

**WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

**SWK 6684: CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE
SUMMER 2015**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the social welfare policies, programs and services to families and children, historically known as "child welfare services." It explores major issues facing children, youth and families, critically examining the assumptions, values, and philosophical perspectives underlying the social policies which shape child welfare. A central theme is the impact of social problems, economic inequity and discrimination on family well-being and how these forces have affected the development of services to families and children.

This course builds on the knowledge of social welfare institutions, introduced in the foundation year course, Social Welfare Organization, by examining the organizational context in which services to families and children are provided. It also utilizes the "ecological systems" perspective to explore the environmental context in which the social worker operates. This course integrates policy and practice by examining the problems affecting families and children and our society's response to these problems, including the impact on the social work practice delivery system. The course is divided into three units. The first unit is an overview that explores changing definitions and expectations of the family, and how such changes are shaped by the economy, cultural values, and other forces. The effects of poverty and discrimination on the well-being of families - in particular minority and single parent families -are also examined. The second unit examines the primary social service delivery systems designed for children and families, including adoption, foster care, and child protective services. The third unit focuses on specific and contemporary social problems facing children and families today, including juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, and sexual violence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course students will:

1. Understand the diversity of families, their needs, and their experiences in various contexts, including neighborhoods, schools, and communities.
2. Orient students to the consideration of societal values and professional ethics in planning, advocating for, and evaluating social policies, programs, and services to meet the needs of children and families.
3. Understand how services to families and children interact with the larger social and political structures and the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.
4. Socialize students in their professional commitment to promote the general welfare of children and families, including the promotion of social, economic, political and cultural values, rights, and institutions

that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

5. Be familiar with the legislative and judicial policies, practices, and goals of current child and family welfare programs especially as it affects diverse and vulnerable populations.
6. Be able to identify problems requiring family services to identify institutional and service gaps, and have an appreciation for collaborative and integrative service efforts.
7. Be able to identify administrative and management problems within child and family welfare organizations.
8. Equip students with the knowledge and skills of advocacy for policy change to improve social conditions and to promote social justice on behalf of families and children and in particular for people of color, women, and under-represented or disenfranchised populations.

PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

HIPAA ALERT

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Text

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment One: Participate in weekly class discussions

Learning Objectives: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8.

Assignment Two: Study of a relevant social problem

Choose a current social problem affecting children and families in your jurisdiction. Address the following:

Describe the specific group or groups of people affected by this problem, with particular attention to vulnerable populations. How widespread is the problem currently?

What factors have contributed to the identified problem? Place the problem within a socio-political-economic framework in order to explain these factors.

How are society's values reflected in how the problem is defined? How are social work values congruent with or divergent from, society's values with respect to the problem you have identified?

What solutions have been attempted to solve the problem? Evaluate their effectiveness.

What solutions would you propose and why?

Due Date: Week 7

APA style required. Incorporate class readings and scholarly literature. 8 - 10 pages.

Learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Assignment Three: Policy response to social problem

Using the social problem you discussed in Assignment Two, write about a current policy or law in your jurisdiction that has been designed to address this problem:

1. Briefly describe the history of the policy. What is the jurisdiction of this policy (ie., is this a national, state, or local law)? Who inspired and/or championed the creation of it? Was there a critical incident that spurred the development of this policy at the time it was introduced?

Describe the policy in detail. You may quote the entire policy verbatim, but then go on to describe what it means in your own words. What are the key provisions that address the social problem?

How well does this policy or law work at addressing the social problem? Has the problem gotten worse, improved, or stayed the same since this policy or law has been introduced? What criticisms has there been to it? Do you think these criticisms are valid?

To what extent does this policy or law concur with social work values? What changes would you suggest to this policy to improve its concurrence with social work values?

Due Date: Week 14

APA style required. Incorporate class readings and scholarly literature. 8 - 10 pages.

Learning Objectives: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8.

V. Grading. The university grading system will be applied. The grade will be based on class participation and quality and promptness of written assignments.

Criteria for final grades are as follows:

Assignment One – 33%
Assignment Two – 33%
Assignment Three – 33%

UNIT ONE: OVERVIEW

Week 1: Introduction

- Review of course requirements, texts, syllabus
- Changing definitions of family
- Overview of the child welfare system

Required Reading:

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th.Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 1, pp. 1-36.

Week 2: Programs to support children and families

- Understanding child well-being
- Understanding the need for services that promote well-being
- US Government programs that assist children and families

Required Reading:

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th.Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 2, 37-69.

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2012). *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2012*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Week 3: "Best interest" in child welfare

- Defining "best interest"
- Theoretical perspectives in child welfare
- Racial and ethnic trends in child welfare involvement

Required Reading:

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2006). *Race matters: Unequal opportunity in the child welfare system*. Retrieved from http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/fact_sheet11.pdf/.

Anyon, Y. (2010). Reducing racial disparities and disproportionalities in the child welfare system: Policy perspectives about how to serve the best interests of African American youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 242-253. Read pages 242-246.

US Department of Health and Human Services. (2010). *Determining the best interests of the child: Summary of state laws*. Washington, DC: Children's Bureau/ACYF. Read pages 1-5.

Week 4: Disproportionality and disparity in child welfare

- The relationship between poverty and child welfare involvement
- Current thoughts on what to do about disproportionalities and disparities

Required Reading:

Drake, B., Jolley, J.M., Lanier, P., Fluke, J., Barth, R.P. & Jonson-Reid, M. (2011). Racial bias in child protection? A comparison of competing explanations using national data. *Pediatrics*, 127(3), 471-478.

UNIT TWO: CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Week 5: Clinical practice with child welfare involved children and families – the casework process

- Evidence-based practices in child welfare
- Challenges to implementing evidence-based practices in child welfare and other practice settings

Required Reading:

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 4, 129-147 & Chapter 9, 362-366.

Jackson, K.F. (2009). Building cultural competence: A systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of culturally sensitive interventions with ethnic minority youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31(11), 1192-1198.

Week 6: Child Protective Services

- Defining abuse and neglect
- The delivery of family preservation and child protection services

Required Reading

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 6

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2011). *How the child welfare system works*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

NYS Office of Children & Family Services. (n.d.). *The statewide central register of child abuse and maltreatment*. Retrieved from <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cps/>.

Week 7: Foster Care

- Characteristics of foster care
- Permanency planning

Required Reading

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 8, 273-325; Chapter 9, 326-386.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2011). *Foster care statistics 2009*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2010). *Placement of children with relatives*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

Week 8: Adoption

- The adoption process
- Open adoption
- Special needs and minority children adoption

Required Reading

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 10, 387-440.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2005). *The Basics of Adoption Practice: A Bulletin for Professionals*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2005). *Concurrent planning: What the evidence shows*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2006). *Foster Parent Adoption: A Bulletin for Professionals*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Week 9: Challenges in coordinating services

- How the services in child welfare are coordinated
- Difficulties experienced in service delivery

Required Viewing

Dretzin, R. & Goodman, B. (Producers). (2003). *Failure to protect?: A national dialogue*. [Television series]. Boston, MA: WGBH Educational Foundation.

Week 10: Youth aging out of care

- Trends for youth aging out
- Programs to assist youth aging out

Required Reading

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 6, 182-220; Chapter 11, 408-436.

Suggested Readings

Altschuler, D., Stangler, G., Berkley, K. & Burton, L. (2009). *Supporting youth in transition to adulthood: Lesson learned from child welfare and juvenile justice*. Washington, DC: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

Weisberg, R. & Roth, V. (2005). *Aging out* [Motion Picture]. United States: Educational Broadcasting corporation.

UNIT THREE: SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Week 11: Juvenile Justice

- Structure of court system
- Rights of juveniles
- Current trends

Required Reading

Downs, S., Moore, E., McFadden, E., Costin, L. (2009). *Child welfare and family services: Policies and practice*. (8th Ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 6, 182-220; Chapter 11, 441-472.

Suggested Readings

Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. (2005). *Double jeopardy: Youth involved in dual systems of child welfare and juvenile justice: Practice notes #17*. University of Minnesota, School of Social Work.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (n.d.). Statistical briefing book. Retrieved <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/offenders/faqs.asp>.

Pennell, J., Shapiro, C. & Spigner, C. (2011). *Safety, fairness, stability: Repositioning juvenile justice and child welfare to engage families and communities*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

Sudol, T. (2009). *Information packet: Juvenile justice and child welfare*. New York: National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning.

Week 12: Teen Pregnancy

- Trends in teenage childbearing
- Pregnancy prevention programs

Required Reading

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. (2008). *Teenage births: Outcomes for young parents and their children*. Albany, NY: Author.

Suggested Readings

Dworsky, A. & Courtney, M. (2010). The risk of teenage pregnancy among transitioning foster youth: Implications for extending state care beyond age 18. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(10), 1351-1356.

Pryce, J.M. & Samuels, G.M. (2010). Renewal and Risk: The Dual Experience of Young Motherhood and Aging Out of the Child Welfare System. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 25(2). 205-230.

Tortolero, S.R., Hernandez, B.F., Cuccaro, P.M., Peskin, M.F., Markham, C.M. & Shegog, R. (2010). Latino Teen Pregnancy in Texas: Prevalence, Prevention, and Policy. *Journal of Applied Research on Children*, 1(1), Article 5.

Public Counsel Law Center. (2010). *Is My Baby Safe: Straight talk to teen parents on child abuse and neglect*. Los Angeles: Author.

Week 13: Public scandal and policy – The Case of the Penn State Sex Abuse Scandal

- Background of the case
- Policy and practice outcomes

Required Reading

Chappell, B. (2012). *Penn State abuse scandal: A guide and timeline*. Retrieved August 26, 2012, from <http://www.npr.org/2011/11/08/142111804/penn-state-abuse-scandal-a-guide-and-timeline>.

Memcott, M. (2011). *Penn State abuse allegations: 'A Culture that did nothing to stop it.'* Retrieved August, 26, 2012, from <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2011/11/07/142090792/penn-state-abuse-allegations-paterno-deeply-saddened>.

The New York Times. (2011). *An interview with Jerry Sandusky*. Retrieved August 26, 2012, from <http://www.nytimes.com/video/2011/12/03/sports/100000001205338/an-interview-with-jerry-sandusky.html?scp=1&sq=sandusky%20sex%20abuse&st=cse>.

Vieth, V.I., Everson, M.D., Geffner, R., Salter, A., Anderson C., Kirk, A.B. et al., (2012). Lessons from Penn State: A call to implement a new pattern of training for mandated reporters and child

protection professionals. *Center Piece: The Official Newsletter of the National Child Protection Training Center*, 3(3/4), 1-10.

Week 14: Course review

- A review of the course based upon the most salient topics for the class as a whole

Bibliography

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- Berry, E., Shillington, A., Peak T., & Hohman, M. Multi-ethnic comparison of risk and protective factors for adolescent pregnancy. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 17 (2), 79-96.
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- Crawford, J. (2000). Co-parent adoptions by same-sex couples: From loophole to law. *Families in Society*, 80 (3), 271-278.
- Dozier, M., Stovall, K., Albus, K. & Bates, B. (2001). Attachment for infants in foster care: The role of caregiver state of mind. *Child Development*, 72 (50), 1467-1477.
- Edelman, M.W. (2008). *The sea is so wide and my boat is so small: Charting a course for the next generation*. New York: Hyperion.
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- Fleck-Henderson, A. (2000). Domestic violence in the child protection system: Seeing double. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 22 (5), 333-54. Magen, R., Conroy, K., & Tuto, A. (2000).
- Gillum, T. (2002). Exploring the link between stereotypic images and intimate partner violence in the African American community. *Violence Against Women*, 8 (1), 64-86.
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- Hicks, S. (2000). 'Good lesbian, bad lesbian...': Regulating heterosexuality in fostering and adoption assessments. *Child and Family Social Work*, 5 (2), 157-168

- Jones, B.J., Tilden, M. & Gaines-Stoner, K. (2008). *The Indian Child Welfare Act handbook: A legal guide to the custody and adoption of Native American children* (2nd ed). Chicago: American Bar Association.
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- Maluccio, A. (2000),The future of child and family welfare: Selected readings. *Child Welfare* ,79 (1), 115-122.
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- Reisch, M. (2000). Social workers and politics in the new century. *Social Work*, 45 (4), 293-297.
- Roscigno, V. Family/school inequality and African-American/Hispanic achievement. *Social Problems*, 47 (2), 266-290.
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- Waldfoegel, J. (2001). Family friendly policies for families with young children. *Employee Rights and Employment Policy Journal*, 5(1), 273-296.
- Wulczyn, F. (2000). Federal fiscal reform in child welfare services. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 22(2), 131-159.