

KEEPING CURRENT

November 2011

Keeping Current is a compilation of relevant news and information, including trainings and events. The materials referenced in *Keeping Current* are intended to be additional resources for consideration by members of the CCAN community, and Children's Law Center cannot verify the quality of all the materials or events referenced herein. CCAN attorneys should conduct their own independent research when reviewing these materials, and should review the weekly CCAN e-mail for current information. Please contact Nancy Drane, Training Director, with comments or suggestions. *Keeping Current* is also posted on the Family Law page of ProBono.net/dc and www.childrenslawcenter.org.

Inside this issue:

Legal News	1
News	2
Reports & Publications	3
Upcoming Trainings	6
Save the Date	9

Legal News

D.C. Superior Court Suggests New Approach to *Pro Se* Litigants (Legal Times)

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/i8cecv>

Colorado Supreme Court Opines on the Role of the GAL and Confidentiality (Colorado Bar Association) In this case, available at <http://tiny.cc/kk5k2>, the Supreme Court of Colorado found that because a child who is the subject of a neglect proceeding is not the client of a court-appointed GAL, neither the statutory attorney-client privilege nor ethical rules governing an attorney's obligations of confidentiality to a client strictly applied to communications with the child. Obviously the case turns on an interpretation of Colorado law – which differs from D.C. law – but may still be of interest.

D.C. Sued by Fathers over Daughters' Foster-Care Stays (Washington Post)

This federal lawsuit regarding the application of the ICPC to non-custodial fathers is available at:

<http://tiny.cc/0616z>. The Federal Court Complaint is available at:

<http://tinyurl.com/3lsejmc>

D.C. Child Welfare News

D.C. Children Needlessly Taken from Homes, Study Finds (Washington Post)

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/q4q15>

D.C. Group Helps Foster Children Succeed After Emancipation (WAMU) Available at:

<http://tiny.cc/yje0y>

Is D.C.'s Foster Care System Preparing Kids for Homelessness? (Huffington Post) Available at:

<http://tiny.cc/yjcdy>

Children, Child Welfare in the News (*Local and National*)

Occupy the Lives of Children in D.C. (Huffington Post) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/ithdz>

Survey: D.C. Eighth-Graders Try to Take Their Own Lives (D.C. Examiner) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/x0edi>

New D.C. Center to Serve Disabled Youths, Vets (Washington Post) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/8brdr>

Record Number of Hispanic Children Living in Poverty (WAMU) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/hldag>

Forging a Life Changing Bond (New York Times) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/1079n>

America's Child Death Shame (BBC) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/euuht>

Native [American] Foster Care: Lost Children, Shattered Families [Series] (NPR)
Available at: <http://tiny.cc/ig84p>

Judge Steve Teske Seeks to Keep Kids with Minor Problems Out of Court (Washington Post)
Available at: <http://tiny.cc/b5rcl>

New Law Protects Foster Kids from Identity Theft (AP) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/snux8>

Education News (*Local and National*)

Rhee's Legacy is in Sharper Focus One Year Later (Washington Post)
Available at: <http://tiny.cc/cyg7b>

Don't Wait and Wonder; District Launches Early Intervention Campaign for Infants and Toddlers (Afro) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/i9zqw>

D.C.P.S., Union to Start Work on New Contract (D.C. Examiner) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/uj256>

D.C. Scores Expands Afterschool Program (Washington Informer) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/s4lo4>

Copying the Harlem Children's Zone in D.C. (The Root) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/l3ndh>

Study: Parents, Students Happier with D.C. Schools (Washington Examiner) Available at: <http://tiny.cc/esrri>

Health News

D.C. Has Fewer Than 3,000 Active Doctors, Report Says (Washington Post)

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/by2x3>

Epidemic of Vaccine Fear Triggers Return of Old-School Diseases (Washington Post)

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/h4hiu>.

Reports and Publications

CHILD WELFARE

Updates to Fostering Connections Act

An amendment to the Fostering Connections Act clarifies that states (including D.C.) must ensure the educational stability of children in foster care whenever they change placements, regardless of whether they are still attending the school they attended when they first came into foster care. American Humane Association has put out a summary of the bill: <http://tiny.cc/qrrw4>. If you are looking for more authority to add to a school stability argument regarding a foster placement change that occurs after the child's initial removal, consider citing section 106(a) of the law.

U.K. Study on Child Welfare Disproportionately

"Pathways to Adoption for Minority Ethnic Children in England – Reasons for Entry to Care," by Julie Selwyn and Dinithi Wijedesa, found that mixed ethnicity children entered care the earliest (6.5 months) and were more likely than Black children to be adopted. Very different profiles of maternal problems and reasons for entry into care were found among various ethnic groups. For an abstract, go to: <http://bit.ly/otDNu0>. To read the Adoption Institute's related report, "Finding Families for African American Children," go to: <http://bit.ly/rmBp6y>.

Child Maltreatment Prevention: Past, Present, and Future

This issue brief discusses the importance of prevention as a critical component of the nation's child protection system. It outlines programs and strategies that are proving beneficial in reducing the likelihood of child maltreatment, such as public awareness efforts, parent education, home visitation, and community prevention efforts. Key challenges and opportunities for the future of child maltreatment prevention are addressed.

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/h2h70>

Building Child Welfare Response to Child Trafficking

This handbook explains the gaps within the child welfare system in accurately identifying and treating child victims of trauma. Chapters address the following topics: Identification & Investigation; Screening Tools for Child Trafficking; Case Management Tools and Resources; Legal Protections and Advocacy; Human Trafficking Resource Guide; Integrating Trafficking Response Protocols and Services within the Child Welfare System – The Illinois Case Study. It also includes a glossary of child trafficking terms. Available at: <http://tiny.cc/hooln>

NRCPPFC Toolkit: Kinship Care and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

This new NRCPPFC web-based toolkit discusses the critical kinship care practices addressed in the Fostering Connections Act: notice to relatives, foster care licensing standards, placement with siblings, and family connections grants. The toolkit provides information and links to resources on each of these topics. The toolkit is accompanied by an organizational self study on kinship care, which can be used to review kinship care policies and practices through the lens of the Fostering Connections Act. Available at: <http://tiny.cc/3b6ns>

Reports and Publications (*cont.*)

CHILD WELFARE (*cont.*)

Family Finding: Does Implementation Differ When Serving Different Child Welfare Populations?

In this brief, Child Trends researchers evaluate two family finding approaches – one with a focus on children “new to out-of-home care” and the other focusing on children who have been “lingering” in foster care. Child welfare agencies implementing – or planning to implement – family finding should examine the implications of serving different target populations and their capacity to support the different approaches. Four key issues were identified which agencies may want to consider in implementing family finding. Available at:

<http://tiny.cc/g4dne>

ADOPTION

Protecting Families: Standards for LGBT Families

This publication recognizes that children in LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) families are vulnerable to being separated from their parents because the law does not always fully recognize their families. The overarching aim of these standards is to help LGBT families remember the importance of protecting the families they create and ensuring that their children continue to have meaningful relationships with the people they see as their parents, especially during times of crisis or a break-up.

Available at: <http://tiny.cc/20m1m>

Adopted Children’s Needs at School

Several websites feature Back to School resources for parents to advocate for their children in the educational arena. *Adoptive Families* magazine: <http://bit.ly/q0eUip>; Center for Adoption Policy: <http://bit.ly/peP7ht>; Tapestry Adoption and Foster Care Ministry: <http://bit.ly/nVufea>. To read the Adoption Institute’s report on the subject, “Adoption in the Schools: A Lot to Learn,” go to: <http://bit.ly/r5pCv5>.

PARENTS

Parenting Older Adolescents

In this webcast, Dr. Gerald Mallon, Executive Director of the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, spoke with Mary Keane, a foster and adoptive parent in New York State, as well as Aileen Rosario, one of Mary’s daughters. Mary shared her experiences as a lesbian resource parent, focusing on how she has engaged older adolescents and how she has met the needs of LGBT youth in her care. Aileen shared her experiences in care and discussed her current work as a permanency Expediter and AWOL Worker. The archived webcast provides links to: a PowerPoint presentation on permanency for older adolescents, a bibliography on parenting older adolescents, and all of the resources described by the presenters. Available at:

<http://tiny.cc/4gxh7>

Opening Doors to Relationships: A Toolkit to Help you Make a Difference

The Fostering Transitions website provides a toolkit to offer resources for pregnant and parenting adolescents and transition-aged foster youth. The toolkit includes: A curriculum for counselors; “Outside In,” a deck of cards to guide counselors’ work with parenting adolescents; “Inside Out,” a deck of cards to guide counselors’ work with transition-aged youth; and, a forum to connect with other staff. Available at: <http://tiny.cc/fp619>

Reports and Publications (*cont.*)

PARENTS (*cont.*)

Ties Between Foster Care Children and Their Incarcerated Parents

Federal law sets timelines for states' decisions about placing foster care children in permanent homes, and, in some cases, for filing to terminate parental rights. Some policymakers have questioned the reasonableness of these timelines for children of incarcerated parents and expressed interest in how states work with these families. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) was asked to examine: (1) the number of foster care children with incarcerated parents, (2) strategies used by child welfare and corrections agencies in selected states that may support contact or reunification, and (3) how the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) have helped these agencies support affected children and families. GAO analyzed national data, reviewed federal policies, interviewed state child welfare and corrections officials in 10 selected states that contain almost half of the nation's prison and foster care populations, and visited local child welfare agencies and prisons. On the GAO website, you can access the Highlights Page, Full Report, and Recommendations. Available at: <http://tiny.cc/qt6dl>

EDUCATION

Education is the Lifeline for Youth in Foster Care

Success in school can be a positive counterweight to the abuse, neglect, separation, and impermanence experienced by the more than 400,000 U.S. children and youth in foster care. Education has the potential to markedly improve their life chances and their ability to contribute to society as productive adults. However, research suggests that far too many of the children and youth in foster care are not succeeding in school and that a concerted effort will be required if significant progress is to be made in their educational outcomes. This brief report by the National Working Group on Foster Care and Education discusses national foster care data, shares research findings, and highlights promising policies and programs. Available at: <http://tiny.cc/l85ks>

REMINDER for CCAN PANEL

Children's Law Center **HELPLINE** provides CCAN attorneys with legal information and assistance.

- Staffed by CLC attorneys
- Confidential
- Legal information and assistance on general and case-specific topics, such as help identifying resources and services, sample pleadings, and other materials
- All Helpline calls are screened to identify potential conflicts of interest

Call (202) 467-4900 (Option 3) — Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Upcoming Trainings and Events

Public Systems: Responding to Students Affected by Trauma

Tuesday, November 1, 2011 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. EST (Webcast)

Children and youth who experience trauma such as maltreatment are often involved with multiple systems in the public sector, including foster care, education, and juvenile justice. Effective interventions for this vulnerable population require a perspective that is grounded in the understanding of trauma and its effects; comprehensive information about the medical, social, developmental, mental health, and educational status of the child and the adults who figure prominently in the child's life; and collaboration across public systems. Please join us on November 1 for a panel discussion on the implications of trauma as it relates to children and families involved with public systems, and on the particular challenges of working with adolescents who have experienced trauma, and programs designed to meet their needs. Panelists: Cheryl Smithgall, Ph.D., is a Research Fellow at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Her research interests include child and family services, children's mental health, foster care and education, and kinship care; Gene Griffin, Ph.D., J.D., is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. His research focuses on child trauma, mental health, juvenile justice, and child welfare; Margaret Porter, M.H.S., is the Program Administrator for Youth & Justice Programs which serve vulnerable youth in Rochester, N.Y.; and Matthew Stagner, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (Moderator). [Register for the live webcast](#). A recording will be archived after the event on the Chapin Hall website, www.chapinhall.org.

Housing and Homelessness in the District of Columbia: Where Are We Today?

Tuesday, November 1, 2011 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Shaw Neighborhood Library, 1630 7th St. NW
November 1st marks the beginning of hypothermia season, a time of increased vulnerability for DC's homeless population. Last year approximately 6,500 persons in the city were homeless, an increase of 5% from 2009. The city also saw the number of homeless families increase by nearly 8% to a total of 1,535 families. For families who are fortunate enough to have housing, with an average rent and utilities for a two-bedroom apartment of \$1,100 a month, many face unaffordable rents. Nearly two-thirds of District families earning 30% of less of the Area Median Income (AMI) have rents that exceed 50% of their income. As homelessness and rent burdens in the District of Columbia continue to increase, what can we do to address the needs of low-income and homeless families? Join us on November 1st for a discussion of the state of housing and homelessness in the District of Columbia. Panelists: Marta Beresin, Staff Attorney, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless and Maribeth DeLorenzo, Senior Policy Specialist, DC Department of Housing and Community Development. Bring your own lunch. To RSVP and submit questions contact Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski, sbocinski@wowonline.org or (202) 464-1596 x.118.

DEVELOPING A CHILD PROTECTIVE RESPONSE TO COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

November 2-November 16, 2011 from 2:00-3:00 PM EST

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is one of the worst forms of child abuse in our nation today. Many children sold or traded for sex have a history of involvement in the child welfare system, often as victims of sexual and physical abuse or neglect. However, these children remain hidden and have few resources for assistance. As more communities tackle exploitation through multi-disciplinary collaboration and action, child welfare agencies will be invited to take part. This six week series will introduce participants to the dynamics of sexual exploitation and share promising practices from three states. Remaining sessions include: 11/2/11: Promising State Responses – Georgia and Connecticut; 11/9/11: Community Treatment Solutions BASE Program (specialty foster care); and 11/16/11: Wrap Up: Questions, Concerns, and Ideas. RSVP (Required) at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/webinarseries>

Trainings and Events (cont.)

Family Intervention to Prevent and Address Homelessness among LGBTQ Youth

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. EST (Webinar)

This webinar is designed to raise awareness of family acceptance as an important prevention strategy for decreasing runaway and homeless episodes of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. The webinar will feature the research and work of Dr. Caitlin Ryan, Director of the Family Acceptance Project, which is a community research, intervention, education, and policy initiative that works to decrease all major health and related risks for (LGBTQ) youth and promote their well-being by helping strengthen, preserve, and connect diverse families with their LGBTQ children. The webinar also will feature the newly-funded pilot programs in New York City run by Theresa Nolan, Director of LGBT Youth Programs at Green Chimneys, and Jenni Gunnell, Director of Social Services GLBTQ Program at SCO. Both programs were recently awarded a grant by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development to facilitate the development of innovative approaches to strengthen the families of LGBTQ homeless and at-risk youth. The webinar is co-hosted by The National Alliance to End Homelessness and the Center for American Progress. Register now at: <http://tiny.cc/kae2a>

Innovative Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Youth in or Exiting Substitute Care

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. EST (Webinar)

Teen pregnancy and parenting pose significant developmental challenges for youth; even more for youth who are in, or have recently exited, substitute care. This webinar will highlight two innovative programs that effectively address the needs of pregnant and parenting youth through an evidence-based home visiting program and a comprehensive child welfare services approach. This presentation is the second in a series that will focus on the special needs of pregnant and parenting youth in or exiting substitute care. The National Resource Center (NRC) for In-Home Services, NRC for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (FRIENDS), NRC for Youth Development, and Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Centers (RHYTTAC) have joined together in sponsoring this webinar with the goal of sharing knowledge and expertise to family-serving systems serving pregnant and parenting youth in prevention, early childhood intervention, in-home family preservation, out-of-home placement, and programs for runaway youth and unaccompanied minors. Register at: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/968895482>.

Best Practices – Evidence, sponsored by the D.C. Bar Family Law Section

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. – D.C. Superior Court, Juror's Lounge

Avoid Common Evidentiary Pitfalls. Learn to evaluate your case from an evidentiary perspective. Bench and bar presenters will offer a refresher (or primer) on common evidentiary issues that arise in family law trials. Panelists: Judge Robert Morin and Sarah Connell of the Office of the Attorney General. Register at www.dcbbar.org

ABA Opening Doors Project, Children's Law Center Training

Thursday, November 10, 2011 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. – Children's Law Center, 616 H Street NW, 3rd Floor

The staff of the ABA's Opening Doors project will discuss issues related to LGBTQ youth in foster care and will provide resources. RSVP to Nancy Drane at ndrane@childrenslawcenter.org.

Evidence with Judge John McCabe, Children's Law Center Training

Tuesday, November 15, 2011 from 3:30-5:00 p.m. – Children's Law Center, 616 H Street NW, 3rd Floor

Join Judge McCabe for a refresher course in evidence, with particular attention to special evidentiary issues that arise in abuse and neglect practice. RSVP to Nancy Drane at ndrane@childrenslawcenter.org.

Trainings and Events (cont.)

CCAN Brown Bag, Jurisdiction When Children Are 18 to 21

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. – D.C. Superior Court Room 4224, Family Court Conference Room

Guardianship and adoption subsidies can now go up to age 21, and children can stay in foster care until they are 21. Yet, for some purposes a young person is an adult at age 18. Who holds what types of authority over a youth from age 18 to 21? This brown bag will attempt to answer this question and related questions about legal rights of young people from the ages of 18 to 21.

CCAN/Juvenile/OAG Special Presentation on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Friday, November 18, 2011 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. – D.C. Superior Court, Room TBA

Some of the country's top experts on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) will be in Washington in mid-November for a press conference/release of a law and psychiatry journal issue focusing on this topic. Howard Davidson of the ABA Center on Children and the Law has arranged for these experts to do a free training for CCAN and CLC lawyers, lawyers representing youth in delinquency cases, and lawyers from the OAG's office. Alcohol-related brain impairment of children is a big developmental issue, with ramifications for neglect cases, TPRs, and delinquency cases. The experts coming to D.C. will be excellent resources on those issues.

D.C. Superior Court Adoption Day

Saturday, November 19, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the 25th Annual Adoption Day in Court which will take place on Saturday November 19 from 10:00 to 12:00 with refreshments and entertainment following the ceremony.

Domestic Violence Brown Bag, sponsored by CCAN

Monday November 28, 2011 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. — D.C. Superior Court, Room 3300

Kenia Seoane-Lopez, Superior Court Domestic Violence Unit Attorney, and Sarah Connell, Domestic Violence section of the Office of the Attorney General, will update attendees on the latest law and procedures in the Domestic Violence practice at the court, including provisions for minors obtaining civil protection orders.

Special Education Brown Bag – Transitioning Youth to the Community, sponsored by CCAN

Wednesday November 30, 2011 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. — D.C. Superior Court

Speakers will be Jamie Rodriguez and Nina Isaacson, D.C. Public Defender Service, and staff from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and D.C. Public Schools (DCPS). Learn about educational services available for youth transitioning from DYRS, residential placement, or other out of D.C. placements to D.C. Public School programs.

Abuse and Neglect Bench-Bar Dialogue, sponsored by D.C. Bar Family Law Section

Wednesday, November 30, 2011 from 5:00-6:30 p.m. – D.C. Superior Court, Juror's Lounge

The D.C. Bar Family Law Section invites you to join your colleagues and the judicial officers of the Family Court's Abuse and Neglect calendar for the second annual Abuse and Neglect Branch Bench-Bar Dialogue. This is a unique opportunity to engage in a discussion of topics of interest with the judges that preside over these very important and challenging cases. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, or submit them in advance. (Questions may be submitted in advance to Nancy Drane at ndrane@childrenslawcenter.org.) Fee = \$10. Register at www.dctbar.org.

Save the Date

Special Education Attorney Strategy and Litigation Tactics for Due Process Hearings, sponsored by CCAN
Wednesday December 7, 2011 from 12:30-2:00 p.m. — D.C. Superior Court, Room 2500
This session is for special education attorneys only. It will focus on how to develop strategy and tactics to achieve the client's goal in a due process hearing.

Expert Witness Issues With Judge J. Michael Ryan, Children's Law Center Training
Friday, December 9, 2011 from 3:30-5:00 p.m. – Children's Law Center, 616 H Street NW, 3rd Floor
Judge J. Michael Ryan will conduct a training on expert witnesses. Anyone who has seen Judge Ryan present knows he is an 'expert on experts' – so this is a can't miss opportunity. RSVP to Nancy Drane at ndrane@childrenslawcenter.org.

D.C. Bar Family Law Section Holiday Party
Wednesday, December 13, 2011 from 5:30-8:00 p.m. – PS7's
The D.C. Bar Family Law Section invites you to join your colleagues and the judicial officers of the Family Court for a holiday celebration. Your registration fee will include refreshments and cocktails. Registration information forthcoming at www.dcbbar.org.

Annual CCAN/FCTLA Case Law Update
Wednesday, December 14, 2011 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. – D.C. Superior Court Offices, Gallery Place
Please join the CCAN Office and the Family Court Trial Lawyers Association (FCTLA) for the annual case law update. In addition to a presentation about neglect, adoption, and TPR cases decided during the past year, we will provide some time to socialize and enjoy refreshments provided by FCTLA. This event will be held on the 6th floor at Gallery Place, near the Finance Office. Attorneys who argued the neglect, adoption, and TPR cases in the Court of Appeals this past year will be invited to attend.

Annual Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute (NDPI)
March 12 and 13, 2012
The annual Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute (NDPI) will be held on March 12 and 13, 2012, at the new UDC School of Law building. This two day training will feature sessions on neglect, adoption, juvenile delinquency, ethics, and special education. More information will be available soon, but for now, please save the date.