The final week of September brought swift passage of “The Child and Family Services Improvement Act, P.L. 112-34 ("the Act"). In back to back action, the US House of Representatives and the US Senate, with bipartisan support in both chambers, reauthorized funding for the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program (CWS, IV-B subpart 1) and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program (PSSF, IV-B subpart 2) for five years (FY2012-FY2016). Under the President’s signature these Title IV-B services of the Social Security Act are authorized to receive combined federal funding of $709 million in FY2011 (absent this legislation these programs would have expired on September 30, 2011). In addition, the Act extends and amends the Court Improvement Program and renews the Child Welfare Demonstration Projects.

The reauthorization allowed two programs to expire: The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program and the National Random Sample Study of Child Welfare (known as, the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being, NSCAW). This study had received $6 million annually since the passage of the welfare reform act in 1996 (P.L. 104-193). NSCAW is a nationally representative and longitudinal dataset on children, families, caregivers, teachers and caseworkers that has yielded 130 publications on permanency, out of home placement, adoption and kinship care (for more information see www.hhs.gov).

As a veteran Capitol Hill staffer for more than 20 years, I have the privilege of serving as a “behind the scenes” advisor on many child welfare matters since leaving the Hill in 2007. This legislation is one of the opportunities I had to ensure that: in the state plan requirements for the CWS funds reducing the length of time children under the age of four spend in foster care be added; improving the quality of caseworker decision making be included in the formula grants the Department of Health and Human Services.
Field Center Hosts Public Hearing on Behalf of PA Senate Aging and Youth Committee

The Field Center was asked to host a Public Hearing focused on youth aging out of foster care by State Senator LeAnna Washington, minority chair of the Pennsylvania Senate Aging and Youth Committee. Scheduled for November 2, 2011 at Claudia Cohen Hall on the University of Pennsylvania campus, the hearing was designed to address Foster Care: Aging Out – Options and Obstacles through two hours of testimony before committee members.

Those scheduled to testify include Field Center Faculty Director Dr. Cindy Christian regarding transitioning youth from the child to adult health care system, Field Center Fellow and federal legislative expert Dr. Cassie Statuto Bevan to address federal legislation and resources, the Philadelphia Department of Human Services, the National Adoption Center, the Achieving Independence Center, and former foster youth.

Testimony from the hearing will inform future legislation and accessing resources to address the needs of this high risk and underserved population.

Field Center Welcomes New Team Member: Cindy Santos, Program Manager

Cindy Santos has joined the Field Center as Program Manager. In her new role, Cindy will be managing Project PENN, the Field Center’s Philadelphia Family Court-based outreach program, and the Interdisciplinary Evaluation Clinic. In addition, she will coordinate research projects, supervise MSW students, serve as the social work representative on the Field Center’s multidisciplinary team, and support other Field Center project and activities.

Cindy has earned BSW and MSW degrees, receiving her MSW from Columbia University after interning in the Division of Policy and Planning for UNICEF where she coordinated an interagency multi-sector workgroup on social protection.

Locally, Cindy coordinated a three-year US Department of Education mentoring grant at Congreso de Latinos Unidos. For the past four years, she has worked at the Philadelphia Children’s Alliance (PCA) where she has been Philadelphia’s only bilingual and bicultural forensic interviewer for victims of child abuse, facilitating multidisciplinary teams and providing clinical and treatment recommendations. Cindy was also the Manager of Forensic Services at PCA, training and supervising forensic interviewers, conducting program evaluation, and providing consultation to other child advocacy centers within the northeast region of the United States. Cindy reduced her hours at PCA to take on the additional position of Training Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth, and Family Services, managing a comprehensive staff training program for private sector child welfare professionals and representing this non-profit agency membership group in a variety of capacities. She has served on several workgroups, including the Philadelphia Department of Human Services Improving Outcomes for Children Capacity-Building Workgroup.

The Field Center is delighted to welcome Cindy Santos to its team of child welfare experts.
There are two main Titles under this Act: Title I: Extension of and Amendments to Child Welfare-Related Child and Families Services; and Title II: Proposed Changes Related to Child Welfare Waiver Authority. It should be noted here that the effective date for the waiver authority is September 30, 2011 with all of the other amendments effective October 1, 2011 except for the data standardization where the enactment date is October 1, 2012. This reauthorization is basically an extension of prior mandatory spending with no new direct costs. The authorization of discretionary funding is the same as prior year authorizations but it should be noted that the annual appropriations for these programs has never been as high as the authorized levels – not even close. What follows are the highlights of the Act of particular interest to child welfare policymakers, practitioners and researchers.

Title I includes requirements related to children and their families; changes in the formulation of the number of caseworker visits annually; increases in reporting and accountability measures; modifications to the Court Improvement Program; and calls for data standardization.

States that accept federal money must meet certain requirements both in the IV-B services program and in the IV-E maintenance program (that reimburses states primarily for the cost of room and board). Changes to current law were made by the Act to require states to establish protocols for the appropriate use of psychotropic medication, to develop state plans for responding to the emotional trauma of maltreatment, to devise developmentally appropriate activities to meet the needs of young children four years of age or younger, including shortening the length of time spent without a forever family, to clarify that educational stability planning is required when a child first enters care and with every subsequent move and to describe the data sources used to report child deaths.

The requirement that 90% of children in foster care be visited by a caseworker on a monthly basis seems from a child-centered perspective to be a standard that should be strongly enforced at the federal level. However, a review of state performance by Emilie Stoltzfus of the Congressional Research Service (October 5, 2011) observed that in FY2010 only seven States reported that all 90% of the foster children had been visited every one of the twelve months. Thus, the Act revives the requirement for monthly caseworker visits by changing the calculation used to determine if the requirement has been met. Instead of basing the monthly standard on 90% of children visited, the standard is based on meeting 90% of the monthly visits. In FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014 States must complete 90% of the monthly caseworker visits and in FY2015 and every year thereafter 95% of these visits must be made. In addition, the Act requires that for FY2012 and subsequent years that 50% of caseworker visits take place in the home. Finally, the Act extends the $20 million set aside in each of fiscal years 2012-2016 to improve the quality of caseworker visits with an additional focus on improving caseworker decision making.

The Court Improvement Program is extended with only two additions to the purpose provision. These are: (One) that efforts to provide adoption as well as family reunification and family preservation services are included in the grants provided to strengthen the court’s interactions with families in child welfare cases; and, (Two) that the ASFA requirement to make concurrent plans for a child (i.e., to plan for reunification and adoption at the same time) is added and emphasized in the basic grant provided to courts to improve judicial decisions in reviewing case plans.

The Act calls for the states and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to develop interoperable data elements and reporting for the activities provided under Title IV-B. Standardized data will assist in interstate communication of child welfare services.

Title II extends the authority of HHS to waive some requirements under Titles IV-B and IV-E to conduct demonstration projects or ‘waiver projects.” Each year over the next three years (FY2012-FY2014) ten states will be eligible to apply for waivers. There are certain safety requirements that cannot be waived and there are additional eligibility requirements that states must meet.

This review merely provided the highlights of the Act. For further information, go to www.thomas.gov or to www.opencrs.com.
The Field Center would like to thank our sponsors for helping to make the Field of Dreams Luncheon a huge success!
The Field Center hosted its inaugural Field of Dream Luncheon on September 23, 2011. Held at the College of Physicians in Philadelphia with 6ABC’s Monica Malpass as the emcee, the luncheon attracted 200 professionals, advocates, and friends of the Field Center.

The luncheon served as a backdrop to honor the Field Center’s late Faculty Director, Penn Law Clinical Professor Alan Lerner. The Honorable Benjamin Lerner of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas was the featured speaker at the luncheon, addressing the importance of the Field Center’s mission and the passionate work of his late brother.

Two significant honors were bestowed at the luncheon.

Field Center Faculty Director Dean Richard Gelles presented Dr. Cindy Christian with the Alan Lerner Child Advocacy Award, honoring the significant contributions she has made to the field of child welfare. The Alan Lerner Fellowship in Child Welfare Policy was given to Tara Grigg Garlinghouse, a second year Penn Law student who will spend the academic year with the Field Center continuing the important work of Professor Lerner.

Members of the Pennsylvania legislature recognized Dr. Christian’s work with citations, presented by Field Center Advisory Board member State Representative Mike Gerber. Representative Josh Shapiro secured a citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senator LeAnna Washington honored Dr. Christian with a citation from the Pennsylvania State Senate. Executive Director of the Senate Aging and Youth Committee Sean McCray was on hand to deliver the Senate award.

Dr. Cindy Christian is this year’s recipient of the Alan Lerner Child Advocacy Award. Dr. Christian holds the Endowed Chair in Child Abuse Prevention at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and was appointed by Mayor Nutter as the first Medical Director for the Philadelphia Department of Human Services. She is Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. Dr. Christian is Chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics Child Abuse and Neglect Committee and is highly influential in national policy and practice for pediatric medicine. She is a Faculty Director with the Field Center and serves as the Pediatric Medicine expert in its Interdisciplinary Evaluation Clinic. Dr. Christian co-taught with Professor Lerner in the Child Advocacy Clinic that brought together law, medical and social work students to learn and practice child advocacy.

Members of the Pennsylvania legislature recognized Dr. Christian’s work with citations, presented by Field Center Advisory Board member State Representative Mike Gerber. Representative Josh Shapiro secured a citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senator LeAnna Washington honored Dr. Christian with a citation from the Pennsylvania State Senate. Executive Director of the Senate Aging and Youth Committee Sean McCray was on hand to deliver the Senate award.

Many former students of the Field Center and Child Advocacy Clinic were in attendance to help celebrate the work of the Field Center and honor the legacy of Professor Lerner.

A host committee comprised of friends of the Field Center were instrumental in the luncheon’s success. Committee members included Larry Ceisler, Frank Cervone, Peter and Cindy Christian, Adelaide Ferguson, Risa Vetri Ferman, Bob and Betsy Fiebach, Joe and Marie Field, Rich and Judy Gelles, Rep. Mike Gerber, Steve and Janis Goodman, Phil and Renee Johnson, Maida Milone, Jeff and Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Claire Rosenstein, Bob and Joan Sadoff, Alan and Pam Schreiber, Rep. Josh Shapiro, Sonia Treister, and Gary and Debra Schilling Wolfe. The Field of Dreams Luncheon brought in $50,000 to help continue the center’s important work.

Tara Grigg Garlinghouse is this year’s Alan Lerner Fellow in Child Welfare Policy. Growing up in a home with parents who cared for over 80 foster children, Tara graduated from Rice University where she researched how parenting practices of teenage mothers impact child development. She was a City Hall Fellow, working on systemic changes for the City of Houston Municipal Courts. Tara entered Penn Law School in 2010 as a Toll Public Interest Scholar. She has volunteered with the Custody and Support Assistance Clinic and was selected for the Bergstrom Child Welfare Law Summer Training and the Lerner Summer Fellowship that supported her work at Lawyers for Children, in New York. Tara is also pursuing a Masters in Public Policy with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and hopes to spend her career on large-scale policy change that addresses both the child welfare system and the underlying issues that result in children being placed in care. She will be spending the academic year as a Fellow with the Field Center, working on legislative and policy initiatives and completing a capstone project on the 90-day review process in Family Court.
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!
We are grateful to the following individuals, foundations and organizations for their generous support of the Field Center as of July 1, 2011

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE ($10,000 and Above)

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Motorola Solutions
Penn School of Social Policy & Practice
Stoneleigh Foundation
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Your tax-deductible donation to the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research enables us to continue our critical work. Thanks to a challenge grant from the Joseph and Marie Field Foundation, gifts are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

An envelope is attached for your convenience, or you may give a gift online by visiting www.fieldcenteratpenn.org. For more information, please contact Field Center Executive Director Debra Schilling Wolfe at (215) 573-5442 or dwolfe@sp2.upenn.edu.
Anne Day joined the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research in September of 2011 as an MSW intern from Penn’s School of Social Policy and Practice. Anne attended Penn State University where she studied psychology and women’s studies. While in State College, Anne worked with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault at the Centre County Women’s Resource Center.

After moving to Philadelphia, Anne continued to work with survivors of domestic violence and their children at Women Against Abuse. In her time working with survivors of abuse, Anne became interested in preventative and early intervention services for at-risk youth. In the last year, Anne has worked with Thomas Jefferson University studying an early childhood intervention program for at-risk youth.

In addition to her work with the Field Center, Anne also works in research with The Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion. Anne looks forward to continuing to pursue research in preventative and early intervention service for at-risk youth upon completing her MSW at Penn.

Rachael Lerner LeMasters, MSW joined the Field Center Advisory Board this year. Rachael has a B.A in Art History from Wellesley College. She received her MSW from Columbia University School of Social Work where she worked at Pathways to Housing giving housing and community support to homeless adults with severe mental illness, and with PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision) cases at the Children’s Aid Society in Brooklyn in a program for youth at risk or involved in the juvenile justice system.

Rachael previously worked in fundraising at New York University School of Law and at Roxbury Prep Charter School in Boston. She was also the Deputy Assistant to the CEO of Village Academies in Harlem. Her work experience allowed her to see kids who did not have access to services and her passion has led her to a career path which allows her to help them realize their potential.

Most recently, Rachael lived in England and worked at the Smallwood Road Family Center, Wandsworth Children’s Specialist Services where her role was to assess families with complex needs. Since London has reformed its child welfare system over the past ten years, she has firsthand experience working in a child welfare organization that includes doctors and schools in their system. She first learned of the Field Center when discussing this multidisciplinary model with her father, Alan Lerner, who was a Faculty Director with the center until his passing last year. Rachael is excited to be a part of the Field Center team and we benefit from her experience with another multidisciplinary model.

In addition to the wealth of knowledge she gained abroad, Rachael is excited to bring a voice of social workers who are out in the field to the table.

We are happy to welcome Rachael back to the United States. She now lives in Connecticut with her husband, Robb LeMasters, and their two-year-old son, Nate, and she is working with the Field Center Advisory Board.

### Calendar of Events

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<tr>
<th>Date &amp; Location</th>
<th>Event &amp; Sponsor</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, CA, January 21-27, 2012</td>
<td>San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment</td>
<td>Phone: (858) 966-4972</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David L. Chadwick Center for Children and Families at Rady Children’s Hospital</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:sdcconference@rchsd.org">sdcconference@rchsd.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huntsville, AL, March 19-22, 2012</td>
<td>28th National Symposium on Child Abuse</td>
<td>Phone: (256) 327-3863</td>
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<td>National Children’s Advocacy Center</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:crobbins@nationalcac.org">crobbins@nationalcac.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV, March 21-24, 2012</td>
<td>NCJFCJ’s National Conference on Juvenile and Family Law</td>
<td>Phone: (775) 784-6920</td>
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<td>National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:ckelley@ncjfcj.org">ckelley@ncjfcj.org</a></td>
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<td>Washington, DC, April 16-20, 2012</td>
<td>18th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect</td>
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NEWS FROM THE FIELD
October 2011

Newsletter Highlights...

- Inaugural Field of Dreams Luncheon Honors Advocate, Scholar
- The Children and Family Services Improvement Act is Passed
- Field Center Hosts Public Hearing on Youth Aging Out of Foster Care