

University of Houston
Graduate School of Social Work
Child Welfare Education Project

CWEP NewsLine

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CWEP Student Spotlight



This month we are highlighting Rhonda Freeman.

Thanks, Rhonda!

How did you come to Social Work? I attended Howard Payne University in 1994 where I majored in psychology. Two years after entering college I was asked to declare a minor. I worked with my advisor and took a Intro to Social Work class, not really knowing what Social Work entailed. After taking the course I declared a double major of Psychology and Social Work. When I graduated college in 1999 I wanted to begin my advance standing Master of Social Work. I began looking into attending the University of Texas at Arlington, but because of my first child, I decided to move back to Houston and began my work experience as a social worker. I took my licensure exam for my LSW in 1999 after graduating and have been a proud licensed social worker ever since.

What are some of your hobbies? I love all kinds of music, and come from a very musically talented family. I used to play the flute, oboe and piccolo, but really only now keep up my instruments when I can. I also enjoy singing, as I was very competitive in my High School Years. I enjoy playing outside with my children and attending local festivals in our community. Arts and Craft Shows are my favorite and I love working with antique or old items and restoring them to new or to a new use. I like to garden and try to maintain an herb garden in the spring and summer. (Continued on Page 2)

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SUMMER COURSE NEWS SOCW 7351 Sponsored by CWEP OFFERED THIS SUMMER

Supervision and Consultation in Social Welfare Organizations (SOCW 7351) will be offered in Summer III on Tuesdays from 12 noon – 4 p.m. Dr. Trish Taylor, CWEP Curriculum Coordinator, will teach this CWEP sponsored seminar course with a limited enrollment of 15 students. Trish has been an approved LCSW supervisor since 1995. Guest lecturers from several public and private agencies will comprise a portion of the class with ample opportunities for students to ask questions and learn first hand from experienced social work practitioners and administrators about supervisory and staff management techniques. The class will begin on May 31 and meet weekly until August 9. The small class size will be conducive to learning.

CWEP's Web Page has been updated!

Check it out at <http://www.uh.edu/ocp/cwep.htm>

You will find helpful links and contact information, including the CWEP Student Handbook, recommended courses, required CWEP Curriculum, syllabus links, the Child Welfare Resource List, the CWEP Library Catalog, APA Style Link and Learning Enhancement Opportunity (LEO Mentor) information.



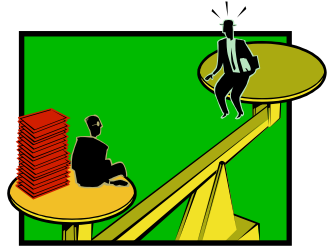
CWEP CALENDAR



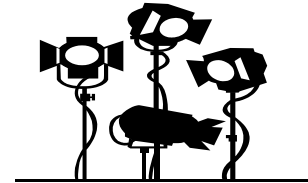
Spring 2005

April 5, 2005
Monday, May 2
Saturday, May 14

Last day to drop a course
Last Day of Class
GSSW Graduation!



Student Spotlight



RHONDA FREEMAN (Continued from Page 1)

What has been your favorite class thus far?

I have really enjoyed all my classes thus far, as I enjoy learning and discussing social work on a graduate level, with other professionals. I enjoy the two practice classes that I have taken thus far and really have been able to utilize interviewing and theoretical constructs with my social work practice at CPS. This semester I am in a Policy class where I have been able to learn in depth about how my advocacy can help create, change, and educate the social work practice for children and families. Being in a Graduate setting has helped me explore my further potential as a social worker.

If you work for CPS, how long have you been there and what is your position?

I began working for Harris County CPS in August 1, 1999. I began in an Investigative unit (Unit 40) after a six months training period in BSD. After about a year and a half in Investigations I transferred into a Subcare unit (Unit 41), where I worked only with children and families that the agency had PMC without Termination. Then six months later my unit along with three other units began working as an Adoption Preparation Unit where we only worked with children who's Parental Rights had been terminated and the agency was looking for adoptive parents or had potential adoptive parents. In August of 2004 I moved to Fort Bend County to work in Unit 63, Foster and Adoptive Homes. I am currently a CPS Specialist IV.

Is there anything else you'd like to share with your fellow students about yourself?

I would like to add that I am a very proud mother of two children. Erika just turned 7 years old and Taylor is my little boy that will be turning 2 the end of March. Oh, and we also have a cat named Bingo that was adopted into our family over 3 years ago.

ANNOUNCING....THE CWEP ALUMNI CORNER

We are establishing a new column with news from CWEP Alumni. Your announcements, practice thoughts etc. are welcome. If you are a CWEP Alum and would like to contribute, please contact Mahasin Saleh at mfsaleh@mail.uh.edu.

FREE TRAINING AND FREE CEUs!!!

University of Kansas School of Social Welfare received a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to provide on-line training modules in Child Welfare. They offer Continuing Education Units for free. There are a variety of modules in the areas of management, policy and evidence based practice. Even if you do not need CEUs, the trainings are a good opportunity to increase your knowledge.

**Check out their website to learn more:
Results Oriented Management in Child Welfare
<http://www.rom.ku.edu/>**

Texas and the Legislative Process

Following are some of the pre-filed bills of interest for the 79th Legislative Session:

*Senate Bill 6 Author Nelson Relating to Protective Services; providing penalties

SB 216 Author Van de Putte Relating to the authority of a local child fatality review team to obtain relevant records at no cost to the team.

SB 90 Relating to the authority of a peace officer to make a warrantless arrest for the commission of family violence.

SB 273 Relating to referring a child with mental illness to an appropriate local mental health authority before completion of probation.

SB 750 Author Van de Putte Relating to the operation of child protective services and foster care systems.

SB 826 Author Van de Putte Relating to mental health services for women with Postpartum Depression.

SB 882 Author Lucio Relating to the name, functions, and duties of the Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

*House Bill 6 Author Hupp et al. Relating to protective services: providing penalties.

HB 224 Author Corte Relating to the treatment of certain persons younger than 18 years of age admitted for voluntary inpatient mental health services and discharge from treatment for those persons.

HB 226 Author Naishtat Relating to the duties of an attorney ad litem appointed for a child in certain proceeding regarding the abuse or neglect of the child.

HB 228 Author Naishtat Relating to use of a proposed child placement resources form in cases involving the Department of Family and Protective Services.

HB 239 Relating to the birth records of adopted children.

HB 240 Relating to the right of an adopted person to have access to the person's original birth certificate.

HB 252 Author Goodman Relating to the use of parenting plans and parenting coordinators in suits affecting the parent-child relationship.

HB 306 Author Goodman Relating to the creation of a program to provide for timely replacement of child protective services caseworkers.

HB 307 Author Goodman Relating to court-ordered representation in suits affecting the parent-child relationship.

HB 339 Author Naishtat Relating to the administration of psychoactive medication to foster children.

HB 383 Author Dutton Relating to the right of certain persons to discipline a child.

HB 384 Author Dutton Relating to a presumption that placement of a child with a parent or relative is in the best interest of the child.

HB 404 Author Villarreal Relating to the membership of the Family and Protective Services Council.

HB 409 Author Goodman Relating to the appeal of certain orders regarding children in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.

*HB 478 Author Goodman Relating to the operation of the child protective services and foster care system.

HB 614 Author Puente Relating to foster care payments for certain children.

HB 657 Author Bonned Relating to terminating the parent-child relationship of a parent convicted of certain crimes.

HB 725 Author: Pena et al. Relating to restoring services under the Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Programs. Making an Appropriation.

*HB 800 Author Uresti Relating to protective services.

HB 802 Author Uresti Relating to the investigation of certain reports of child abuse and neglect.

HB 1685 Author Dukes Relating to the establishment of an interagency coordinating council for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

HB 2099 Author: Dutton Relating to the investigations of reports of child abuse and neglect.

House Bill 2159 Author Nixon Relating to a suit affecting the parent-child relationship in which an international parental child abduction measure has been taken.

Source: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us> *A few of the major pre-filed bills

Note: March 11, 2005 was the deadline for filing bills other than local bills, emergency appropriations and bills that have been declared an emergency by the governor.





Forensic Interviews and Family-Centered Practice

Forensic interviewing often plays a key role in investigations of abuse or neglect, yet its focus on gathering information for the court makes some professionals question how it fits into family-centered practice. North Carolina's child welfare reform effort incorporates forensic interviewing in an effort to build stronger relationships with children and protect them from further exploitation and harm.

In a forensic interview, a caseworker or trained professional interviews a child to find out whether s/he has been maltreated. The approach is used to produce evidence that will stand up in court if the investigation leads to criminal prosecution. Forensic interviewing is designed to reduce child trauma by minimizing the number of times a child is asked to relate an abusive event.

It is not yet clear whether forensic interviewing results in more convictions of child abuse perpetrators, but North Carolina child welfare professionals are finding that the technique lends itself to a multidisciplinary approach to child welfare in which professionals from child protective services, law enforcement, mental health, and medical fields coordinate efforts to support child victims and their families.

Children's Service Practice Notes, Vol. 8, Number 1, from the North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program, offers tips on how to be family-centered while investigating tough cases, a primer on forensic interviewing, and resources for conducting family-centered interviews. The newsletter is available online at <http://ssw.unc.edu/cspn/cspn.htm>

Finding Words is a national program that has been recognized for training in forensic interviewing. For more information, contact Grant Bauer of the American Prosecutors Research Institute at (703) 518-4385. The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children also offers training on forensic interviews. Visit their website at (Source: Children's Bureau Express http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/nonissart.cfm?issue_id=2003-04&disp_art=629&hlt=1&terms=tips)

Also, Dr. Monit Cheung's article "Utilization of Questioning Techniques in Forensic Child Sexual Abuse Interviews" will be posted on the CWEP Website soon.



Stay Tuned!

TEXAS LEGISLATION WOULD LET ADOPTEES HAVE ACCESS TO BIRTH RECORDS

Rep. Tony Goolsby introduced two bills (HB240 and HB770) in February to the Texas House of Representatives that would give adopted people 21 and older access to their original birth certificates. HB770 stipulates that the original documents would not be available if a birth parent files with the state registrar a copy of a signed affidavit of relinquishment promising anonymity, a contact preference form stating he or she does not want to be contacted, and medical records. Birth parents who do not have all the documentation could still indicate whether they want to be contacted by submitting a preference form to the state adoption registry. Both bills are pending in the Committee of Juvenile Justice and Family Issues and would take effect Sept. 1, 2005. To read the bills, go to: <http://www.cappitol.state.tx.us> and search for HB240 and HB770 in the bill action and vote history field. source: www.adoptioninstitute.org