News From the Field
National child welfare policy, practice and research

From the Desk of the Executive Director

The plight of children being separated from their parents at the border is a stark reminder of the trauma faced by children who are removed from their parents' care. Our hearts go out to these children and families whose lives will be forever impacted by this experience.

Much of the Field Center's work looks to lessen the trauma and improve the lives of children who are removed from their homes because of child abuse or neglect and placed in out-of-home care. This issue of News From the Field highlights just some of the ways that the Field Center strives to improve the lives of these children through innovative initiatives, translational research, and investing in their future.

Please join me in keeping all children impacted by trauma in your thoughts, and make a pledge to advocate for those without a voice.

Debra Schilling Wolfe
Executive Director
The Field Center for Children's Policy, Practice and Research

NEW RESEARCH STUDY EXAMINES MACROECONOMIC FACTORS IMPACTING FOSTER HOME SHORTAGE

The Field Center has initiated an important new research study to examine the impact of economic factors on the availability of foster homes nationwide. Two University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice faculty members, Dr. Ioana Marinescu, economist, and Dr. Johanna Greeson, Field Center faculty director and foster care expert, are leading this effort, which is being conducted in collaboration with Fostering Media Connections and release of their upcoming Foster Care Capacity Report.

The analysis provided by the Field Center team will attempt to ascertain what larger macroeconomic trends may be impacting the systemic ability to recruit and retain a foster parent “workforce.”

Research questions include:

- How do trends in wages and employment affect the availability of foster parents?
- How do housing costs affect the availability of foster parents?
- To what extent could an increase in foster care board rates compensate for the effects of other trends that decrease the availability of foster parents?

The Field Center will be publishing its findings in a white paper in 2019.

NO LONGER JUST A DREAM: MAKING COLLEGE A REALITY FOR FOSTER YOUTH

With the support of The Philadelphia Foundation, the Field Center offered a robust program titled "No Longer Just a Dream: Making College a Reality for Foster Youth" to support increasing the number of foster youth who apply to and attend college. The event, hosted at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, was attended at full capacity, with nearly 150 child welfare and other youth-serving professionals representing over 50 different community agencies. Attendees were excited to receive critical information on a topic that is often overlooked in child welfare. This training was developed with assistance from the Field Center's Foster Care to College Work Group's Training Committee to provide professionals with tools and strategies to support higher education access and success for the foster youth that they serve.

Click here for more information about the training program.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD OF CHILD WELFARE

PA Foster Care Tuition Waiver Legislation - Webinar Training

The Field Center collaborated with Juvenile Law Center on a webinar on Pennsylvania's pending legislation, HB 1745, the Fostering Independence Through Education Act, to provide tuition waivers and support for foster youth attending Pennsylvania public colleges.

Click here to view the webinar training.

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Stay up to date with the latest in child welfare by following the Field Center on social media. Click the buttons below to follow The Field Center.

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Upcoming Conferences, Trainings, & Events

FFTA 32nd Annual Conference
July 8-11, 2018
Atlanta, GA
More information

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges 81st Annual Conference
July 22-25, 2018
Denver, CO
More information

NACAC's 2018 Conference
Aug 7-10, 2018
Saint Paul, MN
More Information

30th Annual Crimes Against Children Conference
Aug 13-16, 2018
Dallas, TX
More information

JuST 2018 Conference
Oct 16-18, 2018
San Diego, CA
More information

2018 Conference on Innovations in Family Engagement
On February 9, 2018 President Trump signed the “Further Extension of the Appropriations Act of 2018” (PL 115-123). While most of the attention to the bill focused on the federal budget, for the child welfare community the most important part of the bill was the “Families First Prevention and Services Act.” The Families First Act is the first major revision of federal rules for foster care funding in twenty years. Since its enactment in 1980, Title IV-E of the Social Security Act of 1935 (PL 74-273) has restricted the nearly $7 billion in federal funds for foster care to the costs of board of foster children, administrative costs, and training.

Under the new law, states will be eligible for federal Title IV-E matching fund for services that prevent the need to place children in out-of-home care. However, the new bill also comes with restrictions on how the prevention funds may be used.

As this groundbreaking legislation is implemented, the Field Center will monitor and support its impact on children and families.

PA COLLEGES RECEIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LAUNCH CAMPUS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Field Center is pleased to announce that two of its Faculty Directors were recently awarded tenure by the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Tony Garcia and Dr. Johanna Greeson, both faculty at Penn’s School of Social Policy & Practice, were promoted to Associate Professors by the Provost.

In addition to their appointments with the Field Center, Drs. Greenon and Garcia are Co-Directors of the School of Social Policy & Practice’s Child Well-Being & Child Welfare Specialization.

Both Dr. Garcia and Dr. Greenon joined the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania in 2012.

FIELD CENTER FACULTY DIRECTOR TENURE ANNOUNCEMENT

Foster Care: Child Welfare’s Responsibility and Challenge, authored by a Field Center team including Debra Schilling Wolfe, MEd, Sarah Wasch, MSW, Bethany Watson, MA, Nneka Bekekw, MSW, EdM, and Johanna Green PhD, MSS, MLSP, was published in a special issue of the Agency on foster care (Volume 30, Issue 2). Click here to read the full article.

Faculty Director Cynthia A. Connolly, RN, PhD, along with Janet Golden, PhD, published “Save 100,000 Babies”: The 1918 Children’s Year and Its Legacy in Public Health Then and Now, American Journal of Public Health, July 2018, Vol. 108, No. 7. Click here to view the article.

Field Center Executive Director Debra Schilling Wolfe provided testimony in support of HB 1745, the Fostering Independence Through Education Act, that would provide tuition waivers at Pennsylvania state colleges for foster youth. Click here to read the full testimony.

SET Horizons, Stoneleigh Emerging Leader Fellow, presented a workshop entitled Fostering the Future: Making College a Reality for Philadelphia Foster Youth at the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development K-16 June Institute.

BYU radio’s Top of the Mind with Julie Rose recently interviewed Field Center Executive Director Debra Schilling Wolfe about the Field Center’s research on child sex trafficking and its correlates with child welfare. To listen to the interview, click here.

FIELD CENTER RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

EMPOWERING CHILD ABUSE VICTIMS THROUGH AWARENESS AND CREATIVITY

This spring, Field Center Advisory Board member Klaire Fitzpatrick hosted a family-friendly event at her home to bring awareness of the need to place children in out-of-home care. However, the new bill also comes with restrictions on how the prevention funds may be used.

As this groundbreaking legislation is implemented, the Field Center will monitor and support its impact on children and families.

In honor of Foster Care Month, the capes were presented to Philadelphia Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to be given to the children they represent in child abuse and neglect proceedings in Philadelphia Family Court. Click here to see photos from the event.
The Field Center is a collaboration of

The Field Center is a member of

Founding Benefactors: Joseph and Marie Field

Click the link below to learn more about The Field Center

www.fieldcenteratpenn.org

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