Keeping Current

A monthly newsletter for CCAN attorneys | Published by DC's Children's Law Center | July 2013

Child Welfare News

National Issues

Supreme Court Reverses, Remands Baby Veronica Case Back to South Carolina (Indian Country Today) In a move that ensured the protracted continuance of the four-year custody battle over Veronica Brown, the Supreme Court reversed and remanded Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl back to the South Carolina courts for further review. In a narrow 5-4 ruling that revealed the philosophical fracture among the justices, the nation's highest Court held that sections of the Indian Child Welfare Act "did not bar the termination of parental rights" under state law. Available at: http://tiny.cc/14eczw Another perspective, from The National Law Journal, available at: http://tiny.cc/5gfczw.

States Fight Discrimination Toward Gay Foster Kids (Associated Press) Youth says his religious foster family frequently talked about their disdain for his homosexuality at the dinner table, trashed his room and called him homophobic slurs. While a teenager, he says, they kicked him out of their Connecticut home after he had lived there for nearly a decade. Available at: http://tiny.cc/8sfczw. Another Perspective, from the Pittsburgh Courier, available at: http://tiny.cc/sufczw.

Black Babies Cost Less to Adopt (NPR Morning Edition) Americans adopt thousands of children each year. As the nation has become increasingly diverse, and with the growth of international adoption in recent decades, many of those children don't look like their adoptive parents. The Race Card Project spoke with social workers, adoption agencies and adoptive parents about adoption costs based on ethnicity. Available at: http://tiny.cc/vwgczw.

Sesame Street Creates First Muppet To Have Incarcerated Parent (Indiana News Center) Those friendly, fuzzy Muppets from "Sesame Street" have helped kids open up about all sorts of serious subjects, from hunger and divorce to military deployment. But they're now tackling a much more unexpected issue: incarceration. Available at: http://tiny.cc/u2gczw. Another perspective, from Slate.com, available at: http://tiny.cc/zcnczw.

About This Publication

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 Tomar Brown, Training Coordinator, with comments or suggestions. *Keeping Current* is also posted on the Family Law page of ProBono.net/dc and ww.childrenslawcenter.org.

In This Issue

Child Welfare News	1
Education News	3
Mental Health News	4
Reports & Publications	4
Upcoming Events	5
Save the Date!	5

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Senators Introduce Bill to Create National 'Responsible Father Registry' (Christian Post) Sen. Landrieu argues that the proposed national registry would be valuable to fathers across the country. Available at: http://tiny.cc/qpfczw.

Research Needed on Child Abuse Prevention (Reuters) There still isn't enough evidence to say whether office- or home-based programs ordered by doctors actually prevent child abuse when obvious signs of maltreatment are absent, according to a government-backed panel. Available at: http://tiny.cc/uxoczw.

Foster Families Take Center Stage (NPR) The Fosters could not be more literally named. It's about a foster family with two moms: one black, one white. They're parenting a houseful of teenagers- biological, adopted and fostered, from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The first episode begins with a new kid, Callie, stumbling into the family, bruised physically and emotionally by the foster care system's inadequacies. But is The Fosters realistic? Available at: http://tiny.cc/z5oczw.

DC Children and Youth

Two dads turn to social media to seek adoption (Washington Post) No one knows how many adoptions have resulted from online connections, but at a time when adoptions can take years to come through - and particularly for same-sex couples, for whom international adoption options have dwindled - the potential ease and speed of finding a match online is appealing. Available at: http://tiny.cc/4lnczw.

DC student defying the odds through art (Fox News) Fox profile on foster youth Khadijah Wilson who's about to graduate HS and is headed to the Corcoran College of Art and Design. Available at: http://tiny.cc/8pnczw.

Arlington Non-Profit Bike Stores Lets Kids Shift Gears—And Lives (WAMU) Local radio station feature on a bike repair shop that helps troubled teens. Available at: http://tiny.cc/utnczw.

Mapping the Well-Being of Children in the District of Columbia (School of Data) A data website features DC Action for Children's interactive neighborhood maps on children's well-being. Available at: http://tiny.cc/vxnczw.

Senate Bill Defines Sex Trafficking as Child Abuse (CBS) Bill in the Senate would redefine sex trafficking as child abuse and child prostitutes as victims, instead of juvenile offenders. Available at: http://tiny.cc/r5nczw.

DC Group Uplifts Fathers of Special Needs Children (The Washington Informer) A unique group that supports fathers of special needs children holds event sponsored by HSCSN. Available at: http://tiny.cc/d9nczw.

DC Non-Profit Program Develops "Cradle to Career" Pipeline (Ebony) The Ward 7-based DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative has brought promise to parents and students in a struggling community. Available at: http://tiny.cc/sboczw.

In DC, unwarranted child abuse suspicions lead to a case with no end (Washington Post) Column about a Georgetown couple, once suspected of abuse, trying to get their children back and get off the abuser list. Available at: http://tiny.cc/vjoczw.

DC Program To Help Pregnant Teens Proves Successful (WAMU) Local radio station features New Heights Teen Parent Program. Available at: http://tiny.cc/anoczw.

Education News

The bottom line on summer learning loss (Washington Post) Low-income children are most vulnerable is lost academic knowledge over the summer months. Available at: http://tiny.cc/8ewczw.

In DC public schools, advocacy group finds high rates of suspension (Washington Post) DC Lawyers for Youth publishes a report on suspensions and expulsions. Available at: http://tiny.cc/d9vczw. Another perspective on this story comes from NPR affiliate, WAMU. Available at: http://tiny.cc/acwczw.

Gray Calls for More Collaboration between Public and Charter Schools (WAMU) Local radio station feature on Mayor Gray's education speech - calling for more collaboration between public and charter schools. Available at: http://tiny.cc/35vczw.

DC School System Reduces Truancy Rate (Washington Post) Truancy rates are down at DCPS - from 11% to 8% overall, but older students were more likely to be truant. Available at: http://tiny.cc/a0vczw.

Charters Not Outperforming Nation's Traditional Public Schools (Washington Post) Kids in DC charters do better academically, but that's not true nationwide. Available at: http://tiny.cc/uyvczw.

DC parents rally to save Miner Elementary principal's job (Washington Post) Parents petition to keep their children's school principal, who was let go last week. Available at: http://tiny.cc/yvvczw.

Plans to replace 'No Child' law bring dueling visions of federal role in education (Washington Post) Republican and Democratic parties offer legislative proposals to replace No Child Left Behind. Available at: http://tiny.cc/jtvczw.

School Ignores Learning Disabilities Expertise, Gives Mixed Messages (Washington Post) Mother of twins in PG County details struggle to get them a good education with their special needs. Available at: http://tiny.cc/kowczw.

Northeast DC's Educare a Preschool Model for the Nation (Washington Post) Educare marks its first anniversary. Available at: http://tiny.cc/71wczw.

Graduates From Low-Performing DC Schools Face Tough College Road (Washington Post) Graduates of low-performing DC schools, even those who did well in high school, struggle in college. Available at: http://tiny.cc/kzwczw. A related story from the Washington Post Blog reminds us that a DC valedictorian said she struggled at Penn State because she hadn't really done research at Ballou. Available at: http://tiny.cc/vwwczw.

DC's Hospitality High School Now Has Its Own Building (Washingtonian) It's taken 14 years and two previous locations for this DC public high school to have its own building. Available at: http://tiny.cc/ufxczw.

86 percent of kids in closing D.C. schools haven't re-enrolled
Low numbers of students who are affected by school closures have reenrolled for this fall so far. Available at: http://tiny.cc/94wczw. The Washington Post offers another perspective. Available at: http://tiny.cc/h8wczw.

Mental Health News

Race Impacts Subspecialty Care in Autism (MedPage Today) Subspecialty care for comorbidities in autism may be falling short for non-white children, even among those seen at a major academic centers, researchers found. Available at: http://tiny.cc/wcxczw.

ADHD Diagnosis Falls Short for Minority Kids (MedPage Today) Minority children were less likely to be diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) than whites, and fewer were given medication for the condition, a national cohort study found. Available at: http://tiny.cc/snxczw.

Reports and Publications

Preparing and Supporting Foster Parents Who Adopt
This Child Welfare Information Gateway Bulletin for Professionals discusses the ways that professionals can help foster parents before, during, and after they adopt from foster care in order to ensure that the child and family experience a successful adoption outcome. Foster parents are the most important source of adoptive families for children in the child welfare system. In order to facilitate these types of adoptions, professionals should be knowledgeable about the benefits, costs, and practice implications. Available at: http://tiny.cc/x5xczw.

Youth and Credit: Protecting the Credit of Youth in Foster Care
This guide from The Annie E. Casey Foundation provides advice on the best way for caseworkers and other adults to comply with the new federal law requiring child welfare agencies to request an annual credit report for youth in foster care starting at age 16 and until they leave the child welfare system — and to help young people resolve any issues that come up in those credit report checks. Child welfare workers, foster parents, kinship caregivers, youth advocacy organizations, and others who work with youth and young adults in foster care will find useful information on teaching young people about credit, clearing their credit issues to get them on the road to financial health, and equipping them to maintain good credit in the future. Available at: http://tiny.cc/k1xczw.

Sibling Issues in Foster Care and Adoption
This Child Welfare Information Gateway Bulletin for Professionals explores research, intervention strategies, and resources to assist professionals in preserving connections among siblings when one or more are adopted or in foster care. The importance of the sibling bond is supported by Federal legislation and child welfare best practices that emphasize keeping siblings together whenever possible. Ways to maintain the sibling connections when brothers and sisters are living in different homes are also discussed. Available at: http://tiny.cc/l3xczw.

Crossover Cases: Children and Youth Involved in the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems
Crossover cases vary in definition but share several commonalities: these are challenging cases which require collaboration and coordination among all entities involved to achieve positive outcomes for youth. Available at: http://tiny.cc/wayczw.

Strengthening Families: Protective Factors
The Center for the Study of Social Policy released a series of one-pagers about protective and promotive factors. Each brief addresses one of five factors: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social-emotional competence of children. Available at: http://tiny.cc/ldyczw.

Don't forget about Children's Law Center's Helpline!

Our **Helpline** provides CCAN attorneys with legal information and advice.

- *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 Events

CCAN Brown Bag: De-Constructing the Initial Hearing
Wednesday July 17, 12:30 to 2:00, Family Court Conference Room (4224)
Many things may happen at the neglect initial hearing which set the tone for the entire duration of the neglect case. Join **Magistrate Judge Noel Johnson** and CCAN attorneys **Jorge Vila** and **Adriane Marblestein-Deare** at this CCAN Brown Bag for an exploration of the law and procedure surrounding neglect initial hearings. What is the role of each party at this stage of the case? Which matters must be decided and which can be postponed? How can an advocate who has little time to prepare make the most of this first opportunity to advocate for his client in court? This brown bag qualifies for CCAN training credits.

Save the Date!!!

1/2 Day CCAN Panel Training
DC Superior Court , Family Court Conference Room
July 18, 2013

National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC)
36th National Child Welfare, Juvenile, and Family Law Conference
Monday, August 26—Wednesday, August 28, 2013
More information available at: www.NACCchildlaw.org.