

*Children and youth  
in foster care  
deserve the  
happiness and joy  
every child should  
experience through  
family life and a  
safe, loving home.  
—President Barack  
O’Bama*

## National Foster Care Month

### Dr. Nancy Chavkin

A Message from the Director

May is National Foster Care Month and a good time to reflect on the importance of foster care in the lives of so many children. Statistics show a drop nationwide in the number of children in foster care from more than a half million to around 463,000. At first glance, that might seem to be an encouraging statistic, but consider some of these stats regarding children exiting the system: more than one in five will become homeless after age 18; just 58 percent will graduate from high school by age 19 (compared to 87 percent nationally); fewer than 3 percent

will earn a college degree by age 25 (compared to 28 percent nationally); one in four will be incarcerated within two years of leaving the system.

Federal legislation has attempted to address some of the pressing needs of foster kids. For example, The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, which became law in October 2008, included a state option to provide Title IV-E reimbursable foster care, adoption, or guardianship assistance payments to children after the age of 18 and to extend eligibility for Independent Living services to older youth.



Many of our CPS workers in the state of Texas are making incredible strides forward with Preparation for Adult Living programs with foster youth. We have a program here at Texas State to help students who’ve aged out of the system transition into the rigors of college study.

We’ve made progress to be sure. Let’s rededicate ourselves this month to the kids.

## Nazario to Speak at IV-E Roundtable

Our keynote speaker at this June’s IV-E Roundtable will be Carmen R. Nazario, Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Nazario also has been an Assistant Professor at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, where she taught social policy and coordinated



the Social Work Practicum at the School of Social Work.

Nazario has vast experience in public service with a focus on improving services to children and families within the United States and around the world, dating back to 1968.

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# Finishing Up and Just Getting Started

Congratulations to Title IV-E students graduating this Spring and Summer. Region 8 MSW grads include Manuel Alvizo, Karen Bradley, Venessa Carrillo, and Monette Moreno. Willimae Fulton from Region 7 earns her MSW. BSW grads Courtney Gehrer and Terra Thurwachter start with Region 7 in May.

A special welcome to new Title IV-E stipend students starting up this summer. From Region 7, two new MSW students Christin Ivey and Lurene Tapia

join BSW student Mikhaila Morales. In Region 8, new MSW student Anna-Perez Ingram joins new BSW students Mary Saucedo and Jose C. Aguillon.

*Willimae Fulton with Dr. Mary Tijerina at Hooding Ceremony.*



## Improving Family Foster Care

Casey Family Programs is offering a free DVD and facilitator's guide for Promoting Permanency. Go to its Web site at [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org). Subtitled Successful Exits from Therapeutic Group Care Through Family and Community Integration, the guide and DVD showcase a pilot program in Travis County for

reintegrating kids who've had at least one DSM-IV diagnosis back into communities and homes. The video showcases lives of children in the program, which is a partnership among Casey Family Programs, Travis County Health and Human Services, and Texas Child Protective Services.



Promoting Permanency:  
Successful Exits from Therapeutic Group Care  
Through Family and Community Reintegration  
[www.caseyfamilyprograms.org](http://www.caseyfamilyprograms.org)

## Australia, New Zealand, Then Work

A special farewell and good-luck to David Gwin, new MSW graduate this May in Administrative Leadership. David was a graduate assistant in the Social Work department during his first year and at the Center for Children and Families during his last year of graduate school. He did his final AL internship at

CCF and was honored by Social Work faculty for his research project—a survey of the educational support needs of student veterans at Texas State.

David passed his licensing exam a day before graduation. He plans to work as a therapist in Austin upon his return.



## IV-E Spotlight: Amy Slaton, BSW, Dec. 2000

### *Service Level Program Specialist/I See You Liaison*

The Title IV-E stipend program provided me an opportunity to start working with CPS, which in other ways might have been hard to get a foot in the door. I have not changed agencies since 2000 when I entered the stipend program, so I would say the impact on my career has been great since this is where I see myself staying and Title IV-E is how I got started. My advice to someone who is interested in the Title IV-E program

would be to get a realistic picture of what the job entails, and then join the program! As long as you are realistic, the stipend program is the way to go.



*“If you enjoy working with children and families, CPS is definitely the place to start.”*

*—Christina Rodriguez*

## Christina Rodriguez, BSW, Aug. 2009

### *CPS Family Based Services Caseworker*

The stipend program allowed me to get a foot in the door right after graduation. This was peace of mind to know that I would be employed during such a bad economic time of job loss and layoffs. If you enjoy working with children and families, CPS is definitely the place to start. The stipend money pays for your school with a little extra left over. You are trained for 3 months

and the field experience is something that will help you to better understand the process hands on.

This work is definitely stressful and exhausting but at the end of the day when you know that you have helped a family or kept a child safe from abuse or neglect, you are rewarded.



## Willimae Fulton: BSW, 2006—MSW, 2010

### *CPS Family Group Decision Making Specialist*

The stipend program allowed a secure job coming out of college and provided financial assistance for my internship. The stipend program’s payback requirement really helped me to commit to the agency during difficult times. It allowed me to get over the burn-out period to become a tenured worker in the agency.

The stipend program also allowed me to obtain a Master’s Degree in Social Work to enhance effective social work practice in positions held within the agency.

*Note from the editor:* Ms. Fulton is a Title IV-E May graduate of the Texas State’s MSW program. (See photo opposite page.) Congratulations Willimae!





The Center for Children and Families is located at Swinney House on the Texas State University-San Marcos campus.

## Roundtable Soon Underway

Dr. Karen Brown, co-director of the 14th Annual Title IV-E Federal Region VI Roundtable will welcome federal representatives along with state reps from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas to New Braunfels T Bar M Conference Center June 3 and 4. This year's keynote speaker is Carmen Nazario, U.S. De-

partment of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families. She will be speaking on Thursday morning to help kick-off the conference. A number of topic tables, focus groups, and breakout sessions are planned for the two-day event, which provides an opportunity for Title IV-E

workers to network among colleagues from various states and to share tricks of the trade for boosting best practices in child welfare.



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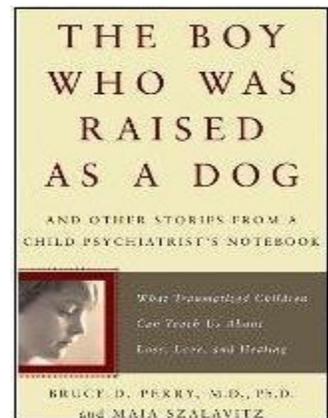
**TEXAS STATE**  
CENTER FOR CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

## Read More Books

In clear, plain, and imminently readable language, Texas child psychiatrist Bruce Perry tells the stories of several traumatized children he has treated. Drawing upon 25-years experience with child trauma and a biopsychosocial approach he calls neurosequential therapy, Perry shows how early traumatic experiences affect children's brains in

crucial developmental ways and how positive, sensitive relationships with caring adults and others can help repair and rebuild vital psychosocial neuronetworks that allow children to recover, heal, and lead psychologically healthy lives.

To learn more, see the Child Trauma Academy site ([www.childtrauma.com](http://www.childtrauma.com)).



## Nazario Keynote (cont'd.)

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From January 2003 – December 2008, Nazario served as Administrator of the Administration for Children and Families for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, where she led an agency of 4,000 staff with a budget of over \$220 million. Prior to that, she served as the Senior Resident Investigator for the Jordan Poverty Alleviation Program,

where she developed and implemented a national poverty reduction strategy for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and advised leaders in the nation on the delivery of social services.

During the Clinton Administration, she first served as Associate Commissioner for Child Care in the Administration on Children, Youth and Families and later became the

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Nazario joined the Clinton Administration after serving as Secretary of Health and Social Services for the State of Delaware from 1993-1997, and, prior to that, she was the Director of Social Services in Norfolk, Virginia, and Loudoun County, Virginia.