

National Social Work Month 2013

Dr. Nancy Chavkin

A Message from the Director

March is National Social Work Month and this year's theme is *Weaving Threads of Resilience and Advocacy: The Power of Social Work*. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has announced this theme with the following concepts in mind: personal strengths, self-advocacy, and positive futures.

There are more than 650,000 social workers in the United States who witness how daunting life's situations can be. But they also experience the determination and resili-

ency of individuals and families who achieve in changing themselves, their circumstances and their lives. Sometimes, it only takes a little guidance from a social worker to reveal a new path. Other times, a social worker is called to be a lifeline during a crisis. Specific advocacy efforts, along with resiliency and determination can change lives, and this is what this year's theme encompasses.

NASW has created a tool kit to bring awareness to the profession of social work during March. The tool kit includes ideas such as finding and attending a NASW chapter lobby event, presenting social



work research at a non-social work conference, and using social networking /media to promote the profession and network with other colleagues.

More information and ideas for Social Work Month can be found at the [National Association for Social Workers website](#).

"Social Work is the profession of hope-fueled by resiliency and advocacy."
- National Association of Social Workers

Coming and Going

The center would like to welcome the Title IV-E students joining the program this spring. They are Raquel Hernandez (BSW), Christopher Leh (MSW), and Selene Mendez (BSW) all from Our Lady of the Lake University and Caroline Dickens (MSW), Jennifer Gamez (BSW), Karon Gayoso (MSW), Christina McKinney (MSW) and Ana Mejia (MSW) all from Texas State University.



The center would also like to extend our congratulations to the following 2012 fall Title IV-E graduates: Cameron Anchorage (BSW) from Our Lady of the Lake University, Thomas Samkutty (BSW) from Texas State University, and Julian Apolinari (MSW) from Texas State University. Good luck on your future endeavors!



Factors Influencing the Retention of Child Welfare Staff

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Institute of the Advancement of Social Work Research, and University of Maryland School of Social Work teamed up to look at factors that influence the retention of child welfare staff. The report, *Factors Influencing Retention of Child Welfare Staff: A Systematic Review of Research*, discusses that the well-being of children is put at risk because of the difficulty in retaining and recruiting competent staff. All the while, turnover rates and case-loads remain high, impeding on the ability to serve clients fully.

It has been determined by Child and Family Services Reviews and states' development of Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) that there is an urgent need to address the retention of child welfare staff. Additionally, state efforts to achieve accreditation and respond to lawsuits were also found to be issues. The Annie E. Casey Foundation launched the Human Services Workforce Initiative (HSWI) with the assumption that a motivated workforce will result in better results for children and families. Effective strategy change is necessary to retain and recruit well-qualified staff.

Some of the positive personal factors that contribute to retention are: professional commitment, education, and job satisfaction. Personal factors that negatively impact retention are: burnout and role overload. Organizational factors that impact retention include: salary, supervisory support, reasonable workload and opportunities for advancement.

For the entire article and its findings: <http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/hs3622h638.pdf>

The Journal of Family Strengths Honors the Children's Bureau

The Journal of Family Strengths recently honored the Children's Bureau (CB) centennial with a special issue focusing on the Bureau's 100 year history of helping families and children. The Children's Bureau is the first federal agency within the United States to focus exclusively on enriching and improving the lives of families and children.

Articles focus on the Bureau's efforts to promote family involvement and the impact of Title IV-E training on the outcomes of children and families who receive child welfare services. The article "Developing a Framework for Child Welfare Supervision" discusses the findings of a five year project to improve recruitment and retention of child welfare workers. The

article describes how the framework supports strength-based, culturally competent family-centered practice, the implementation process and evaluation results.

The special issue can be found here: [Journal of Family Strengths, Special Issue](#).

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

- Don't have access to peer-reviewed journal articles? Don't have time to read lengthy research reports and reviews? National Child Welfare Workforce Institute has done the work for you! The solution: [Short, 1-page workforce research summaries](#).
- The report, [Child Maltreatment 2011](#), reveals that there is a steady decline in the number of victims who suffer maltreatment for a fifth consecutive year. The report represents national data about child abuse and neglect known to child protective services agencies during fiscal year 2011.
- Time to "Step- Up Social Workers!" It is a legislative year and you can keep up with the NASW/Texas legislative agenda for 2013. Visit [NASW/Texas](#) to sign-up to receive action alerts, communicate with election officials and to learn more about the issues and proposed legislation that affect you as a social worker.



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

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Rural Child Welfare

Literature about child welfare practice typically includes populations in cities and suburban areas. However, child welfare professionals working in rural communities need to be cognizant of the differences between their practice population and urban populations in order to adopt their practice to meet the needs of rural populations who may have less access to related services. [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#) has provided some literature and resources on practicing and serving clients in rural areas.

Articles include: understanding rural communities, working in rural communities, federally funded rural grants, and federal programs related to rural child welfare. Additional resources for specific client populations is available for American Indian populations as well as practicing culturally competency with rural populations.

There is also an issue brief on rural child welfare practice that can be accessed here: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue_briefs/rural.cfm



Future Conferences

The Title IV-E National Roundtable will take place May 29-31, 2013 in Galveston. Early bird registration ends May 10th . Roundtable federal and state meetings will take place as well as workshop break out sessions. More information can be found at the [Roundtable website](#).

The 4th annual Texas REACH Conference is taking place June 3-4, 2013 at Lone Star College in Houston. This is an excellent opportunity for professional development at an affordable price. The conference focuses on helping foster care alumni transition and attend college. More information can be found at: <http://www.texasreach.org/>

The NASW/Texas State Conference will take place August 31-September 2, 2013 (Labor Day Weekend) in Austin at the Hilton. For more information: <http://www.naswtx.org/>



Policy Brief: Status of Title IV-E Funding to Support BSW & MSW Education

The NASW Social Work Policy Institute has a new policy brief, [Educating Social Workers for Child Welfare Practice: The Status of Using Title IV-E Funding to Support BSW and MSW Education](#). The policy brief addresses the current status of Title IV-E funding in social work education, the value of funding to promote professional social work practice in public child welfare agencies, and describes some of the policy implementation changes.