

Moving Forward!

A Symposium on Subsidized Guardianship



JUNE 24 AND 25, 2008 • ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION / CASEY FAMILY SERVICES AND THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND

Welcome Letter

Dear Symposium Participants:

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and its direct service agency, Casey Family Services, first joined with the Children's Defense Fund in 2004 to open a rich dialogue on the importance of permanent families for children and appropriate policy approaches. Today, we are pleased to continue this national conversation with all of you — the true experts and professionals in the field.

Although guardianship was recognized as a permanency option by the Adoption and Safe Families Act in 1997, states today still rely on a variety of state revenues because there is no dedicated federal funding available for guardianship in the same way as for adoptions. As of 2008, 37 states and the District of Columbia are implementing subsidized guardianship programs.

Across our country, each morning more than six million children wake up in the home of a relative — usually a grandmother. About 2.5 million live there without their parents in the home. For a variety of reasons, their own parents are unable to care for them. For some, a probate court has determined — at least temporarily — that these children cannot remain safely with their parents. State and federal policymakers are therefore challenged to provide needed resources to care for these children and their caregivers, who often struggle to maintain their family unit.

Since Casey's last symposium on subsidized guardianship in 2006, held in partnership with Generations United, the data on and damaging impact of racial disproportionality in the child welfare system have garnered critical attention, resulting in a 2007 report on racial inequality from the U.S. General Accountability Office. As child welfare policymakers look to reduce disproportionality and increase the number of children and youth who achieve family permanence, subsidized guardianship has proven to be an effective policy and practice solution. Illinois provides just one example of a jurisdiction that has documented promising results of subsidized guardianship's potential to reduce disparities.

Today's symposium, "**Subsidized Guardianship: Moving Forward!**," is planned as a working session. It will draw upon the experience and expertise of caregivers and youth, advocates, researchers, and state and local child welfare leaders to collectively assess the policy solutions and opportunities to increase supports for children being raised by relative caregivers. Attending this invitational symposium are representatives from jurisdictions that have not yet operationalized programs to serve children in guardianship. We will ask participants to share insights on how their states are grappling with the challenges of supporting families headed by kinship caregivers.

We are confident that this symposium working group will identify new policy opportunities to move us closer to ensuring that guardianship is a fully implemented permanency option for vulnerable children and families throughout the country.

Sincerely,

Raymond L. Torres
Vice President
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
& Executive Director
Casey Family Services

Sania Metzger, Esq.
Director of Policy
Casey Family Services

MaryLee Allen
Director of Child Welfare
and Mental Health
The Children's Defense Fund

Agenda

Wednesday, June 25

- 7:30 AM **Breakfast**
- 8:15 AM **Welcome**
 Raymond Torres, *Vice President of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Executive Director of Casey Family Services*
 MaryLee Allen, *Director of Child Welfare and Mental Health, Children's Defense Fund*
 Sania Metzger, *Director of Policy, Casey Family Services*
- 8:30 AM **What Do Children, Youth, and Families Say About the Promises and Challenges of Subsidized Guardianship?**
 Facilitator: Gretchen Test, *Senior Associate, the Annie E. Casey Foundation*
 Connie Bear King, *Government Affairs Associate, National Indian Child Welfare Association*
 Julia Johnson, *Caregiver and Community Advocate, Kentucky*
 Lynn Granger, *Coordinator, Vermont Kin as Parents*
 Respondent: Liv Hull, *Youth Advocate, Vermont*
- 9:30 AM **How Can Increased Support for Relative Caregivers Reduce Racial Disparities?**
The GAO Report on African-American Children in Foster Care: Policy Implications for Placements With Relative Caregivers
 Bernadette Blount, *Parent Organizer, Child Welfare Organizing Project*
 Khatib Waheed, *Senior Fellow, Center for the Study of Social Policy*
The View from the Frontlines
 Carolyn Jackson, *Founder, Grandparents on the Move, Connecticut*
 Elba Montalvo, *Executive Director, the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc., New York*
 Respondent: Sheila Craig, *Disproportionality Manager, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*
- 10:30 AM **Break**
- 10:45 AM **What Are the Best Arguments for Promoting and Expanding Subsidized Guardianship?**
 Sandra Chipungu, *Associate Professor, Morgan State University School of Social Work*
 Rutledge Hutson, *Director of Child Welfare Policy, Center for Law and Social Policy*
 Respondent: Rob Geen, *Vice President for Public Policy and Director of Child Welfare Research, Child Trends*
- 11:45 AM **Networking Lunch**
- 12:30 PM **Federal Policy Update**
 Facilitator: MaryLee Allen
 Jill Hunter-Williams, *Legislative Director, Office of U.S. Representative Danny K. Davis of Illinois*
 Amy Pellegrino, *Legislative Assistant, Office of U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe of Maine*
- 1 PM **What State Strategies Can Help Increase Support for Subsidized Guardianship? Successes and Challenges**
 Gladys Carrión, *Commissioner, New York State Office of Children and Families*
 Leslie Cohen, *Research Specialist, Children and Family Research Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*
 Leo Farley, *Director of Adoption Support Services, Massachusetts Department of Social Services*
 Anne Lebrun-Cournoyer, *Regional Director, Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families*
- 3 PM **Reflections and Next Steps**

Presenter Profiles

MaryLee Allen is director of child welfare and mental health at the Children's Defense Fund (CDF). She is responsible for defining and carrying out CDF's agenda to keep children safe in nurturing families and communities. Allen has played a leadership role in the development, passage, and implementation of major child welfare and children's mental health reforms over the past two decades. She co-chairs, with the Child Welfare League of America, a coalition of child-welfare and mental-health organizations and works with advocates and service providers across the country. Allen is the author and co-author of many articles and publications.

Connie Bear King is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and is the government affairs associate of the National Indian Child Welfare Association. She is responsible for assisting Indian communities in their efforts to improve public policy on all levels in order to increase effective services. She assists tribes, state, and federal governments with policy development and technical assistance to ensure the well being of American Indian children and families.

Bernadette Blount is a parent organizer for the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP). She graduated from CWOP's original Bushwick Parent Leadership initiative in January 2001, and then helped to bring the curriculum to East Harlem. Blount's two-year struggle to reunite her own family was documented in a front-page *New York Times* article in 2004. She was a keynote panelist at the Fordham Interdisciplinary Center Spring 2001 conference, and has guest lectured at nearly every school of law and social work in the New York City area. She has written a variety of publications, including co-authoring CWOP's parents' rights manual. She serves on the Casey-Center for the Study of Social Policy Alliance for Racial Equity, addressing disproportionate representation of families of color in child welfare.

Gladys Carrión is a member of New York State Governor David Patterson's cabinet, having been appointed commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) in 2007. In this role, she oversees all child welfare services. Commissioner Carrión is also responsible for directing the administration and management of specialized programs for juvenile delinquents and juvenile offenders, and residential facilities for youth placed in the custody of OCFS by family and criminal courts. She is also responsible for directing functions performed by the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH), and state government responses to the needs of Native Americans on reservations and in communities.

Sandra Chipungu is an associate professor at Morgan State University School of Social Work in Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. Chipungu received her Doctorate from the University of Michigan in Social Work and Sociology, where she also received her Masters in Social Work and a Masters in Sociology. She received her undergraduate degree in Sociology and Anthropology from Morgan State University.

Leslie Cohen has been a research specialist at the Children and Family Research Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign since 2000. Her work has focused on kinship care and federal waiver demonstrations on subsidized guardianship. Recent projects include "*Supporting Adoptions and Guardianships in Illinois: An Analysis of Subsidies, Services and Spending*," as well as the implementation and evaluation of subsidized guardianship waiver demonstrations in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Tennessee.

Sheila Craig joined the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services two years ago, having moved from New Orleans, Louisiana, following Hurricane Katrina. In the Lone Star State, she first served as the kinship program specialist and currently is the state disproportionality manager. In this post, she administers reform efforts to address disproportionality and disparities in Texas child welfare through training, policy revision, leadership development, and community collaboration. Craig began her career in social services as an activist for local and national organizations that support low-income families. Her impact brought her to the White House where she presented before the National Advisory Board to President Clinton to advocate for continued support of the national Head Start program.

Leo Farley has been the director of adoption support for the Massachusetts Department of Social Services for the past seven years. Prior to this, he served as manager of the subsidy unit and was responsible for drafting the current subsidy policy used by the department. He joined the agency in 1980 and has been an investigator, on-going worker and adoption worker. He also has performed quality assurance reviews. Recently, Farley has been involved in the state's work on improving outcomes for older youth.

Rob Geen, one of the nation's leading child welfare researchers, joined Child Trends in 2006 as vice president for public policy and director of child welfare research. Prior to this, Geen served as director of the child welfare research program at the Urban Institute, as well as a William T. Grant Foundation Distinguished Fellow in the U.S. House of Representatives. He directed evaluations of two nationwide programs to encourage adoptions from foster care, the Dave Thomas Foundation's Wendy's Wonderful Kids Program and the Freddie Mac Foundation's Wednesday's Child Program. While at the Urban Institute, he also led an evaluation of guardianship programs.

Lynn Granger, a founder of Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP), has been involved in kinship work since 2001 and is currently a coordinator for the organization. VKAP is a grassroots nonprofit that supports kinship caregivers and the children they are raising and educates the public about the joys and difficulties kinship families face. She taught in the Winooski, Vermont, school district for 28 years, retiring three years ago. She is the parent of two adopted children, a grandparent of six, and has been raising her oldest grandchild, Brian, age 11, for nine years.

Liv M. Gray is a recent high school graduate from Vermont and will return to her alma mater next year as a teaching assistant. She hopes to attend college in the future and become a math teacher in an international setting, having been inspired by her community service work in Mexico and Panama. Gray is being raised by her grandmother through a guardianship arrangement.

Jill Hunter-Williams is the legislative director for U.S. Representative Danny K. Davis (Chicago, IL). She was an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellow, sponsored by the American Psychological Association, from 2004 to 2005. Her primary policy concerns include: education, foster care, women's issues, and appropriations. Prior to working for Davis, Hunter-Williams worked for a private consulting firm to evaluate state initiatives to prevent crime, promote resilience in children exposed to violence, and understand community school programs. Her clinical specialty focused on educational assessment.

Rutledge Hutson is director of child welfare policy at the Center for Law and Social Policy, where she works on a range of child-welfare issues. Before joining the center, she served as deputy director of the Child Welfare and Mental Health Division of the Children's Defense Fund. She advises Congressional staff on proposed legislation and works with state legislators and administrators to implement best practices. She has been a frequent presenter at national and state conferences and has authored numerous publications.

Presenter Profiles (cont'd)

Carolyn Jackson was a parent coordinator for the Board of Education in New Haven, Connecticut, when Superintendent Reginald Mayo asked her to start a support group for grandparents who were raising their grandchildren. As a grandparent who parents grandchildren herself, Jackson understood the issues when she established Grandparents on the Move. Today, between 40 and 100 grandparent-parents attend monthly meetings, go on trips together, help each other informally, run food drives, and advocate for more support from the child welfare system. Under Jackson's leadership, Grandparents on the Move has grown to become the largest grandparent support group in the state.

Julia M. Johnson, a full-time social work student, has provided adoptive, foster, and kinship care for children. The parent of three biological and three adopted children, she also is helping another teen prepare for adulthood. She worked for eight-plus years in human resources and public relations at the University of Kentucky before returning to school. Moved by her experiences caring for vulnerable children, she and her husband, a pastor and teacher, are now advocates in their community.

Anne Lebrun-Cournoyer is a regional director for the Rhode Island Department for Children, Youth, and Families. A lifelong resident of the state, she joined the department 24 years ago, starting as a frontline social worker managing working with families, becoming a supervisor and then an assistant administrator before assuming her current role. In addition, she spent two years directing a federal grant program providing supports to adjudicated youth exiting correctional settings to the community. As regional director, she oversees the department's largest metropolitan office, which supports 1,600 children in need of intervention due to abuse, neglect, dependency, or juvenile-delinquency issues. She leads a team of 70 social workers, 14 supervisors, and 10 support staff.

Sania Metzger is director of policy for the Annie E. Casey Foundation/Casey Family Services. An attorney, she serves on the Casey Policy and Communications Strategy Group, the Child Welfare Strategy Group, and the Casey-Center for the Study of Social Policy's Alliance for Racial Equity. She works to influence and track policies at local, state, and federal levels. Metzger continues to provide pro bono legal services and has served as a small claims court arbitrator in New York. She worked for the New York State Legislature for 11 years as legislative counsel to Assemblyman Roger Green, then chair of the Standing Committee on Children and Families. Metzger is on the board of directors of Prevent Child Abuse America and the Center for Family Representation.

Elba Montalvo started as a teacher in the New York City public school system, and then began working as executive/educational director of a day care center. To address the needs of the Latino community, she created a New York-based nonprofit agency, the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc., in 1982. She has worked at both the local and national levels to address the challenges faced by ethnic and minority children and their families. Nationally, Montalvo was invited by President Clinton in 1997 to be part of a White House National Conference on Child Care. The President appointed her to serve on the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect. She is also part of the International Forum for the Child Welfare Executive Committee and acts as its liaison to the United Nations.

Amy Pellegrino is the legislative assistant for the Office of U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe of Maine.

Gretchen Test is a senior associate with the Casey Strategic Consulting Group at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, in Baltimore, Maryland. In that role she provides intensive consulting to public human service agencies, working on-site in close collaboration with clients to strengthen agency management, internal operations, and frontline practices. From 2003 to 2007, she served as program associate for child welfare,

helping manage the Foundation's Family to Family Initiative and its child welfare grants. Before joining the Foundation she served for 5-plus years as director of the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators. She is a social worker who brings a variety of experiences developing and administering community-based human service programs.

Raymond L. Torres is both a vice president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and executive director of Casey Family Services, the Foundation's direct service agency. He oversees the agency's eight divisions, located throughout New England and in Baltimore, Maryland, and supports the Foundation-wide focus on permanence. Prior to his current position, he was the programs administrator for child welfare services within the Oklahoma State Department of Human Services and held the post of deputy regional director for the New York State Division of Family and Children's Services. He also has served as adjunct assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma School of Social Work, where he taught courses in child abuse prevention and child welfare issues.

Khatib Waheed is senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and leads the Casey-CSSP Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare. Previously, he was senior associate at the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives and special assistant to the Director of the Missouri Department of Social Services. He also established the Walbridge Caring Communities Program in a North St. Louis neighborhood; the program has been widely studied and replicated.

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The Annie E. Casey Foundation fosters public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. The Foundation makes grants that help states, cities, and neighborhoods fashion more innovative, cost-effective responses to these needs. Casey Family Services, the direct service agency of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provides a broad range of permanency-focused services to meet the changing needs of vulnerable children and families: foster care, post-adoption, preservation, reunification services, and family resource centers. Casey Family Services provides technical assistance, consultation, and training to state agencies through the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice. www.aecf.org and www.caseyfamilyservices.org

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