

**CSWE CW SYMPOSIUM 2010**



# Enhancing the Child Welfare Workforce: A View from Washington

October 14, 2010

Joan Levy Zlotnik, PhD, ACSW, Director  
Social Work Policy Institute, NASW Foundation  
202 336 8393      [jzlotnik@nawdc.org](mailto:jzlotnik@nawdc.org)

# Thank You



- MaryLee Allen and Beth Davis-Pratt, Children's Defense Fund
  - John Sciamanna, American Humane Association
  - Tom Birch, National Child Abuse Coalition
  - Elizabeth Hoffler, NASW
- 
- To sign up for child welfare and mental health policy updates – contact [ssprow@childrensdefense.org](mailto:ssprow@childrensdefense.org)

# Goals

- Overview of national legislative and policy efforts
- Stimulate discussion from child welfare partnerships

# Vision for an Effective Child Welfare Workforce

An effective child welfare workforce promotes positive experiences and outcomes for children and families by...

- Promoting recruitment and retention of a knowledgeable, skilled workforce able to successfully deliver quality services and support to children, youth and families
- Ensuring comprehensive integrated services for children, youth and families
- Ensuring effective and efficient stewardship of funds

# Vision continued



An effective child welfare workforce ...

- Accurately assesses and provides what children and families need
- Has the resources to support its work with children and families
- Connects to the children and families it serves and their communities

# Historical Perspective



- Late 1980s
  - Declaration of a Personnel Crisis in Child Welfare
- 1990s
  - Use networks to encourage use of IV-E training funds for education stipends
  - Initiate collaborative partnerships
- 2000 on
  - National attention (CB sponsored conferences)
  - GAO Report
  - CW advocacy community begins to address workforce issues (2004 form policy workgroup)
  - Recruitment and Retention Grants
  - Increased research
  - National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and its Programs

# UPDATE on Federal Reforms That Can Impact the Workforce



- Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (P.L. 110-351)
- Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (S. 2837)
- Social Work Reinvestment Act (S. 686, H.R.795)
- Child Welfare Financing Reform
- Teri Zenner Social Work Safety Act, H.R. 1490
- Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148)
- The Executive Branch Efforts

# Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (P.L. 110-351)



- Promotes better outcomes for children
- Addresses racial disparities
- Recognizes importance of federal/state partnership
- Generates broader interest in children in the child welfare system
- Builds momentum for next steps for children – prevention, specialized treatment, post-permanency services, workforce improvements, and enhanced accountability

# IV-E Training Improvements in Fostering Connections



Expands IV-E funds to provide short term training for the following:

- Current or prospective relative guardians
- Private state-licensed or state-approved child welfare agencies providing services to children receiving IV-E assistance
- Judges, attorneys, guardian ad litem, and other court appointed special advocates

# IV-E Training Improvements in Fostering Connections (2)



- Continues to increase ability of staff to provide support/assistance to foster and adopted children and children with relative guardians
- Federal match started at 55% beginning in FY2009, and increases 5 percentage points a year until it reaches 75% in FY2013, and continues at that match rate

# Fostering Connections Implementation Resources



- [Fosteringconnections.org](http://Fosteringconnections.org) – The Fostering Connections Resource Center focuses on all 7 areas of the law
  - Kinship; Adoption; Tribal; Education; Health; Older Youth; Training
- [childrensdefense.org/fosteringconnections](http://childrensdefense.org/fosteringconnections)
- [www.childrensdefense.org/FCSIAAGuide](http://www.childrensdefense.org/FCSIAAGuide) - New Help for Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives: Questions and Answers About the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

# Implementing IV-E Training Improvements in Fostering Connections



- Encourage your state child welfare agency to take advantage of new training opportunities
- Track how the new training funds are used
- Document what new training is happening as a result
- Document the challenges in using new funds
- Continue to highlight the need for additional changes in IV-E training and other child welfare workforce improvements

# The Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (S. 2837)



## National Child Welfare Staff Study/National Academy of Sciences

- Demographics and other characteristics of staff
- Turnover
- Relationship between child welfare staff and related professionals
- Appropriate workloads and caseloads for workers and supervisors and appropriate measurements
- Education and training relevant to core competencies
- Data on child welfare staff and how best to link to outcomes

# The Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (2)



## Regulations for New Data on Child Welfare Staff

- Links to child and family outcomes
- Coordinated with other data collections systems

## Steps to Remove Barriers to Training in IV-B and IV-E

- Eliminate AFDC eligibility/IV-E criteria for those impacted by the training
- Include staff providing broad range of services for children in the child welfare system (including preventive services as well as mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, etc.)

# The Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (3)



- Allow funds from private nonprofit educational institutions to be considered as the state's share in IV-E

## Annual Assessment of Nature of Staff Development and Training Activities

- Nature of the training
- Types of staff trained
- Impact of the training and staff development activities on staff and children and families

# The Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (4)



## Comprehensive Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Demonstration Grant Program

- Competitive Grant Program for states, tribes, and large counties
- Phase 1 (1 yr. planning grants): Needs Assessment & Workforce Improvement Plan
- Phase 2 (4-5 yr. implementation grants): Implementation Plan focusing on three areas:
  - Accurately assessing and providing what children and families need (e.g.s. education & training, mentoring, leadership development)

# The Child Welfare Workforce Improvement Act (5)



- Securing more resources to support the work (e.g. Workloads, recruitment, selection, and retention, organizational environment, data and technology, access to services across systems)
- Strengthening connections to communities and families they serve (e.g. family engagement, cultural competence and sensitivity, community and cross-systems outreach)
- If successful in meeting goals set, grantees receive 3% increase in federal administrative match rate for 5 years

# Resources to Make the Case



- National Child Welfare Workforce Institute
- Special Issue of *Child Welfare*, vol. 88 (5), 2009
- SWPI Resources:
  - Research to Practice Brief
  - IASWR Child Welfare University/Agency Partnerships



# Social Work Reinvestment Act



**Support of H.R. 795 / S. 686**  
"The Dorothy I. Height and  
Whitney M. Young, Jr.  
Social Work Reinvestment  
Act"

The logo for the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative (SWR) features the letters 'SWR' in a large, white, serif font. Below the letters, the words 'Social Work Reinvestment Initiative' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.A black and white portrait of Dorothy I. Height, an African American woman wearing a large, ornate hat and a purple jacket.A black and white portrait of Whitney M. Young, Jr., an African American man in a suit and tie.A photograph of the United States Capitol dome, partially obscured by a green and blue abstract graphic overlay.

# Social Work Reinvestment Act



## Social Work Reinvestment Commission

The historic legislation would create a Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide a comprehensive analysis of current trends within the practice, academic, and professional social work communities. Specifically, the Commission would address the future of the profession by developing recommendations and strategies to maximize the ability of America's social workers to serve clients with expertise and care.



# Demonstration Grants



- Workplace Improvements
- Research
- Education and Training
- Community Based Programs of Excellence

	Commission	Workplace Improvements	Research	Education Training	Community Programs	Coord. Center
1 yr	Such sums as necessary	Up to \$1 million	\$5 million total	Up to \$100,000	Up to \$500,000	\$1 million
2 yr		Up to \$1 million		Up to \$100,000	Up to \$500,000	\$1 million
3 yr		Up to \$1 million		Up to \$100,000	Up to \$500,000	\$1 million
4 yr		Up to \$1 million		Up to \$100,000		\$1 million
5 yr						\$1 million

# Social Work Safety, H.R. 1490



- The Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act, H.R. 1490, was introduced on March 12, 2009 by Rep. Dennis Moore from Kansas.
- The bill currently has 42 cosponsors.
- New sponsors needed in 112<sup>th</sup> Congress
- States have passed safety laws (see October 2010 *NASW News*)

# Social Work Safety, H.R. 1490



- Establishes a grant program to provide safety measures, such as GPS, equipment, self-defense, conflict prevention , etc,
- Authorizes \$5 million per year for the next five years, includes a reporting requirement and requires states to provide 50 percent matching funds.

# National Coalition To End Child Abuse Deaths



2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of *We Can Do Better* released

<http://www.everychildmatters.org/home/coalition>.

## Key findings from the report include:

- There are nearly 3 million child abuse and neglect reports per year.
- Many more American children die from abuse and neglect than do children in other advanced countries.
- It is largely an accident of geography whether abused or neglected children receive the full protection they need.

## *We Can Do Better,* continued

- Many child protection workers lack the resources and training they need.
- Many caseloads much higher than national standards.
- Restrictive confidentiality laws shield the press, and the public from shortcomings in the child protection system.
- A national strategy is needed to stop maltreatment deaths.
- Current federal spending is far below the level needed.

# Goals for Federal Child Welfare Financing Reform



- Improve outcomes for children and families who have been abused and neglected or are at risk of maltreatment through:
  - Greater investments in prevention and early intervention
  - Increases in specialized treatment (for substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, etc.)
  - Expanded permanency options and post-permanency services
  - Improvements in the child welfare workforce
  - Greater accountability

# Opportunities for Child Welfare Financing Reform: Why Now?



- Build on momentum from the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act
- Interest in Congress in “finishing the job”
- Obama’s Administration’s interest in prevention/home visiting/helping children succeed in school/systems of early childhood supports
- Better understanding of where the gaps in services are in child welfare and what works for children
- Growing consensus about the need to tackle child welfare financing and the direction it should take

# Opportunities for Child Welfare Financing Reform: The Challenges



- Keeping the focus on children
- Connecting problems children and families face to financing reforms
- Achieving consensus about how to proceed and substantive details
- Highlighting evidence-based policies and practices
- Demonstrating that states will build on opportunities and be held accountable for improved outcomes
- Accommodating wide state variations in use of federal, state and local dollars
- Creating a sense of urgency

# Opportunities for Child Welfare Financing Reform:



- Increased investments in the full continuum of services: prevention, specialized treatment, reunification and post-permanency services
- Increased flexibility in the use of IV-E funds in terms of who is eligible and services they're eligible for
  - Reinvest federal and state IV-E funds that would be otherwise lost when caseloads decline;
  - Delink IV-E foster care eligibility from AFDC income eligibility
- Improvements in the child welfare workforce
- Accountability for outcomes for children

# Opportunities in Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act



- Medicaid coverage for low-income parents and other adults (eff. FY2014)
- Medicaid coverage to age 26 for youth leaving foster care at 18 or older (eff. FY2014)
- Older youths are eligible for coverage to age 26 under parents' insurance plans
- Attention to the importance of a health care power of attorney in transition planning for youth in care
- Elimination of pre-existing condition requirements (eff. Now for children, for all in FY2014)
- New funding for early childhood home visiting programs
- Increased investments in community health centers and school-based health centers
- Momentum to enroll children in CHIP and Medicaid who are eligible but not yet enrolled

# CAPTA Reauthorization



- S. 3817
- Introduced in the Senate on September 22
  - Differential Response
  - Family Group Decision-Making
  - Title II CBCAP
  - Substance Abuse

# The Executive Branch

- NASW meetings with HHS officials on workforce issues.
- Meetings with Bryan Samuels.
- NCWWI as part of the CB T/TA Network.
- Workforce identified as a problem in every service sector.

# What Can You Do?



- Make the case for improvements in child welfare workforce
- Can you answer the question – Does a social work degree make a difference?
- Highlight the good work going on in child welfare in your state