



## MONDAY MORNING MEMO

Monday, February 18, 2008 ☞ Volume 3, Issue 2

### *Kinship Research and Resources for Family Caregivers in NYS*

- On average, children in the custody of the child welfare system who are placed with relatives experience greater stability and fewer placement disruptions than children placed with non-related foster parents.
- Research shows that children in kinship care are reunified with biological parents at slower rates but are less likely to re-enter the custody of the child welfare system.
- Private kinship families are more likely to live below the federal poverty line than kinship foster care families and are less likely to receive food stamps, TANF child-only grants or to be covered by Medicaid.
- Research has shown that kinship caregivers experience significant negative health impacts, psychological distress, parenting stress, depression and burden. Family resources have been shown to reduce caregiver stress and moderate the relationship between family functioning and caregiver stress.
- Research has generally shown that children in kinship foster care tend to have lower rates of mental health and behavioral problems than their peers in non-related foster care, but higher than children in private kinship care and even higher than children in the general population.

The above research summaries are examples of the information presented late last year at the NYS Kincare Coalition Kinship Care Summit. James P. Gleeson, Ph.D., ACSW, and associate professor at the Jane Addams College of Social Work presented findings from the Kinship Care Practice Project, a summary of what has been learned from more than 20 years of research into the effectiveness of kinship care. The information was shared with the Statewide \ Permanency Planning Team last fall.

#### ***Kinship Caregivers Rights and Resources Training to be Held March 12***

The Mental Health Association in Dutchess County, administering agency for CASA of Dutchess County, will be hosting a training on legal issues facing relative caregivers on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, from 10 a.m. to Noon at their offices, 253 Mansion Street, Poughkeepsie.

The speaker is **Gerard Wallace, Esq.** Director of the Kincare Support Project and the NYS Kinship Navigator Program. The training will also address resources across the state including housing, case management, and legal assistance.

To register, call 845-473-2500 ext. 1308.

Although some research has shown that relative caregivers are less willing to adopt the children in their care than non-related foster parents, a recent study showed that what was considered a “kinship



disadvantage” regarding adoption was turned into a “kinship care advantage” through the use of policy and practice initiatives that included the discussion of adoption with kinship caregivers.

The summary included findings that children in kinship care have been found to be satisfied with their living arrangements, to feel loved, to have positive relationships with their caregivers, and to have contact with their parents. They also report that, despite these positive relationships with their caregivers, they still miss their parents.

*Resources on kinship care include the following:*

- **The Kinship Navigator:** [www.nysnavigator.org](http://www.nysnavigator.org)

The Kinship Navigator is operated by Catholic Family Center of Monroe County and specifically designed to provide information and resources to kinship caregivers across all of New York State. Funded by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, the program was launched in late 2006, part of a coordinated effort to provide comprehensive services that address the multiple needs of kinship caregivers and their families through State funds. In addition to the website, phone consultation is available from an experienced Kinship Specialist during designated hours. The site includes Fact sheets on laws and resources, county guides, and answers to frequently asked questions on kinship care.

- **Factsheet on Kinship Caregivers:** [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f\\_kinshi/f\\_kinshia.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_kinshi/f_kinshia.cfm)

The Child Welfare Information Gateway provides a Factsheet for Families on different types of kinship care, private kinship care including physical and legal custody, voluntary kinship care, and kinship foster care.

- **Kinship Care Legal Research Center:** [www.abanet.org/child/kinshipcare.shtml](http://www.abanet.org/child/kinshipcare.shtml)

The American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law provides a Legal Research Center on Kinship Care, including an overview of financial assistance available for kinship care providers, statutory preferences for relative placement, state policies in a glance, a relative caregiver legal checklist, and kinship care in the news.

- **Generations United:** <http://gu.org/Brief9131633.asp>

The above link takes you to a report titled *Every Child Deserves A Permanent Family: Subsidized Guardianship as a Common Sense Solution for Children in Long-Term Relative Foster Care*. The report features new data on Latino Foster Children.

## **The A-Train**

### **Register Soon for Succession Planning Trainings: Feb 28 and March 4**

There are still openings for both regional trainings on Succession Planning, slated for February 28 in Geneva and March 4 in Poughkeepsie, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day. The workshop will look at how you and your organization create and adapt to change in general, and offer tools and techniques to better address the people side of leadership transitions. There is no cost for the training.



Presenter **Newell Eaton** is a facilitator, coach, trainer and designer who helps individuals, organizations and communities facilitate intentional change. Formerly the Director of Strategic Planning for the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, he designed and coordinated the agency's strategic planning process and was a member of the change management team that coordinated the merger of the state's child welfare, child care, youth development and juvenile justice systems. He has provided guidance to a number of other state agencies, corporations and not for profit organizations around the country.

For more information and registration materials, contact Darlene Ward at [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us) or visit our website at [www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/) .

***CASA of the Southern Tier Presents Infant Advocacy Conference***

CASA of the Southern Tier, Inc. is hosting a conference April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> on infant advocacy. Titled “Healthy Beginnings: Creating Positive Attachments in Children,” the training will draw together Family Court judges, lawyers, policy makers, social service, health and mental health treatment providers, medical professionals, teachers, parents, foster parents and community volunteers.

The conference begins Thursday evening, April 3<sup>rd</sup> with keynote speaker Dr. Steven Blatt, director of ENHANCE Services for Children in Foster Care and Adoptive Health Services. The training continues with breakout sessions Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> including “Ensuring the Healthy Development of Infants in Foster Care: Tools for Judges, Advocates and Child Welfare Professionals” by Trista Borra, Deputy Statewide Project Manager for the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project, a co-sponsor of the training. Friday’s plenary luncheon speaker is Dr. Arthur Becker-Weidman from the University of Maryland at College Park, Institute for Child Study.

For more information and to register, contact CASA of the Southern Tier, Inc. at 607-936-CASA (2272) or 1-888-936-2272 or email [casasoutherntier@aol.com](mailto:casasoutherntier@aol.com) .

**Save the Dates**

**March 31-April 1, 2008    Latham, NY**  
**CASA Spring Program Directors’ Meeting**

**April 2, 2008                                    Latham, NY**  
**Adapting to Addiction: A Child’s Perspective**  
*An overview of substance abuse and the impact on families*



*Success Stories*

***NYC CASA Finds Partner in Courtyard by Marriott***

The Courtyard by Marriott on East 41<sup>st</sup> Street has been a friend to the New York City CASA Program, which offers its thanks to the hotel for its support. Jay Philipson, the General Manager, has donated hotel nights and meals to the CASA programs' silent auction as well as offering favorable overnight accommodation rates to performances at CASA.

*What's New at OCA*

***Three New Supervising Judges Appointed for New York City Family Court***

Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau announced last week the appointment of three new Supervising Judges for New York City Family Court: Hon. Jane Pearl as Supervising Judge of New York County Family Court, Hon. Paula Hepner as Supervising Judge of Kings County Family Court, and Hon. Edwina Richardson-Mendelson as Supervising Judge of Queens County Family Court.

The appointments were made in consultation with the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for New York City Courts, Joan B. Carey, and the Administrative Judge of New York City Family Court, Joseph M. Lauria. The appointments are effective immediately.

*Quote of the Week*

"The administration of justice is the firmest pillar of government."

*- George Washington*

*This is a publication of the*  
NYS Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration, Division of Court Operations  
Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program

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