

**Fordham Graduate School of Social Service**  
**The Children and Families Institute for Research, Support and Training (Children FIRST)**  
*in collaboration with the*  
**International Association of Outcome-Based Evaluation and Research in Family and  
Children Services (iaOBERfcs)**

***An International Perspective on the Mental Health Needs of  
Children and Adolescents in Care-  
Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research***

**Fordham University at Lincoln Center - September 20, 2006 – 9:00am to 5:30pm**

**Introduction to the Conference**

International experts from eight countries, together with leadership in child welfare and mental health services from New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, will be brought together to address the ongoing challenges for leaders and practitioners in the interface between mental health and child welfare.

Evidence shows that mental health needs of children and adolescents in the child welfare system are seldom met. This situation contributes to serious lifelong challenges for young people. In line with the President's 2003 New Freedom Commission's mandate for transforming mental health in America, the proposed meetings intend to advance the application of recent research in support of service integration and innovation.

Although progress is being made, families and children involved in the child welfare system largely experience mental health services as inaccessible and fragmented. Collaboration between child welfare and mental health providers with researchers and evaluators will significantly contribute new information, consultation and resources to advance more effective means for meeting the mental health needs of children and families locally and across the globe.

What is unique about this conference is that recent alumni studies from the United States, Ireland and Australia, of children in care will be presented. These will be followed by responses from mental health and child welfare commissioners addressing implications for policy and practice.

The afternoon session will provide participants two choices from 16 workshops presented by national and international leaders in the field. (See workshop descriptions below)

The national and international participants' publications will be available at The Fordham University Bookstore.

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**Welcome and Introduction to the Conference 9:00am**

*Father McShane*, President, Fordham University

*Peter Vaughan*, Dean, Graduate School of Social Service

*Anthony Maluccio and Tiziano Vecchiato*, Presidents of the International Association of Outcome-Based Evaluation and Research on Family and Children's Services

**Morning Session 9:15 – 1:00**

**Panel Presentation – 9:15-10:45 - *Child Welfare Alumni Speak***

Chaired by Anita Lightburn, Fordham University

Peter Pecora, Casey Family Programs, University of Washington, USA

Elizabeth Fernandez, University of New South Wales, Australia

Colette McCauley, Queens College, Belfast, Northern Ireland

**Coffee Break 10:45-11:00**

**Panel Session - 11:00-12:30 - *The Commissioners' Respond***

Chaired by Virginia Strand, Fordham University

Response to the Presentations by Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey and New York City and State Commissioners of Child Welfare and Mental Health Services

**Wrap-up - 12:30 -1:00**

Professor Jim Whittaker, University of Washington

**Lunch (Provided) 1:00 – 1:45**

**Afternoon Session 1:45 – 4:30- Attendees will choose 2 workshops**

Work shop sessions will be from 1:45 - 3:00, and 3:15 – 4:30, with a coffee break from 3:00-3:15

**Wine & Cheese Networking Reception – 4:30 – 5:30**

## Afternoon Conference Workshop Session

The second part of the conference will involve 16 workshops with leading national and international researchers. The workshop leaders will provide information on effective means and best practices for working with mental health issues in the child welfare system.

### **Workshops will include:**

- **Attention to early intervention – integrating mental health and child welfare for infants and young children in foster care.**  
In this presentation key model principles and strategies, grounded in cross-cultural research and literature on attachment in infant mental health will be illustrated, with examples from two intervention research projects that concern the child's first days in foster care and have implication for current and future well-being.  
Presenter: Maureen Marcenko, Ph.D. & Susan Kemp, Ph.D., University of Washington
  
- **Preparing the work force to understand the developing world of the child.** This workshop will introduce exciting new resources and applications from the latest research on child development. Materials such as a DVD, a learning guide, with a variety of training exercises, and a practice notebook, will be demonstrated for use as prompts in direct work with children and young people.  
Presenter: Wendy Rose, AIMS, Open University, U.K.
  
- **Developing competence out of chaos through family-based children's mental health services** – This workshop will present findings from the author's study of Pennsylvania's state-wide implementation of family-based children's mental health services for children with serious emotional and behaviour disturbances. Family-based services will be introduced through the program's logic model, including its theory base in structural and systemic family therapy.  
Presenter: Martha Dore, Ph.D., Guidance Center Inc., Cambridge, Mass.
  
- **Parent and youth empowerment training to increase access to mental health services.**  
Learn about the strategy and methods being implemented in New York City, Nassau County and Houston to improve the mental health functioning of youth in foster care by focusing on four related conditions that limit the functioning and development of youth in out-of-home care; and where there are well-formulated treatments: (1) *Depression*, (2) *Anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD)*, (3) *ADHD*, and (4) *Impulsive aggression*. This is a collaboration among Casey Family Programs, the Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health (CACMH) at Columbia University, Harvard Medical School, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Presenter: Peter Pecora, Ph.D., Casey Family Programs

- **Evidence-based parent mediated interventions for children involved with child welfare and mental health issues.**  
 Parenting interventions, shown to be effective in reducing conduct problems, are now being tried with child welfare populations. This workshop will review the evidence base for parent mediated interventions within child welfare settings. Promising models will be discussed addressing specific implementation issues.  
 Presenter: Richard Barth, Ph.D., University of Maryland
- **Juvenile offenders with co-morbid mental health problems: maintaining integrative systems.**  
 Interventions for this group of vulnerable young people will be presented with a focus on the scope of the problem and outcomes of different service models. Policy issues (e.g., screening, risk assessment, developing and maintaining integrative systems of care, referral to care and follow-up) with examples of recent practices and initiatives within Europe (in particular, Belgium and the Netherlands) will be discussed with issues of implementation and evaluation.  
 Presenter: Hans Grietens, Ph.D., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium
- **The special needs of adolescents with serious emotional and behavioural problems: intensive family preservation.**  
 Implications for policy and practice of the mental health needs of adolescents referred to intensive family preservation services (IFPS) in England, will be presented based on a quasi-experimental study, focusing on the mental health needs and outcomes of referred adolescents. Although many of the young people in the study had high levels of psychosocial needs, the principal focus of services was on preventing placement.  
 Presenter: Nina Biehal, Ph.D., University of York, England
- **Kinship care and child wellbeing: staff challenges.**  
 Presented in two parts, this workshop will tease out the commonalities from studies in England and Scotland on good practice in kinship care for children from different environments. The first part will focus on a British study of practitioners in collective enquiry. The second part will focus on some unique findings, in the voice of young people, from a study in Scotland on children and their caretakers, as well as surveying the policies and practices of 32 Scottish local authorities.  
 Presenters: Jane Aldgate, Ph.D., Open University, U.K. & Chris Warren-Adamson, M.S., University of South Hampton, U.K.

- **Responding to traumatized children and adolescents’ need for assessment and intervention.**

Findings from a study implementing standardized assessment measures for trauma at intake with children and adolescents will be presented. Results highlight the importance of developing sensitive trauma interventions and point to the significance of attending to the process involved in diffusion of innovation.

Presenters: Virginia Strand, D.S.W., Fordham University & Anthony Maluccio, D.S.W., University of Connecticut

- **Integrative family support programs – managing the child welfare/mental health interface.**

Drawing on case studies, these international presenters will report on the integrative nature of family support practice, which includes unpacking the black box of practice. Some key concepts that contribute to a theory of change and also challenge our conventional view of practice and program evaluation will be elaborated on, with implication for more effective ways to meet the mental health needs of children and families at risk.

Presenters: Chris Warren-Adamson, M.S., University of South Hampton, U.K., Marion Brandon, M.A., University of East Anglia, U.K., & Anita Lightburn, Ed.D. Fordham University.

- **Is ‘care’ part of the problem or part of the solution? A global perspective on children in and out of home care.**

Administrative data from 17 states in 10 ‘developed’ countries in North America, Australasia, and Europe prompt a discussion of how out-of-home care is used to help parents and children who suffer from mental illness or have emotional and/or behavioural problems. Explanations will be explored, in this workshop, for different rates in care, characteristics of the children, and placement and legal options used in different countries.

Presenter: June Thoburn, LittD. University of East Anglia, U.K.

- **Transforming the voluntary child mental health agency through the integration of evidence-based practices.**

This workshop describes a team effort to identify and implement a linked set of activities, designed to address the present “science-to-service” gap in evidence-based practice, from the perspective of the non-profit child mental health agency. “Lessons learned” include the potential for the service agency to be both consumer and generator of child mental health research; the potential for building agency-centered research capacity as both an integrative and transformative force and future implications for contributing high quality, science-based information to child mental health services, singly and through the future development of a national network of experimenting child mental health agencies.

Presenter: Jim Whittaker, Ph.D., University of Washington

- **Community-based system of care – mental health and child welfare rooted together in community: managing the interface**

This workshop will describe the opportunities and challenges faced by The Guidance Center, Inc. (GCI) in its effort to build an effective, integrated system of care within a fragmented funding system, while translating evidence-based innovation into tangible family-centered practice. This workshop will (1) review the agency's roots in community clinical practice, (2) analyze the development of a system of care through contracting with evolving mental health, child welfare and early childhood systems and (3) discuss the challenges of integrating "elements of care" to build a seamless continuum of family services.

Presenters: Susan Ayers, M.S.W., Executive Director & Borja Alvarez de Toledo, M.Ed., Director of Family Services Operations & Program Development, Guidance Center Inc., Cambridge, Mass.

- **Community rootedness and clinical sophistication – meeting child and family service needs.**

This workshop will discuss the research findings, programmatic and practice implications of an intensive study of the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park. The Center is an innovative, neighbourhood-based agency designed to preserve and support families over time. Recognized repeatedly for its exemplary service program, the Center integrates excellent clinical practice with multiple youth and community development initiatives.

Presenter: Brenda McGowen, D.S.W, Columbia University

- **Financial and wellbeing costs for looked after children: Converting research messages into practice.**

Developed by the presenter and a team of researchers, the Cost Calculator for Children's Services enables agencies to determine the costs of the placements and services provided to children in out of home care. Users can work out the short-, medium- and long-term costs of care for each child, for groups of children or for the population of looked after children. Summary and comparison reports can also be created. The workshop will include a demonstration of the Cost Calculator.

Presenter: Harriet Ward, Ph.D., Loughborough University, U.K.

- **Defining, classifying, and evaluating outcomes.**

The monitoring of social interventions is at the top of the European agenda. Results from outcome studies have not been convincing because there isn't a classifying system able to observe and compare the interventions delivered to people. A strategy for monitoring and evaluating interventions that overcomes difficulties and facilitates solutions is offered in the workshop. This method is useful for outcome based evaluation in single cases and for comparing results obtained from different services and agencies.

Presenters: Tiziano Vecchiato, Ph.D., & Cinzia Canali, Ph.D., Fondazione "E. Zancan", Padova, Italy

- **Family support and community-based practice – methods of evaluation.**

Community-based programs are often aimed at supporting families with children of suspect neglect and/or abuse. Goals of these programs are to improve parenting skills and to provide children with a safe environment. This workshop will present findings from research in Australia and Israel representing useful strategies in evaluating program goals, their difficulties and advantages.

Presenters: Anat Zeira, Ph.D., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel & Patricia McNamara Ph.D., Latrobe University, Australia.