, and to put that commitment into writing by signing a Three for Me promise card. If your school doesn't have the Three for Me program, the site will help you get one started.

www.three4me.com



National Organizations That Promote Safe Children and Healthy Families

This publication includes organizations that participated in the 2007 Prevention Initiative and provided input into the creation of *Promoting Healthy Families in Your Community: 2007 Resource Packet*. While they are varied in the services they offer and the professionals they support, they are all committed to protecting children and promoting healthy families. Many of these national organizations have member agencies or affiliates in your community.

www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=21&rate_chno=19-00044

Supporting Healthy Relationships between Young Children and Parents: Lessons from Attachment Theory and Research

According to attachment theory and research, early child-parent relationships lay the foundation for children's later social, emotional and school functioning. This new brief from the Center for Child and Family at Duke University examines the range of attachments and their importance for later development and offers guidelines and curricula recommendations for practitioners, policymakers, parents and others.

www.pubpol.duke.edu/cneters/child/ecal/attachment/index.htm



What Works: Evidence on Early Child Interventions

The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse recently reviewed 17 early childhood interventions (curricula and practices) aimed at children ages 3 to 5 in center-based child care. Each review covered: oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, early reading/writing, cognition and math. It identifies the programs that offered evidence of strong positive effects. www.ies.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/early_ed/

Trends

Rural America at a Glance

From the US Department of Agriculture, this report shows trends in rural America over the last year. Between July 2005 and July 2006, the population of the nonmetropolitan United States grew 0.6 percent. Additionally, nonmetropolitan employment increased by 1.4 percent from 2005 to 2006, which was similar to 2004 to 2005 data. This resource provides the most recent indicators of social and economic conditions in rural areas, for use in developing policies and programs to assist rural people and their communities. <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm>

New Campaign: America Forward

December 11 marked the official launch of America Forward, a coalition of more than 60 organizations involved in health, education, poverty and economic mobility, workforce and other issues. Its aim is "to introduce the presidential campaigns to the work of social entrepreneurs and encourage them to ... support policies that encourage new approaches to difficult social problems," writes the Chronicle of Philanthropy.

Visit the America Forward Website: <http://americaforward.org/>



A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy

This framework for using evidence to improve outcomes in learning, behavior and health for vulnerable children is from the National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation and the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. It draws on neuroscience, behavioral and developmental science, economics, and decades of early childhood research to guide better policies and practice. http://www.developingchild.net/pubs/persp/pdf/Policy_Framework.pdf

LINKS (Lifecourse Interventions to Nurture Kids Successfully)

This database from Child Trends now features descriptions of over 200 evaluated programs that enhance children's development. Each program description includes a brief summary of the type of program, its target population, its intended outcomes, and what experimental evaluations have found the program's impacts to be.

http://www.childtrends.org/_catdisp_page.cfm?LID=C69A59D5-7C1A-47C1-AB7C751AD5A71718



Funding Opportunities and Sustainability

Grant: GE Healthcare –

For programs that focus on youth education and/or promote healthy lives.

Funder: General Electric.

Eligibility: Nonprofits. Deadline: Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, Nov. 1.

Amount: \$1,000 to \$50,000.

www.gehealthcare.com/usen/about/gehealthcare_americas_charitable_giving_guidelines.pdf

Grant: Relatives as Parents Program –

To promote the creation or expansion of services for grandparents and other relatives who are surrogate parents to children of absentee caregivers.

Funder: The Brookdale Foundation. Eligibility: Local and state agencies.

Deadline: Local agencies, Jan. 10; state agencies, Feb. 8.

Amount: \$10,000 over two years.

Contact: www.brookdalefoundation.org/relativesasparents.htm

Grant: Champions for Healthy Kids –

For community projects that develop creative ways to help youth adopt balanced diets and physically active lifestyles. Funder: The General Mills Foundation, American Dietetic Association Foundation and the President's Council on Physical Fitness.

Eligibility: Nonprofits. Deadline: Jan. 15. Amount: 50 grants of \$10,000 each.

Contact: www.generalmills.com/corporate/commitment/champions.aspx

Youth Programs Resource Center and Clearinghouse

To help smaller youth and family programs, the Finance Project and its partners (including the Forum for Youth Investment) have created a clearinghouse of information and resources related to supporting and sustaining youth programs, initiatives and policies. Here, you'll find data, tools, financing and funding strategies, policy guides and technical assistance.

www.financeproject.org/irc/yp.asp

SAMHSA – Website Supports Grant Applications

Sustainability is a topic that often comes up when discussing program activities. Often agencies look outside of their government funding streams for additional funds to meet the changes needs of the population. Funders, both private and government sources, often require that evidenced based practices be used. To that end, SAMHSA provides a website that assists in the review of interventions when you are considering new programs. It is not an all inclusive list of interventions, but it is a good resource. It provides an intervention summary, including the "Key Findings" sections that summarize the research results for each outcome. The site can be viewed by clicking the link below or cutting and pasting the address in your browser.

<http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/index.htm>

Curricular Resources

Walk a Mile 2008: Training Opportunity

Since 1994, this program has brought together policymakers, low-income constituents and youth in foster care in 36 states for a unique one-month project.

To raise awareness about the challenges facing people living in poverty and in foster care, policymakers are paired with a low-income constituent or a youth living in foster care. The program is looking for community organizations working with low-income constituents or youth in foster care to coordinate 2008 projects. There are two kinds of projects: statewide projects (state legislators are matched with constituents in their districts) or local projects. **"Walk a Mile Coordinators' Training" will be held January 28 to 29, 2008 in Seattle.** Cost: \$350. For more information e-mail: patricia@walkamile.org.



PARENT MENTORS

A program that matches former clients with parents new to the system is showing promise for increasing parent engagement and support. In Contra Costa County, CA, parents who have successfully navigated the child welfare system and reunited with their children are selected, hired, and trained as parent advocates who can work within the system to provide mentoring and support to other parents dealing with child welfare issues. This Parent Partners program is described in a recent article in *Child Welfare*.

Trained Parent Partners are able to help parents new to the child welfare system by:

- Sharing their own experiences and modeling appropriate and empowering behavior
- Connecting parents with appropriate resources, often providing a personal contact
- Serving as contacts at court hearings and team decision-making meetings
- Serving as a link between parents and the child welfare system
- Expanding the parents' social networks

An extra benefit of the Parent Partners program is the impact it has made on child welfare staff and the agency's organizational climate. Having the paid Parent Partners on the staff and in nearby office cubicles has promoted more positive language about parents by caseworkers, as well as greater sensitivity to parent concerns and perspectives. This shift in attitudes may contribute to a more family-centered organization.

Read about the Parent Partners program in "Closer to Home: Parent Mentors in Child Welfare," by Edward Cohen and Linda Canan, in the September/October 2006 issue of *Child Welfare*. For information, visit the Child Welfare League of America website:

www.cwla.org/articles/cwjabstracts.htm#0609

Preparing Staff to Involve Youth and Families

The National Collaboration for Youth and National Youth Development Learning Network offer free training activities (www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce) for preparing frontline youth workers in three key competency areas:

- Involving and Empowering Youth
- Cares for, Involves and Works with Families and Community
- Advocates for the Rights of Disenfranchised Youth and Families

Working with Immigrant Children, Youth and Families

According to the last Census, one in five children in this country today is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant, and the number is rising. This guide from the National Collaboration for Youth offers the context of the immigrant youth experience and practical tips for hiring, developing and retaining staff to work with this population.

www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce/PreparingStafftoWorkwithImmigrantYouth.htm

Resources – Outcomes Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement, Retention, and Recovery

The SAFERR monograph was developed in response to frequent requests from managers of child welfare agencies for a "tool" that caseworkers could use to screen parents for potential substance use disorders in order to make decisions about children's safety. Although research findings and practical experience have established that no single checklist yields the kind of information caseworkers need to make difficult decisions about whether children are safe, they have identified an array of screening instruments and practice principles that, if used appropriately, can provide timely information to guide those decisions. It also provides guidance on developing collaborative efforts to improve outcomes for families.

<http://ncadistore.samhsa.gov/catalog/productDetails.aspx?ProductID=17633>

Friends National Resource Center

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

CBCAP State lead agencies 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>

OCYF Update

The Family Center Applications for FY 2008-09 were distributed by email on Friday, December 7th, 2007. If you or your Grantee did not receive the email, please contact Holly Stockwell at 717-214-6765 or Hstockwell@state.pa.us.

The Family Center grant, which previously included components for the Fatherhood Initiative and Time-Limited Family Reunification (TLFR), has become three separate grants that will function in 3-year cycles, FY 2008-09 through FY 2010-11. The Fatherhood Initiative has become a "Promoting Responsible Fatherhood or Child Abuse Prevention (PRF/CAP)" grant. All current Family Centers and County Children and Youth Agencies (CCYA) are eligible to apply.

There is a pre-proposal meeting for Family Centers planned for Monday, January 14th. This meeting will be a pre-proposal for the Family Center application and the PRF/CAP application.

The TLFR grant is now only available to County Children and Youth Agencies, although Family Centers may function as a sub-contractor. The application for TLFR was only sent to the CCYA. Family Centers may request a copy of the TLFR application by email: Hstockwell@state.pa.us.

Congratulations to **Holly Kuch** who was recently married; her last name is now Stockwell.
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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.

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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