Contributors

Andy Barclay
Michelle Barclay
Valerie Condit
Will Crossley
Stephen Fusco
Jessica Crawford Gibson
Lynn Grindall
Jennifer Hall
Mary Margaret Oliver
Elizabeth Reimels
Lynne Tucker
Karen Worthington
Workplace Supports to Improve Georgia’s Child Protective Services

Table of Contents

I. Current Status of Georgia’s Child Welfare System ........................................................................... 1
   A. Purpose of Paper ......................................................................................................................... 1
   B. Recent Improvements and Momentum ..................................................................................... 1
   C. History of Recent Reform Proposals ......................................................................................... 2

II. Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 5
   A. Strong Promotion of Education and Training ............................................................................ 5
      1. Recommendation: Support training for case managers, and incorporate reliable methods for measuring the effectiveness of initial training and professional development activities. Delivery of the training should incorporate multimedia and distance learning. .................. 5
      2. Recommendation: Expand and strengthen partnerships with colleges and universities, and state-sponsored child welfare education programs. Maximize the use of Title IV-E funds for this purpose. ................................................................. 6
      3. Recommendation: Support job recruitment for hiring case managers with BSW and MSW degrees. .......................................................................................................................... 9
   B. Technology as a Tool ................................................................................................................ 11
      1. Recommendation: Enhance the usability of existing reporting applications (IDS, PSDS, and CPRS) as they are integrated into the new state web portal ................................................. 12
      2. Recommendation: Contract an independent vendor to perform regular security audits on all DHR data systems containing confidential information. .................................................. 12
      3. Recommendation: Build a comprehensive Georgia SACWIS website to keep DFCS staff and partners well informed on information technology resources, plans, and implementation .... 13
      4. Recommendation: Staff a Project Management Office (PMO) in DHR to provide basic project management supports, not just to technology projects, but throughout the department. 13
      5. Recommendation: Increase the use of mobile devices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of case managers. .................................................................................................. 13
   C. Workforce Morale ..................................................................................................................... 14
      1. Recommendation: Support strategies to improve working conditions in ways that will boost employee morale, reduce burnout, and encourage longevity. ........................................ 14
         a) Mentoring Programs ........................................................................................................... 14
         b) Loan Forgiveness or Repayment Assistance Programs .................................................. 15
         c) Flextime and Sabbaticals ................................................................................................. 15
         d) Job Sharing ...................................................................................................................... 16
         e) Employee Recognition .................................................................................................... 16
2. Recommendation: Perform confidential job satisfaction surveys. Summarize results periodically for policy makers, decision makers, partners, and for public education on frontline needs. .....................................................................................................................................17

3. Recommendation: Support development of a proactive media strategy to enhance Child Protective Service workers’ morale and educate the public .............................................................................................................17

III. Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................................................18

IV. Appendices .........................................................................................................................................................................19
   A. Training Programs in Other States ........................................................................................................................................19
   B. The Importance of Community Partnerships ......................................................................................................................21
   C. Additional Research Resources ........................................................................................................................................24
I. Current Status of Georgia’s Child Welfare System

A. Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this paper is to identify and discuss successful strategies for implementing the recommendations of the April 2000 Governor’s Child Protective Services (CPS) Task Force report and the Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) plan for child welfare reform, “Safe Futures for Georgia’s Children.” The paper provides an overview of some of the many programs and workplace supports implemented elsewhere to enhance longevity and job satisfaction for child welfare workers. It also provides research-based recommendations for improving the recruitment and retention of child welfare case managers in Georgia.

B. Recent Improvements and Momentum

In March 2001, at the urging of the Governor, the General Assembly passed a budget package allocating an enhancement of $32 million in state funding for the child welfare system in state fiscal year 2002. After years of budget cuts in DFCS, cuts that were approaching $100 million, the state provided the first installment of funding for a long-range plan to improve the child welfare system.

One impetus for this budget allocation was the April 2000 report of the Governor’s Child Protective Services Task Force (“April 2000 Task Force Report”), the latest in a number of reports issued over the last decade detailing the problems of Georgia’s child welfare system and providing recommendations for addressing these problems. The April 2000 Task Force Report identified the following critical workforce concerns:

- DFCS workers receive low pay, no incentives for extra training, education, or years of employment, and inadequate compensation for long hours of work and being on-call;
- Training inadequately prepares workers for life and death decision-making tasks;
- Workers have inadequate opportunities for professional advancement within DFCS; and,


4 CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVS. TASK FORCE, GA. DEP’T OF HUMAN RES., CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES TASK FORCE REPORT (2000) [hereinafter TASK FORCE REPORT], available at http://www2.state.ga.us/cpstaskforce/.
• Heavy workloads and job demands, and inadequate compensation put DFCS workers at risk of neglecting their own children and families.\(^5\)

Thirty-nine percent of DFCS workers left their jobs in fiscal year (FY) 1999 and 44% left their jobs in FY2000. In some counties, including Fulton, the turnover rate reached over 70% in FY1999.\(^6\) In response to this exodus, a large proportion of the $32 million budget increase for FY2002 was earmarked for increased case manager salaries and new positions to reduce swelling caseloads. The Barton Child Law and Policy Clinic produced a policy paper in January 2001 that provided research support for these measures.\(^7\)

However, higher salaries and lower caseloads will not remedy all of the workforce issues facing DFCS. These measures are necessary to address the immediate crisis, but standing alone they will not sustain the institutional capacity DFCS needs to better protect children. The April 2000 Task Force Report identified a number of other measures needed to develop a satisfied, stable, professional child welfare workforce:

• Increase the number of case managers who have a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree;

• Implement new training strategies for case managers;

• Supply case managers with the technology they need to perform more efficiently;

• Establish a statewide, integrated, comprehensive case management system; and

• Implement programs to increase case manager morale and improve working conditions.\(^8\)

C. History of Recent Reform Proposals

Since 1989, a number of commissions and task forces have produced reports for improving the child welfare system, with strikingly similar recommendations.

The latest of these, the Governor’s April 2000 Child Protective Services Task Force Report, said

The state of Georgia must commit to a comprehensive effort to redesign and improve the delivery of its child welfare services for vulnerable children and families. What that commitment entails is the State ‘stepping up’ to be the reform champion of the child welfare system. Creating effective child welfare services is difficult work in the best of circumstances. Georgia faces the special

\(^5\) Id.


\(^8\) TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.
challenge of improving a system where the demands upon it have far outstripped the system’s resources, skills, and capacities. Anything less than total commitment by state leaders -- to a visible, sustained change effort, guided by clear standards and heightened accountability -- will yield only incremental or partial change.

As part of building community capacity, the state must “enable” the people who are at the heart of this work -- frontline child welfare workers and their supervisors. Among the changes to be made, the most immediate and one of the most important is the development of the skills, knowledge, and judgment of the people who interact with families everyday. Children’s lives depend on the judgment of these workers. The Task Force calls for a “frontline revolution” in the quality of the work provided by the child welfare system every day.\(^9\)

The problems of case manager salaries and workloads, effective database systems, and training, among others, have been steadily worsening for more than a decade in Georgia. The solutions recommended when the problems were first identified in the late 1980s were less expansive and less expensive than those needed now. The following are some of the calls for reform that have been issued over the last decade.

- **In August of 1989, the Child Protection in Georgia report was released which gave an overview of the CPS system in Georgia.** CPS workers around Georgia reported that their biggest problems were being underpaid, overworked, and under-trained. The report recommended that the state increase the number of CPS workers in order to meet national standards and prevent an increase in caseloads.\(^10\)

- **In January of 1993 the System Review of Child Protective Services of the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services compared Georgia’s CPS system with national guidelines and standards.** The recommendations were to develop and implement a training program for CPS, develop a plan for the design of workload standards, and formalize and enhance internal support systems to offer additional benefits and incentives for staff.\(^11\)

- **In December of 1993 the State Senate released the Report of the Senate Study Committee on Children at Risk.** The study identified problems facing Georgia’s at risk children; discussed where the child protective, educational, judicial, and law enforcement systems are weak; and recommended solutions to the problems facing Georgia’s at risk children. The report recommended that Georgia fund an additional 443 CPS workers and 1,277 Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Food Stamp workers to meet national standards.\(^12\)

---

\(^9\) *Task Force Report, supra* note 4, at 20.  
\(^12\) Ga. Senate, Report of the Senate Study Committee on State Foster Care and Adoption (1996).
• **The Child Placement Project Final Report**, presented to the Georgia Supreme Court in October 1996 by the Georgia Supreme Court Administrative Office of the Courts, assessed court proceedings involving abused, neglected, and deprived children as they moved through the juvenile courts. The report recommended developing and implementing improved, uniform methods of record-keeping and case management in DFCS and in the court system; increasing education and training of all participants including DFCS case managers; and providing cross-training for all persons working with juvenile court cases.\(^{13}\)

• The **Report of the Senate Study Committee on State Foster Care and Adoption**, released in December 1996, outlined ways to move toward permanent settings for children in DFCS custody, strengthen DFCS, and use private agencies as partners in child welfare activities. The report recommended reducing caseloads to thirty cases per case manager by 1997 and twenty by 1999.\(^{14}\)

• **A “PeachPrint” for Georgia: Recommendations for Reform and to Reduce Child Abuse**, recommends strengthening the full continuum of care for children, including child abuse prevention programs, treatment and intervention services, the child welfare system, and the criminal justice system.\(^{15}\) This compilation of recommendations includes strategies to address the failing child welfare system, along with a variety of measures to address other aspects of child well-being. Some of the recommendations for DFCS include: recruit and retain an appropriately qualified, competent, and stable workforce; increase the number of BSW and MSW level social workers; establish minimum job competency levels and provide ongoing training to ensure attainment of these competencies; develop a system to deal with the problems of staff shortages and high turnover rates.\(^{16}\)

These reports consistently highlight that Georgia’s child welfare system is and has been severely understaffed, and that the system needs additional training, salary increases, and many other job supports in order to have a stable, effective child protection workforce. Now that the state has committed to provide some of the needed financial resources,\(^{17}\) implementation of recommended changes can begin. The following recommendations identify and discuss some support options, in addition to salary increases and caseload reductions, that DFCS could use to help case managers do a better job protecting abused and neglected children.


\(^{14}\) GA. SENATE, supra note 12.

\(^{15}\) RANDY ALEXANDER, PETER LYONS, AND SANDRA WOOD, A PEACHPRINT FOR GEORGIA: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM AND TO REDUCE CHILD ABUSE 6 (2000).

\(^{16}\) Id. Authors of the PeachPrint proposal were included on the Governor’s CPS Task Force committees and recommendations pertinent to DFCS were incorporated into the April 2000 Task Force Report.

\(^{17}\) See supra note 2 and accompanying text.
II. Recommendations

A. Strong Promotion of Education and Training

Education and training are critical needs for case managers.18 A recent national study of the child welfare workforce found that increasing in-service training and educational opportunities more effectively retains workers than does reducing caseloads or raising salaries.19 Improving supervisory training and orientation also more effectively retains workers than does increasing salaries.20 Thus, improving case manager training should be a top priority in any plan for improving DFCS.

1. Recommendation: Support training for case managers, and incorporate reliable methods for measuring the effectiveness of initial training and professional development activities. Delivery of the training should incorporate multimedia and distance learning.

Improving training has been cited as a goal in every Georgia study over the past ten years. The April 2000 Task Force Report made a number of recommendations specific to the training of child welfare workers, including establishing a competency certification system for each child welfare position, and implementing quality training that prepares case managers to interact with clients and to testify in court.21 The report also suggested that DFCS establish regional training centers, develop partnerships with universities and tie training curricula to the skills needed for each position in DFCS.22

One national study compared trained case managers with case managers who did not receive training. The study found that trained case managers performed better on knowledge tests, and that they had stronger perceptions about their knowledge levels.23 Case managers who scored higher on knowledge tests perceived themselves as more competent to practice, and this perception had a positive correlation with the length of time a case manager stayed with an agency.24

Georgia is currently at a crossroads on training programs for DFCS workers. The Georgia Academy, which has provided most of the training for case managers over the last ten years, is being reorganized.25 Rather than renewing Georgia Academy’s contract for 2001, DFCS issued a request for proposal for the training of DFCS case managers.26 Given this period of change,

18 TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.
20 Id.
21 TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.
22 TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.
26 Id.
the state has an opportunity to insure that future training programs include reliable measurement methods and an effective evaluation plan. Ideally the state will be able to measure whether its training programs ultimately result in improved casework and improved outcomes for children.

Many states have reported positive results in the use of multimedia training, particularly in the use of case simulations. Reasons for the success of multimedia training include: interactivity, flexibility, rich content, motivational effects, immediate feedback, stimulating presentation of the material, and ability to structure instruction. The flexible scheduling and self-paced nature of multimedia and distance learning are ideally suited to the needs of the child welfare workforce. DFCS should give these delivery methods adequate consideration in developing future training curricula.

2. **Recommendation: Expand and strengthen partnerships with colleges and universities, and state-sponsored child welfare education programs. Maximize the use of Title IV-E funds for this purpose.**

One initiative to help public child welfare systems improve their workforce is the development of collaborative child welfare education programs. Through these programs, universities with schools of social work partner with the state in which they are located to train CPS workers to effectively meet the demands of their jobs.

Over the last ten years, states have increasingly used federal funds to support social work education pursuant to Title IV-E of the Child Welfare and Adoption Assistance Act of 1980. Under Title IV-E, the federal government agrees to pay 75% of training expenses for personnel who are employed in state or local programs designed to meet federal child welfare standards. States eligible for Title IV-E funding can use the funds for training CPS workers. The funding is available through grants to the educational institution or by direct financial assistance to students enrolled in the training.

Title IV-E provides matching funds to states that comply with federal standards for their child welfare system. The states must implement programs designed to meet certain federal standards regarding foster care and adoption assistance. The states must then regularly review and report on their progress in meeting those standards in order to maintain eligibility for federal funding.

---


30 Funds are available based on the number of children in the state’s care who are eligible for federal assistance. See Title VI-E (Federal Payments for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance), 42 U.S.C. § 470 – 471 (2000) (effective 1980).

31 Some of the standards that must be met include: the child’s health and safety will be of paramount concern in making reasonable efforts in regard to that child; reasonable efforts will be made to preserve and unify the family while concurrently making reasonable efforts to place the child with an adoptive family or other guardian; preference will be given to relative caregivers; each child must have a case plan; all children in child welfare with special needs will be provided with health insurance; all prospective foster parents will be provided with training.
Approximately forty states, including Georgia, currently have some type of university-state partnership that uses Title IV-E funding for child welfare. Requirements for accessing IV-E funds are written broadly, allowing states and universities to determine what is best based on state staffing and policy needs. In addition to funding social work education for soon-to-be case managers, Title IV-E funds may be used for current case managers returning to school to obtain their social work education, training purposes, research, program evaluation, and hiring field instructors for child welfare agencies. A 1996 survey conducted by the Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research of the 550 BSW and MSW programs in the United States found that 29 states were using IV-E funds for child welfare state initiatives; since 1997 that number has risen to 40 states.

In Georgia, there is a current effort to expand the collaborative child welfare education program. The Georgia Child Welfare Research, Education and Training Consortium includes a collaborative partnership between DHR-DFCS, the five public colleges and universities currently providing social work education, one college with plans to open a BSW program and a social work program at a private university. Future plans for the educational consortium include participation with other child welfare training organizations and agencies in the state.

Under Georgia’s existing Title IV-E program to educate social workers, DHR makes no financial contribution; the required state match comes from Board of Regents contributions through the five participating universities. Approximately 50% of the funds expended for this purpose in Georgia are Title IV-E federal funds and approximately 50% of funds are Board of Regents funds. The program pays the cost of tuition, fees, books, and mileage for the students. Students receiving grants through this program are obligated to work for DHR for a number of years equivalent to the number of years they received money through the program. The program in Georgia is open to BSW students, MSW students, and child welfare workers currently employed by DFCS.

Based on current funding, approximately seventy-five undergraduate and graduate level students will benefit from the existing Title IV-E grant program in FY2002. Georgia could easily expand this program by allocating additional state dollars to draw down additional federal funding. The most direct way to link this program to an improved child welfare system is for the legislature to appropriate additional money to DHR for case manager training.

As Georgia develops a plan to increase the number of DFCS workers holding degrees in social work, it can be guided by other states that have already been successful in this endeavor. Two

33 Id.
34 Id.
35 Id.
37 The five universities include Albany State University, Georgia State University, Savannah State, University of Georgia, and Valdosta State University. Other participants in the educational consortium include Dalton State College, which has plans to open a BSW program, and the Whitney M. Young School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University.
38 Peter Lyons, *supra* note 36.
states that have spent a decade developing IV-E supported partnerships between public schools of social work and public child welfare agencies are Arizona and Nevada. Since 1988, Arizona has had a movement to recruit and prepare students for careers in public child welfare. The Child Welfare Education and Training Project developed a child welfare specialization in Arizona State University’s MSW program. The critical element in recruiting students was financial support in the form of stipends, paid internships, and tuition. Title IV-E matching funds were used to pay for tuition for some students, who were then contractually obligated to work in public child welfare upon graduation for the amount of time equal to the time they received IV-E funds.

Ironically, the high turnover of agency staff provides increased opportunity for students to serve as trained student social workers in the absence of case managers. The Arizona program allows field students to complete their placements during the summer months to maintain functioning year-round units. The program specializes in both urban and rural areas, though there is a ‘rural initiative” to attract students who will eventually take the place of existing workers returning to complete their MSWs.

For ten years Nevada has had a partnership between the two state university schools of social work and three public child welfare agencies to improve the education of child welfare workers. The most visible component of the partnership is the Nevada Child Welfare Training Partnership, an in-service training program located within the School of Social Work at the University of Nevada, Reno. Since 1991, all state and county child welfare workers have been required to complete the program’s core competency-based curriculum.

The second area of partnership in Nevada concerns professional social work education and teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Title IV-E funds have been used to hire a field placement coordinator to oversee students placed as interns in public child welfare agencies, and to provide stipends to students willing to commit to public child welfare employment and current state employees accepted into the MSW program. As a result of the endeavors and incentives, 68% of the child welfare workers employed by the state of Nevada

---

39 The State of Texas also formed a CPS Training Institute that is sponsored by four social work graduate schools. The Institute is funded by federal Title IV-E with matching funds from Protective Services and the graduate schools. TEX. DEP’T OF PROTECTIVE AND REGULATORY SERVS., PROTECTIVE SERVICES TRAINING INSTITUTE OF TEXAS: CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS FOR PRS IN TEXAS, at http://www2.uta.edu/ssw/ccw/ccwscpsti.htm (last visited February 4, 2002). The program was originally developed as a certification program for CPS supervisors. Certification requires the supervisor to pass knowledge-based and skills-based sections of the certification examination. Nearly 70% of all CPS supervisors in Texas are presently certified. Id.
40 Christina Risley-Curtiss et al., Developing Collaborative Child Welfare Educational Programs, 55 Public Welfare 29 (1997).
41 Id.
42 Id.
43 Id.
44 Id.
45 Id.
46 Id.
Department of Family and Children Services now have degrees in social work (a significant increase from the 20% who had degrees in the field in 1986).\footnote{Thom Reilly & Nancy Petersen, \textit{Nevada's university-state partnership: A comprehensive alliance for improved services to children and families}, 55 \textsc{Public Welfare} 21 (1997).}

Cultural competency training is another area where university partnerships can be helpful. The effects of diversity training on CPS workers were examined in a study of CPS workers and supervisors in two rural and two urban child protection agencies.\footnote{Karen Hopkins et al., \textit{Impact of University/Agency Partnerships in Child Welfare on Organizations, Workers, and Child Activities}, 78 \textsc{Child Welfare} 5 (1999).} Workers taking part in a MSW program (paid for by the agency) found that post-training they were more aware of how their own cultural backgrounds influence the way they see their clients.\footnote{Id.} They also reported that the curriculum’s emphasis on diversity helped them learn to recognize when race, ethnicity, or culture might be an important part of what is happening in a case.\footnote{Id.} As Georgia’s population becomes more diverse, case managers who are equipped to work with clients from a variety of backgrounds and cultures will suffer less stress and be more effective.

\textbf{3. Recommendation: Support job recruitment for hiring case managers with BSW and MSW degrees.}

The April 2000 Task Force found that less than 10% of the CPS frontline workforce in Georgia holds a bachelor’s degree in social work.\footnote{TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.} This fact partly explains why Georgia has such high case manager turnover in its child welfare system. A series of national studies has found that a degree in social work is one of the primary indicators of longevity among child protective services case managers.\footnote{Jones & Okamura, supra note 24.}

A degree in social work leads to longer service because case managers who are adequately prepared for the complex situations and emotionally draining work of protecting abused children are less likely to burn out in a short period of time.\footnote{E. M. Smith & R. Laner, \textit{Admin. for Children, Youth and Families}, Ariz. Dep’t of Econ. Sec., Implications of Prior Experience and Training for Recruiting and Hiring CPS Staff (1990).} Burnout occurs when a committed professional disengages from his or her work in response to stress and strain experienced in the job.\footnote{Marie Soderfeldt and Brian Soderfeldt, \textit{Burnout in Social Work}, 40 \textsc{Social Work} 638 (1995).} Burnout occurs more frequently for professionals whose work focuses on helping people, such as teachers, nurses, police officers, and social workers.\footnote{Id.}

The BSW degree program trains generalist social workers to function in diverse situations involving a variety of populations. Crisis intervention, de-escalation and effective interviewing skills serve as the foundation of a basic social work education. BSW students understand the complex relationship between people and their environment and are trained to intervene in a variety of difficult situations. Many situations involving abuse and neglect escalate when brought to the attention of CPS. Case managers must have the skills to effectively handle these situations.
A MSW education develops specialized skills related to supervisory roles. A MSW has the potential to not only effectively guide case managers, but also to assist in managing the stress of the child welfare environment. A MSW is equipped with the knowledge and skills to advocate systemically and-legislatively on behalf of case managers and the clients they serve; and is therefore prepared to support both clients and workers. The MSW degree prepares social workers for professional leadership roles in clinical social work practice, social welfare management, and community practice.

Several studies have documented the positive impact of social work education on CPS workers. The findings from these studies have been compiled in a proposal to re-professionalize Georgia’s public child welfare system, the Georgia Child Welfare Research, Education, and Training Consortium (“Training Consortium”). One core element of the Training Consortium is the establishment of a partnership between public schools of social work and the Georgia Department of Human Resources for the purpose of training case managers. This is also a recommendation of the April 2000 Task Force Report.

The research supporting the development of the Training Consortium shows how social work education improves the effectiveness of case managers and supervisors. Among the findings of several studies are the following:

- Education, specifically a MSW, appears to be the best predictor of overall performance in social service work.
- Overall performance of case managers with MSW degrees is significantly higher than those without MSW degrees and those with MSW degrees are the best prepared to do more complex tasks.
- States that require a MSW have lower turnover rates than states that do not require specialized degrees for child welfare positions.
- In one study, 81% of child welfare case managers who stayed longer than two years had completed at least one social work degree.
- In another study, of 179 child welfare supervisors and case managers surveyed, case managers with MSW degrees had lower burnout rates than case managers with BSW degrees or other Masters of Arts degrees.
- Determining how long child welfare workers remain in their positions depends on the level of social work education a worker has attained and the climate of the work environment, including supportiveness of supervisors and peers.

---

56 Lyons, supra note 36.
57 Id.; see supra notes 36-38 and accompanying text.
58 TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.
59 Lyons, supra note 36.
61 Id.
63 Id.
64 SMITH & LANER, supra note 53.
B. Technology as a Tool

While Georgia is still many years away from a statewide child welfare case-management system, nearly every state child welfare worker has access to a computer with word processing, web browsing, and email software. Case managers report that the tools provided thus far are helpful. Word processing templates are a good first step toward moving work processes away from paper documents.

Private providers now put databases of placement resources and substance abuse treatment programs online via the World Wide Web. DFCS workers routinely search for Department of Corrections prisoners and Georgia Bureau of Investigations sex offenders online.\(^{66}\) DFCS, in partnership with the courts, is moving to a shared, online Caseplan Reporting System (CPRS).\(^{67}\) Some efforts have been made to move the DFCS policies and procedures manuals online for more convenient searching and to ensure current information.\(^{68}\) Children in DFCS custody are tracked through the Internal Data System (IDS), which has been available through a web interface for two years.\(^{69}\) Reports of child maltreatment are not yet accessible over the Internet, but plans are being made to combine the Protective Services Data System (PSDS) into the web-based IDS system.

A May 2001 national survey of states reported that only two out of 40 states responding supplied "None or Few" of their direct services workers with internet access.\(^{70}\) Only three out of 39 states responded that they supplied cellular phones to "None or Few" of their direct services workers.\(^{71}\) Georgia’s Office of Planning and Budget policy allows only department heads to have cellular phones paid for with state dollars.\(^{72}\) This and other barriers to local procurement of technology should be addressed by the Georgia Technology Authority’s (GTA) Converged Communications Outsourcing Project (CCOP) to be awarded in July 2002. County funds can be used to supply cellular phones to case managers. In Richmond county, a local taskforce headed by a Superior Court Judge was able to get new cell phones donated by a private company for all the Richmond County DFCS case managers. The State DFCS office has agreed to pay the monthly phone bill.\(^{73}\)

It is well understood that a high quality case management tool is a necessity for improving the child welfare system. Such a system would provide case histories and record-keeping organization to the worker, management information to the local supervisors, and aggregate data to state and federal managers. The United States Congress recognized this in 1993 when it authorized funds to reimburse up to 75% of the costs to states that built a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). Georgia, along with at least 17 other states, has

---

\(^{66}\) For a list of casework resources on the web, see [http://childwelfare.net/resources/](http://childwelfare.net/resources/).

\(^{67}\) See [http://gacaseplan.org/](http://gacaseplan.org/). A demonstration site can be found at [http://childwelfare.net/DHR/policies/](http://childwelfare.net/DHR/policies/).

\(^{68}\) For a prototype of a possible presentation of DFCS policies, see [http://childwelfare.net/DHR/policies/](http://childwelfare.net/DHR/policies/).

\(^{69}\) See [https://idsonline.smipc.net/](https://idsonline.smipc.net/).

\(^{70}\) Cyphers, supra note 19.

\(^{71}\) Id.

\(^{72}\) Currently, the policies of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget permit state funding for cellular phones only for use by department heads. Information provided by J. H. Fuller, Department of Human Resources, in Atlanta, Ga. (July 5, 2001).

\(^{73}\) Presentation by Judge Douglas Flanagan of Richmond County Juvenile Court, November 16, 2001.
had a difficult time building a SACWIS.\textsuperscript{74} The Barton Clinic’s previous policy paper elaborated some of these difficulties.\textsuperscript{75} As of this writing, plans from the GTA call for completion of a Business Process Reengineering (BPR) in June 2002 leading to a four-phase SACWIS rollout with release dates in December of 2003, 2004, 2006, and 2007.\textsuperscript{76} Georgia SACWIS, as it will be known, will be built on top of the new State of Georgia Web Portal, an infrastructure of \textit{web services} that will be shared by all state entities. For example, the portal’s web services might provide an application such as SACWIS with the ability to seamlessly interact with a case manager using a mobile device, such as a cellular phone or personal digital assistant (PDA). Another web service might provide a scheduling capability for family conferences. Georgia’s web portal is scheduled to debut in June 2002, followed by a pilot of the state Health and Human Services portion of the portal in July 2002.

1. \textbf{Recommendation: Enhance the usability of existing reporting applications} (IDS, PSDS, and CPRS) as they are integrated into the new state web portal.

Together, three reporting applications currently make it possible for Georgia to meet federal reporting requirements (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, and IV-E), saving millions of state dollars each year. With meager budgets and little or no user training, these applications have achieved nearly 100\% adoption by all 159 counties, simply because the need is so great. Modern web interfaces to enhance the usability of these applications might save the State thousands of person-hours each month, yet decision makers refuse to improve these interfaces for fear of laying "digital concrete" (the phenomenon of rigid information systems locking an organization into a way of doing business). Since these are merely reporting systems, the probability of business processes and user acceptance building to the hardness of concrete around these applications is very small. It is worth this risk, and the small dollar costs, to provide some immediate relief to the reporting burden of workers in the field.\textsuperscript{77}

2. \textbf{Recommendation: Contract an independent vendor to perform regular security audits on all DHR data systems containing confidential information.}

Children and families that trust their most personal information to DHR have a right to know how that information will be protected. An unintended release of data could be devastating to DHR’s clients, and, in some cases, even lifethreatening. DHR should move quickly to publish departmental information technology (IT) security policies.\textsuperscript{78} These policies should be guided by the National Institute of Standards and Technology Federal Information Technology Security Assessment Framework, including a requirement for regular security audits (including

\textsuperscript{74} Status of States’ SACWIS progress includes 4 states completed, 21 states operational (all pending federal review), 8 states partially operational, 8 states undergoing implementation, 6 states planning (including Georgia) and 4 states with no activity. See \url{http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/oss/sacwis/cwsstat.htm}; see also \url{http://www.it.dhr.state.ga.us/facets/news.htm}.

\textsuperscript{75} See supra note 7.

\textsuperscript{76} Personal interview, Carol Veihmeyer, SACWIS Project Director (December 10, 2001).

\textsuperscript{77} Telephone Interview, Magistrate Judge Charles Day, United States District Court for the District of Maryland, in Greenbelt, Md. (Feb. 27, 2001).

\textsuperscript{78} See, e.g., WASH. STATE DEP’T OF INFO. SERVS., IT PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT POLICY, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES, at \url{http://www.wa.gov/dis/portfolio/} (February 1, 2002).
penetration testing) by an outside contractor. DHR IT security policies and records of audits should be made available to clients and the general public on the DHR website.

3. **Recommendation:** Build a comprehensive Georgia SACWIS website to keep DFCS staff and partners well informed on information technology resources, plans, and implementation.

Despite the false starts, state and county managers remain committed to Georgia SACWIS. The hope generated by Georgia SACWIS leads to a great deal of speculation about timelines and functionality. The state and county management should not have to speculate about the future of such a critical tool in their arsenal; they should have summary and detailed planning documents available to them via the web. Reporting from the BPR project is of particular importance, since thorough review and feedback from county level staff is crucial to good reengineering. Websites and listservs are particularly well suited to this task.

4. **Recommendation:** Staff a Project Management Office (PMO) in DHR to provide basic project management supports, not just to technology projects, but throughout the department.

Georgia’s Child and Family Services Review and the Safe Futures for Georgia’s Children initiative have recently generated more than 25 new projects. Most of the leaders of those project teams have little or no formal training in project management and are largely unfamiliar with the tools of the project management trade. Georgia SACWIS is likely to be one of the largest software projects ever undertaken in the 50 year history of computing. State managers need support from a PMO that can tackle the complexity of SACWIS development, while still "right-sizing" their services to the many small to medium sized social services projects at the division or section level. A PMO working with social services managers should err on the side of too little process, being very careful not to drown clients in methodologies.

5. **Recommendation:** Increase the use of mobile devices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of case managers.

It goes without saying that the quality of social service work is directly proportional to the time spent with the families and children in need. Mobile digital devices (phones, PDA’s, palmtops, laptops, email pagers, video phones) on the market today hold the promise of untethering case managers from their desks. Cellular phones promote teamwork and collaboration, as well as providing immediate access to law enforcement and other resources. PDA’s costing less than $300 can now store large resource databases listing substance abuse, family counseling, housing, utilities, childcare, and many other service providers, as well as an electronic copy of the organization’s policies and procedures. Desktop video phones that transmit over normal phone lines and cost about $500 could be used in some family conferencing situations and court proceedings.

---


appearances. If all paper forms were converted to word processor templates, a room full of forms could be carried in a small palmtop or laptop and filled out in the client’s home.

C. Workforce Morale

Good employee morale benefits an organization’s productivity and quality of service to clients. On the other hand, low employee morale can be an undeterminable expense to an organization through decreased productivity, unresolved conflict, high employee turnover, and poor service to clients. In any organization, management can improve employee morale by implementing programs designed to motivate employees to do their best work and that contribute to a satisfying work environment.

1. Recommendation: Support strategies to improve working conditions in ways that will boost employee morale, reduce burnout, and encourage longevity.

Studies have shown that social services workers suffer the highest rates of burnout of any profession.\(^81\) In addition to the key issues of salary, workload, education and training, several other factors have a measured positive effect when it comes to attracting and retaining a capable and committed workforce. A sense of community within the organization and attention to personal values are some of the elements involved in every successful business team.\(^82\) These factors can retain a committed workforce and conversely, if they are not addressed, the lack of these factors can contribute to worker burnout. The safety of Georgia’s abused and neglected children will continue to be compromised if the issue of worker burnout is not addressed.

Workers in direct service positions, such as CPS workers, attest that the reasons for high turnover and burnout are insufficient salary, large caseloads, late night on-call duty requirements, high job stress, lack of agency and public support, inadequate training, and changes in the nature of job responsibilities.\(^83\) Looking at factors such as the physical work environment, the tools provided to workers, the types of social interactions that occur, and involvement of employees in the development and implementation of policies, administration, and supervision, will help DFCS to develop strategies to reduce burnout and turnover, and to increase employee morale. A national survey found that implementing strategies such as mentoring, flextime, and loan repayment were important to successfully retain qualified CPS workers.\(^84\)

a) Mentoring Programs

Nationally, most child welfare agencies have not implemented formal mentoring programs.\(^85\) Of eight agencies studied that have implemented a mentoring program, one agency found such a program ineffective, six reported it somewhat effective, and one regarded it as highly effective.\(^86\) In a national survey of CPS case managers, many identified mentoring by a co-worker or advisor as being the most effective type of training in preparing for their job. In a report on the retention

\(^{83}\) Lela B. Costin et al., The Politics of Child Abuse in America 157 (1996).
\(^{84}\) Cyphers, supra note 19.
\(^{85}\) Id.
\(^{86}\) Id.
of child welfare case managers, the Child Welfare Training Institute found that some of the most effective strategies for reducing case manager turnover includes increasing salary, allowing flex-time, and establishing mentoring programs. 87 Connecticut is one of the few states that has implemented a mentor program. Connecticut’s program pairs managers in child protection agencies with second year social workers. 88

b) Loan Forgiveness or Repayment Assistance Programs

Loan Forgiveness Programs that help workers pay off their college loans can be a meaningful incentive for case managers to remain on the job. 89 Georgia currently offers several loan forgiveness programs that could be expanded to include education programs resulting in BSW or MSW degrees. Under the HOPE Scholarship Program, PROMISE provides forgivable loans to students who aspire to be teachers in Georgia public schools. In order to qualify for the forgivable loan, students must be enrolled in an approved teacher education program in Georgia and commit to teaching one academic year in an area of critical shortage in Georgia schools for each $1500 awarded. The HOPE Scholarship Program also offers a similar loan forgiveness program to teachers for graduate study in critical shortage fields.

The Georgia Student Finance Authority (GSFA) offers another loan forgiveness program to students in Georgia working toward undergraduate or advanced degrees in areas that are identified as having personnel shortages. The GSFA offers service cancellation benefits on eligible Federal Stafford loans. Currently under this program, DHR employees can receive service cancellation benefits to study for a baccalaureate or advanced nursing degrees.

c) Flextime and Sabbaticals

Allowing employees to work a flexible schedule provides them more control over when they perform their responsibilities. Increasing control and autonomy can help to reduce employee stress. In addition, flexible scheduling allows employees more freedom to meet family and other obligations, relieving some external stressors on employees. A national survey found that out of the child welfare agencies that incorporated flextime and/or changed office hours to include non-traditional working hours, five found it not effective, fifteen found it somewhat effective, and one found it highly effective. 90 Some child protection agencies, including those in Oregon and Baltimore, have begun to experiment with more flexible scheduling for CPS workers. 91

Sabbaticals are no longer limited to university professors. With at least 20% of businesses offering a formal sabbatical program, the sabbatical is finally being recognized as an important tool in recruiting and retaining personnel. 92 Sabbaticals are most popular in fields where the

---

87 CHILD WELFARE TRAINING INST., RETENTION OF CHILD WELFARE CASE MANAGERS: RETENTION REPORT 8 (1997).
89 Id.
90 Cyphers, supra note 19.
91 AM. FED’N OF STATE, COUNTY & MUN. EMPLOYEES, supra note 88.
basis of the organization is intellectual and human capital. A sabbatical is different from an extended leave in that a sabbatical has a purpose and the employee must have completed a certain period of employment prior to being eligible. Some organizations offer sabbaticals as a “social service leave,” a time for their employees to reflect on life by volunteering in the community with charities and non-governmental organizations. Fortune One Hundred companies have found that sabbaticals are necessary to compensate employees for excessively long work weeks and consequent burnout because sabbaticals allow employees to learn new skills in their field, recharge their batteries, and get more energized to work.

d) Job Sharing

Job sharing allows two people to share duties and hours in the same or similar job. Twenty-eight percent of firms in the private sector offer job-sharing programs, an increase from the 8% of firms that offered them in 1990. Although many workers and agencies can benefit from job sharing, it is crucial that the job-sharing program be taken seriously, that policies and guidelines governing it are created, and that management is trained to deal with it. People who might benefit from job sharing include workers with elder or child care responsibilities, older workers who want to phase in retirement, workers who also are students, and people with disabilities who only want to work part of the day or week. Studies of job sharing show it allows workers to create a more balanced lifestyle, which decreases stress and overall anxiety and results in better morale and increased productivity.

e) Employee Recognition

Finally, productive employees who remain on the job for a period of time should be recognized and rewarded. The Child Welfare Training Institute suggests that providing recognition and rewards for longevity can increase retention of child protective service workers. By giving a cash bonus or merit increase to workers who have stayed with the agency for three years, DFCS is encouraging longevity among its workers.

---

95 Id.
96 GINGER CURWEN, SABBATICALS AREN’T JUST FOR ACADEMICS, at http://www.workingwoman.com/www/home.jsp (last visited August 14, 2001); Shainblum, supra note 94.
98 Id.
101 Child CHILD WELFARE TRAINING INST., supra note 87.
102 Id.
2. **Recommendation: Perform confidential job satisfaction surveys. Summarize results periodically for policy makers, decision makers, partners, and for public education on frontline needs.**

The extent to which DFCS has surveyed case managers specifically for job satisfaction in the recent past is unknown. In an effort to find out the reasons behind the extremely high turnover and low morale in DFCS, a MSW student at the University of Georgia, in cooperation with her field placement supervisor, surveyed social service and eligibility workers in one suburban county and one rural county in the spring of 2001.\(^\text{103}\) The survey attempted to capture social service workers’ perceptions regarding compensation, work preparedness, job performance, adequacy of training, job stability, their relationships with supervisors, overall job satisfaction, and other factors. The type of information obtained through this kind of survey provides insight into the potential that exists for DFCS and county supervisors to gather useful data for improving employees’ working environments and performance levels.

To some extent, the CPS Task Force public forums targeted toward case managers and direct service providers served as an informal needs assessment for those groups. Over 1200 people participated in the forums and the Task Force received hundreds of letters.\(^\text{104}\) However, public forums are not a substitute for systematic, comprehensive, confidential surveys of case managers and their needs.

3. **Recommendation: Support development of a proactive media strategy to enhance Child Protective Service workers’ morale and educate the public.**

The April 2000 Task Force Report recommended that DFCS develop and implement a communications and public awareness plan to deal with the mistrust and misunderstanding between the public and the agencies serving families and children.\(^\text{105}\) The Task Force’s recommendation was made after observing that negative media coverage undeniably amplified the existing crisis faced by CPS. Further, a national survey found that improving the public’s image of the child welfare system through the media was an important action that must be taken to retain qualified workers.\(^\text{106}\)

A common stereotype perpetuated in the media is that case managers are under-performing instead of under-resourced. This image lingers in the public’s mind, contributing to a bad public perception of DFCS and consequently, lower morale among under-appreciated workers. The public should become educated about how child abuse happens and how individuals can prevent abuse from occurring. A well-informed public is in a better position to evaluate the accuracy of press coverage of DFCS and to become involved in the solutions when the press highlights a crisis.

---

\(^\text{103}\) Courtney Fields, University of Georgia: School of Social Work, Survey Results from Two County DFCS Offices (2001) (unpublished manuscript, on file with author).

\(^\text{104}\) For a summary of information obtained through the public forums, see [http://www2.state.ga.us/cpstaskforce/cpsfin8.html](http://www2.state.ga.us/cpstaskforce/cpsfin8.html).

\(^\text{105}\) TASK FORCE REPORT, supra note 4.

\(^\text{106}\) Cyphers, supra note 19.
To help inform the public, DFCS needs to develop a proactive media strategy that ensures that media reports properly explain the reasons behind the Division's actions. In addition, a good media strategy could allow DFCS to show the consequences of failing to provide the necessary resources to a Division charged with the all-important task of protecting children. Such a strategy could help garner public support for resources for DFCS because it would highlight systemic failures and solutions for the failures.

The Justice Policy Institute and the Center on Criminal and Juvenile Justice are adept at putting potentially negative subject matter in the appropriate context to educate the public about the reality behind high profile media stories. For a number of years those organizations and others have written reports and editorials to counterbalance negative portrayals of juveniles in the media, particularly young people of color. These organizations provide training and technical assistance on media relations to individuals and organizations working on behalf of children in the juvenile justice system. Their strategies could easily be applied to the child welfare system.

A proactive strategy for DHR to deal with the media might include creating a full-time public relations staff or contracting with private providers for this work. DHR should dedicate such staff or providers to work exclusively on DFCS matters. These positions require people with the necessary level of understanding of social work, law, and policy and procedure. Not only would they be needed to deal with crisis situations, but also to increase public awareness of CPS and foster care activities, and to increase public awareness of the public’s role in prevention and intervention of child abuse.

### III. Conclusion

DFCS case managers in Georgia need higher salaries and reduced caseloads, but leaders must additionally support case managers with standard good management practices. A sampling of suggestions for good public child welfare management practices has been included in this paper. Case managers must be adequately educated and trained. And, to provide protection for children in the greatest danger, case managers must be supported by the creation of a reliable and user friendly case file database system that allows case managers to track and preserve their daily work, and thereby know the history and current status of every child in the child protection system. Additional guidance is available through a variety of resources, including those listed in the appendices. Some of the best experts on what is needed to improve Georgia’s child welfare system are within the system. Case managers should be asked what is needed, and efforts must be made to meet those needs. This would be a significant first step toward providing workplace supports that will contribute to the systemic improvement of Georgia’s child welfare system.

---

IV. Appendices

A. Training Programs in Other States

They type of training programs other states provide to public child welfare agency case managers may provide guidance to Georgia DFCS as that agency revises the type of training provided to new and experienced case managers. The following are two examples of components of training programs in other states.

Texas

(1) CPS Phase 1 Workshops (3 workshops are required of all new workers)
   a. Advanced risk assessment
   b. Child Development: From Birth to Age Five
   c. Developmental Delay in Children

(2) Workshops to Go Toward CPS Specialist Phase II Certification/ CPS Specialist and Supervisor Recertification
   a. Strengthening Families
   b. Client Mental Health Issues
   c. Cultural Competency
   d. Skills, Safety, and Well-Being
   e. Substance Abuse and Addiction
   f. Children and Adolescents

(3) Child-Care Licensing-Focused Workshops (Certified CPS staff may apply CCL-focused courses to their recertification training requirements if the workshop topic is closely relevant to their work)
   a. Beyond Behavior
   b. How to Testify Effectively in Hearings
   c. Interviewing Children
   d. Overcoming Resistance
   e. Planning Presentations: Speaking With Your Community

(4) Ethics for PRS (can go towards CPS Specialist Phase II certification/ CPS Specialist and Supervisor recertification/ Ethics training for Texas social worker licensure)
   a. Discrimination: Pride and Prejudice
   b. Forgiveness and Child Protective Services: The Missing Peace
   c. Knowing Where to Draw the Lines: Professional Boundaries with PRS Clients
   d. Religion and CPS: Bridge or Barrier?

(5) Distance Learning
   a. Ethical Issues for Social Workers in CPS
   b. Tools for Solving Ethical Problems

---

California

California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) – statewide consortium of social work graduate schools, county departments of social service, mental health centers and the California chapter of National Association of Social Workers

(1) Standardized Core Curriculum Project (new child welfare workers get competency-based training before they get independent course loads)
   a. Personalized tracking of progress and customized on-the-job training
   b. Reinforcement on-the-job: Supervisors use a “cookbook” which reinforces classroom training with on-the-job activities
   c. Evaluation: An integrated evaluation is conducted to see which methods are working

(2) Eight components to the Program:
   a. Primary child welfare skills
   b. Social work skills
   c. Human behavior
   d. Workplace management
   e. Legal processes
   f. Cultural competence
   g. Social work values and ethics
   h. Interdisciplinary practice

\[109\] Id.
B. The Importance of Community Partnerships

As DFCS examines concerns about workforce morale, it may decide that one way to support caseworkers is by providing avenues by which community organizations can support the work of caseworkers. Listed below are examples of programs that involve the community in the work of protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Adopting a caseworker: The faith-based community is a valuable resource to many social programs. One creative solution to assisting caseworkers and children protected by CPS is the ‘adoption’ of caseworkers by faith-based organizations. As an example, a synagogue may connect with a caseworker or two in their county to provide resources to the caseworker and the children on his or her caseload. Sometimes a church adopts a caseworker who is a part of the congregation and has expressed a need for help from the congregation. When the caseworkers need supplies for the children in their care (clothing, eyeglasses, school supplies, a suitcase, etc.) a request would be made to the members of the congregation.

CASA: Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates (GA CASA) is a nonprofit organization, which establishes and supports programs across the state that screen, train, and supervise community volunteers. These volunteers are then appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in juvenile court deprivation proceedings. For more information contact GA CASA at 404-874-2888 or 1-800-CASA-393, www.gacasa.org or info@gacasa.org.

Child Watch: A program of the Children’s Defense Fund, The Child Watch Visitation Program was designed to allow leaders to witness firsthand what is happening to children in their community. It highlights the faces and stories of real children that too often go unnoticed among statistics and reports. Organized by volunteers and advocates in local coalitions across the country, the Child Watch Visitation Program moves executives, clergy, legislators, and other community leaders out of their offices, corporate boardrooms, and legislative chambers and into the world of the children and families who are affected each day by their decisions. A Child Watch Atlanta program took place on January 18, 2001, hosted by Trinity Presbyterian Church. For more information, contact Trinity Presbyterian (Denise de la Rue 404-875-1313) or visit the Children’s Defense Fund website: www.childrensdefense.org/childwatch_about.htm.

Citizen Review Panel: Citizen Review Panels are made up of volunteers from the community, appointed by the Juvenile Court Judges to ensure the children throughout the state of Georgia have permanency and stability in their lives. Trained volunteers meet once a month to review cases of children in foster care and make recommendations to the judge about the status of the cases. For additional information, contact Robert Bassett, Council of Juvenile Court Judges Training Director 404-657-5020.

Family Connection: The Family Connection is a statewide network of 148 communities who have made a commitment to improve results for children and families. Family Connection collaboratives draw upon public-private partnerships to weave the threads of many resources into a supporting web for Georgia’s families. For more information on the Family Connection, visit their website at www.georgiafamilyconnection.org.
**Georgia Network of Child Advocacy Centers:** Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) facilitate a multidisciplinary approach to the investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse cases. The involvement of CACs reduces the stress of the investigative atmosphere for the children and families involved in abuse cases. Several communities have established Child Advocacy Centers to facilitate improved coordination of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. For more information, visit their web site at [www.cacga.org](http://www.cacga.org).

**North Georgia Foster Parent Association:** The North Georgia Foster Parent Association provides resources for financially pressed foster families by collecting and distributing items that are needed for children in foster care, including clothing, shoes, furniture, toys, etc. The effort is an attempt to help lessen the stigma many children in foster care have, to help families in the midst of fostering, and also to encourage families to foster children despite the costs they would incur. As a support group for foster parents, they have learned that the lack of financial and other support is what prevents some people from taking foster children. Each child in foster care who comes to the North Georgia Foster Parent Association warehouse is given six outfits (three for play, two for school and one for dress occasions) plus a heavy coat, a lightweight sweater or jacket, a pair of pajamas, six pairs each of socks and underwear plus other items as needed. Call 770-641-9591 for more information.

**One Church One Child:** One Church One Child is a federally sponsored national program that was founded in 1980 by a Chicago priest who is best known as the first priest to adopt a child. There are now 31 chapters in 31 states, including Georgia. Each chapter consists of a network of local churches that seek and refer prospective adoptive parents from their congregations and the community to the local government social services agency that has children available for adoption. There is a specific recruitment effort of African American families, appealing to the tradition of extended families. One Church One Child transcends all religious preferences. Instead it appeals to a common thread that links us all: ‘the belief that every child needs a family to love him or her… Forever.’

For more information, contact One Church One Child Program, Inc. P.O. Box 115238, Atlanta GA 30310, 404-766-0383 or 1-800-662-3651 or OCOCG@bellsouth.com.

**Prevent Child Abuse Georgia:** Formerly the Georgia Council on Child Abuse, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia (PCA Georgia) leads, supports and coordinates citizens and professionals in an effort to end child abuse through volunteer, community-based prevention programs, in addition to advocacy, training and increased public awareness.

PCA Georgia prevention programs include the Healthy Families, a voluntary, neonatal home visitation program focusing on promoting positive parent-child interaction, healthy child development, and strengthening family functioning.

First Steps is another family support and primary prevention program developed by PCA Georgia. Trained volunteers offer educational information and emotional support to expectant and new parents through a hospital or health clinic setting. This support continues through telephone calls and/or home visits during the early stages of the infant’s development.
PCA Georgia also offers consultation, training, and technical assistance for development of education programs for successful parenting.

For more information see [www.preventchildabusega.org](http://www.preventchildabusega.org).

**Volunteers with DFCS:** Many county DFCS offices have a volunteer or resource coordinator to build bridges between resources in the community and the local DFCS office. They coordinate the use of volunteers in the DFCS office. Projects for which volunteers are needed include:

- Operate or donate to a local clothing closet or food pantry
- Sharing information about foster care and adoption with others in your community, at your place of worship, at your place of work, or throughout your community
- Participate in the Secret Santa program at Christmas
- Participate in Thanksgiving giving during the Holiday
- Become a foster care respite provider
- Provide in-kind donations to helping children in foster care with graduation and other school and extra-curricular activities
- Volunteer with the Celebration of Educational Excellence – a program for children in care who are graduating.

For more information call 1-888-310-8260 (foster care hotline) or 1-888-460-2467 (adoption hotline) or your local DFCS office.
C. Additional Research Resources

Annie E. Casey Foundation’s "Family to Family" Initiative

In 1992, the Annie E. Casey Foundation awarded grants to several state child welfare agencies to assist them in developing plans and implementing an initiative called Family to Family. This initiative was developed by the Foundation to achieve innovative and systemic reforms in the nation’s child welfare systems at the state and local level. The initiative has now been field tested in communities across the country, including Alabama, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Maryland. Los Angeles County has implemented the initiative and New York City has adopted the principles of Family to Family as an integral part of its mandated reform effort. Other sites in the process of joining this initiative include Illinois, San Francisco, Oregon, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Colorado and Santa Clara County, California.

The four key strategies of Family to Family are:

- Recruitment, training and support of resource families (foster and relative)
- Building community partnerships in areas with high referral rates
- Family team decision-making: involving foster parents, caseworkers, birth families, and community members
- Self-Evaluation: using hard data linked to child and family outcomes to drive decision-making and show where change is needed and where progress has been made.

To support and sustain these efforts, the Foundation and its grantees developed a set of 17 “tools” for rebuilding foster care. The tools were developed by teams of child welfare workers and are built upon the lessons learned working inside child welfare agencies and with community and political leaders. The tools include sets specific to the retention of frontline caseworkers: “The Resiliency Workshop: A Tool to Lessen Burnout in Child Welfare,” and “Safety First: Dealing with the Daily Challenges of Child Welfare.” The Foundation makes these tools available free online at their website: http://www.aecf.org/familytofamily/tools.htm. An independent evaluation of Family to Family was undertaken by the Health and Social Policy Division of the Research Triangle Institute and the Jordan Institute for Families, School of Social Work, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The report of that evaluation was submitted to the Annie E. Casey Foundation and can be accessed at their website.


Congressional Research Briefing, September 14, 2000, Washington DC

The Joint Center for Poverty Research and leading members of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Ways and Means Committee cosponsored a research briefing in the capitol that examined the state of child welfare and child protective services around the country. Three prominent researchers provided an overview of the current state of knowledge about child abuse and neglect and the current state of child protective services and child welfare systems. This briefing may be accessed at: http://www.jcpr.org/conferences/childprotection.html.
"Child Welfare: Complex Needs Strain Capacity to Provide Services"

Report by the US General Accounting Office (GAO), 09/26/95, No. HEHS-95-208

GAO reviewed the foster care system and related child welfare services, focusing on trends in the characteristics of the foster care population; whether resources for foster care and child welfare services have kept pace with changing needs; and how states are responding to foster care and other service needs. The report noted that resources have not kept pace with service needs and that constraints on resources included problems recruiting and retaining caseworkers. (Letter :4) Next to funding, states reported that staffing is the most serious issue facing their child welfare systems. Over 90% of states responding to an American Public Welfare Association survey reported difficulty recruiting and retaining caseworkers. State officials attributed these difficulties to several factors, including hiring freezes, low pay and poor working conditions. These factors, in turn, led to staff shortages, high caseloads, and high burnout and turnover rates among caseworkers. (Letter :4.3)

"Confronting the Workforce Crisis"

Meeting of public and private sector child welfare administrators convened by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) in December 1999, Washington, DC, to identify problems and recommend practices and policies in the areas of recruitment, hiring, staff development, motivation and retention.

A national taskforce has been formed, the CWLA Workforce Advisory Committee, to address these issues. One of the organizations represented on the Advisory Committee, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), reports that at the Committee’s meeting in September 2000, it was agreed that low wages is the biggest obstacle to recruiting and retaining a competent workforce. However, other factors identified as contributing to the workforce problem were: failure to include frontline workers in decision-making, poor communication within agencies, insufficient emphasis on education and training staff and numbing paperwork and bureaucracy. (See http://www.afscme.org/publications/child/cww01101.htm.)

CWLA has also undertaken a Workforce Survey to analyze and address emerging challenges in the child welfare workforce, in partnership with American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and the Alliance for Children and Families. CWLA’s contact for this program is Alicia Drais, (202) 662-4281, adrais@cwla.org. APHSA’s contact is Gary Cyphers, Director of Research, (202) 682-0100, gcyphers@aphsa.org.

Crossroads: Child Welfare

American Public Human Services Association (APHSA)

This online publication by APHSA addresses the many challenges facing the public child welfare system and offers proposals and recommendations for state and federal policy changes to improve outcomes for children and families. On the subject of the child welfare workforce, APHSA states that workforce preparation, recruitment and retention are key for meeting best outcomes. APHSA recommends amending Title IV-E to support comprehensive training that includes all aspects of child welfare--child protective services, private agency providers, court
personnel (including judges, court-appointed special advocates, etc.), and health providers--and that is not allocated based on whether a child is Title IV-E eligible. At present, a federal match for training funding is based in proportion to the number of children who are Title IV-E eligible. However, ASPHA argues that workers must be trained to the same standards whether or not they are serving IV-E children and that federal funding be extended to train workers in provision of services and safety assessments for private as well as public agency workers.

This publication may be accessed at http://www.aphsa.org/reauthor/cw.asp.


*American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)*

The Public Policy Department of AFSCME surveyed the union’s 29 affiliates in 10 states that represent professional child welfare workers. The survey covers such issues as salaries and qualifications, caseloads, training and violence in the workplace. In addition, the survey report highlights some of the creative solutions developed by AFSCME affiliates. More than 70 percent of the affiliates indicated that workers had been threatened or victimized because of their job duties. Protections for workers included buddy systems, reassignment of cases, cellular phones, training for violent situations, and requirements for the client to meet with the worker in the agency offices. The report can be accessed at http://www.afscme.org/pol-leg/dj01.htm.

**The Future of Children**

*Online journal published by The Center for The Future of Children, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

The Spring 1998 issue of the Packard Foundation’s journal, *The Future of Children*, is devoted to the subject: "Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect" (Volume 8, Number 1). The journal focuses on the efforts and problems of the CPS system. In an article entitled "Rethinking the Paradigm for Child Protection," Jane Waldfogel reviews several proposals for reforming the CPS system and describes, in detail, the proposal of the Harvard Executive Session (see above).

"Guidelines for a Model System of Protective Services for Abused and Neglected Children and Their Families"

*National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA), Washington, DC*

In 1999 the NAPCWA, in collaboration with the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, published its revised guidelines, which represent a significant revision from the original edition published in 1986. Among the topics included are staff qualifications and performance standards and interdisciplinary teams. Copies of the Guidelines can be obtained through NAPCWA staff, Gretchen Test or Angie Brown at (202) 692-0100 or via online order at http://www.aphsa.org/.

**Harvard Executive Session on New Paradigms for Child Protective Services**

Between 1994 and 1997 the Harvard Executive Session brought together child welfare administrators, practitioners, policymakers and experts to consider problems and reforms to CPS. The session was funded by the Annie E. Casey and Edna McConnell Clark Foundations. One
paper produced out of this effort is "Building Community Partnerships for Child Protection; Getting From Here to There," Frank Farrow, Center for the Study of Social Policy, March 4, 1997 (http://www.cssp.org/kd20.htm). This paper addresses the efforts made as part of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation’s initiative, "Community Partnerships for Protecting Children," and conceptualizes the strategies needed to improve child protection services.

**National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Child Welfare Project**

The NCSL’s Child Welfare Project, in conjunction with the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation is conducting site visits for legislators to view state innovations in CPS. The December 1999 issue of NCSL’s magazine *State Legislatures*, included an article entitled "A New Look at Child Protection" by Nina Williams-Mbengue and Kyle Ramirez-Fry. This article reviewed the efforts of several states to find new, flexible ways to protect children. Recognizing that CPS can no longer handle the rising volume of child abuse and neglect reports, these efforts emphasize the need for collaboration between public agencies and community resources. Arizona’s Family Builders program is cited as an innovative network of community and volunteer agencies that helps with less serious cases—thereby alleviating time and resource constraints on state CPS workers. Arizona looked to programs in Missouri and Iowa in developing their own model.

The contact for this program is Nina Williams-Mbengue or Kyle Ramirez-Fry, (303) 830-2200. Also see http://www.ncsl.org/.

"**Supervising Child Protective Services Caseworkers**"

*Morton, T. and Salus, M. (1994) Washington, DC; Published by the US Gov. Printing Office as part of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect’s (NCCAN) User Manual series designed to provide guidance to professionals involved in the child protective services system and to enhance community collaboration and the quality of services provided to children and families.*

This manual includes a section entitled "Increasing Job Satisfaction and Preventing Burnout" which delineates factors contributing to job satisfaction (i.e. achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility, growth and development) and reviews ways to recognize and prevent ‘burnout.” Extensive notes provide bibliographic references to relevant research on these issues. The manual can be accessed online at http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/usermanuals/supercps/satisfy.htm.