

CSWE APM Child Welfare Track Meeting 2019
Denver, CO
Notes of Meeting, October 24, 2019

Welcome

Track Co-Chairs Helen Cahalane and Traci LaLiberte welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of Papers Presentations and Posters

The Child Welfare Track this year had 66 submissions, with 52 accepted. The numbers are a little lower than last year. The Co-Chairs thanked proposal reviewers and requested proposals and reviewers for next year's APM.

Acknowledgements and thanks

Dr. Cahalane expressed thanks to Indiana University for audio-visual resources, Stockton University and Metropolitan University for refreshments, CSWE for the room, and to members of the CW Track Planning Committee.

Journal of Public Child Welfare: Best Article of the Year

Dr. Collins-Camargo described the special issue of the journal and announced the best article of the year authored by Drs. Anita Barbie and Becky Antle.

Announcements and Election of Incoming Co-Chair

Dr. Nancy Dickinson described the NHSTES Symposium this year at the University of Maryland, which was quite successful and noted that next year the symposium will be in Berkeley.

Dr. Austin Griffiths announced that the 2020 IV-E Roundtable will be on 5/19-21/2020 at the University of Western Kentucky in Bowling Green, KY, approximately is one hour north of Nashville, TN. Dr. Griffiths also announced that the University of Western Kentucky has established a child Welfare Research Center.

Ballots were distributed for the incoming Track Co-Chair. Nominated to run were Dr. Robin Hernandez-Mekonnen (Stockton University), Dr. Judy Krysik (Arizona State University), and Dr. Barbara Pierce (University of Indiana). Thanks were offered to Dr. Cahalane for her service as the outgoing Track Co-Chair.

Child Welfare Career Achievement and Dissertation Awards

Dr. Helen Cahalane introduced the Dean of the School of Social Welfare at the University of Albany, Dr. Lynn Warner. Dean Warner described the distinguished career of Dr. Katherine Briar Lawson her skill in networking, her tireless advocacy, her public child welfare work, and her service in support of child welfare practice and the workforce. Dr. Nancy Dickinson spoke of her tireless work and her experience of Dr. Briar-Lawson as a mentor and supporter, and colleague in the work of NCWWI.

Dr. Briar-Lawson thanked the Track for this recognition. Dr. Jones also expressed thanks to Mary McCarthy; she spoke of her own work as a public child welfare worker, and how, at that time, the structure of child welfare within the larger welfare system allowed workers to deal with the poverty related work related to concrete needs in a non-adversarial way. Dr. Briar-Lawson described how the CPS system later became damaging to some the workers trying to do the work. Dr. Briar-Lawson spoke

of the emergence of the understanding of the need for better education and preparation of the workforce, and the funding to achieve this. Dr. Briar-Lawson spoke of everyone's work in supporting the well-being of the child welfare workforce and the need for culture and systems change in both child welfare and our own schools. She expressed thanks to the Children's Bureau, her gratitude for this award and for the work of those here who have chosen to do this work.

Dr. Helen Cahalane announced the dissertation award winner, Dr. Cara Kelly from Arizona State University. Dr. Craig Lacroy described Dr. Kelly's virtues of being smart, scholarly, energetic, and hard working. Her work examined risk assessment and prevention in child welfare. She pushed herself beyond what many students do and stepped forward to learn new techniques to deepen her work. Dr. Kelly thanked her committee and colleagues and community partners and delivered an overview of her work and plans for further study.

Collaborating with the Children's Bureau to Build and Sustain the Workforce

News from the Child Welfare Information Gateway

Ms. Angelique (Angie) Brown, the Senior Manager of Child Welfare Strategic Initiatives at the Gateway, delivered news from the Child Welfare Information Gateway (CWIG), the information branch of the Children's Bureau. Ms. Brown gave a quick tour of the CWIG website, and highlighted some of the resources available on the site including Reports, Factsheets, Issue Briefs, State Statutes, and numbers and trends. There are site areas on Domestic Violence, Juvenile Justice in addition to a Library section and a Podcast section. Ms. Brown described available email subscriptions (such as the Children's Bureau Express and Child Welfare in the News); there is a new Grantee Connection subscription. CWIG offers a Live Chat option, in addition to email and phone access to the Gateway.

Update from the Children's Bureau

Ms. Rebecca Huffman, the NCWWI Federal Project Officer in the Capacity Building Division of the Children's Bureau. Children's Bureau Vision for Changing National Child Welfare Practice. The vision shifts the focus to prevention and preventing unnecessary placement, plus supporting a healthy and informed workforce and strengthening families and communities.

Lynn Johnson has been the Assistant Commissioner at ACYF for about 6 months and she has an adoption focus. Elizabeth Darling is now Commissioner at ACYF for the Children's Bureau and the Family and Youth Services Bureau (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/acyf/about/leadership/elizabeth-darling>), and her focus is on state implementation on Families First, and support prevention and adoption. Jerry Millner is now fully in his role as Associate Commissioner at ACYF. There were several questions concerning the Families First legislation, including funding for evaluation being included as an administrative cost. Ms. Huffman said that she would find answers to questions raised. One of her main concerns is about the impact of the act on workforce, including education and preparation. There are 6 state Title IV-E prevention plans submitted; most states are not ready to move forward. One comment from the floor related to the amount of federal funds which can be used for evidence-based programs (50%). Another question related to the needs of migrant children, which Ms. Huffman will take back. NCWWI is looking at and for is a focus on changing the perspective of child welfare in our communities and helping workforce to feel proud of their work. There is now a Child Welfare Workforce Appreciation Month and a Day of Recognition in that month. They are looking at how child welfare workers use technology and

information and a report will be coming out early in 2020. The survey received more than 4000 responses from several different interest groups. Findings suggest that face to face information predominates as a method of communication, with higher use of electronic devices by those preparing for work than those already in the workforce. CWIG does not have a phone app yet – one was developed which did not work well, so they are looking at another iteration of an app.

National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative: An Opportunity

Dr. Wilson Emily Smith-Goering the Evaluation Manager for the Center for Adoption Support and Education (CASE) (<https://adoptionssupport.org/nti/>) spoke of the training initiatives, which include parallel trainings for front line workers in child welfare and mental health, and their supervisors. NTI incorporates a set of guiding principles and competencies and training modules. These are free and both interactive and available online in ~30 minute lessons (including links to resources and transcripts), which are grouped to form Modules, such as The Impact of Grief and Loss. There are introductions and overviews to evidence-based practices, such as PCIT and TF-CBT. Evaluation reports on the pilots for these trainings are available on the website. Findings include increased knowledge (particularly regarding the impact of grief and loss) as well as self-reported impacts on practice, including increased confidence and self-efficacy and improved communication with children and their mental health providers. It is certified for continuing education credits by NASW and will be available through the Children's Bureau website and can be made available through individual state learning management systems. There is an implementation guide and CASE can assist with implementation questions.

Child Welfare Education: Advances in Child Welfare Policy / Research and Gaps in Knowledge

Dr. Peter Pecora, Casey Family Programs, Managing Director of Research Services.

Dr. Pecora reviewed recent policy advances in child welfare and some of the innovations that have flowed from them (including personal tax deductions for adoptions decreasing the number of youth waiting for adoption and increased frequency of parent-child visitation). Sources of information for 'what works' were reviewed, including the Grand Challenges paper, reviews from Campbell Collaboration and the Cochrane Library, evidence-based clearing houses (including the Families First Prevention Services Clearinghouse, together with first-person accounts.

Dr. Pecora gave a high level overview of prevention programs, including universal and selective prevention and intervention, such as Safe Haven Laws, Felony expungement, free legal assistance, housing assistance, and job training and placement. There are some interventions that have some level of evidence related to preventing child maltreatment or maltreatment related deaths. Among other areas, Dr. Pecora drew attention to the need to apply safety science from the airline, maritime, medical injury control, and nuclear power industries and more open source interventions.

Safety Collaborative: Transforming Culture Together

Ms. Casey Melsek, Senior Consultant with the Safety Collaborative, uses safety science to support workers and utilize them as a resource, which is not the typical response in child welfare which may involve recrimination and counterfactual reasoning of what should have been done, and the assumption that following a procedure would have prevented a critical incident.

Ms. Melsek described how to build a safety culture, which involves:

1. Moving to a culture of system accountability instead of individual blame.
2. Moving to making systemic change instead of applying a quick fix

3. Engage in Human Factors Debriefing to look for Second Stories (asking workers for their view of deeper systemic factors) instead of First Stories (Who did not do their job? What was missed?)

This presentation was unfortunately and abruptly brought to an end by a fire alarm.

Wrap-up

Dr. Barb Pierce (University of Indiana) was announced as the incoming Track Co-Chair. The current track Co-Chairs closed the meeting by thanking sponsors, presenters, and attendees. There will be a link to the presentations on the National Title IV-E website hosted by the University of Houston.