Real Cases Project:
Social Welfare Programs and Policies

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INTRODUCTION

A. Overview of Course Sequence within Social Work Curriculum

Social welfare and social policies are integral components of the social work curriculum at both the BSW and MSW level. Although there is no universal manner to divide this subject matter, it is typically divided into two courses.

In general, the first Social Welfare Programs and Policies course provides students with a historical perspective of the social work profession, social welfare institutions, child welfare, and the formation of social work values. It also serves to enhance understanding about the ways social workers can engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well being and deliver effective services. Commonly, the subsequent Social Welfare Programs and Policies course emphasizes advanced concepts in social policy, and the role of social movements in identifying and responding to social issues. Students are also taught advanced aspects of policy development and analysis.

This guide may be used if the first Social Welfare Programs and Policies course is part of the foundation curriculum and the second is housed in the advanced curriculum of a school of social welfare. However, if this arrangement of courses differs in individual schools, this guide can be easily adapted.

The guide is in keeping with the Council on Social Work Education Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards-2009 that outline the following as the scope of content for policy practice course work offered in accredited schools of social work:
Educational Policy 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

<u>*Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being; and collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.*</u>
(.http://www.cswe.org/NR/rdonlyres/2A81732E-1776-4175-AC42-65974E96BE66/0/2008EducationalPolicyandAccreditationStandards.pdf)

This guide may be most effective when introduced after students are engaged in their practicum assignments since it is highly likely that irrespective of fields of practice of placement agencies, most will have some involvement with cases known to a child welfare agency. For advanced concentration students, the guide may be used at the discretion of the instructor since content focuses on the process of policy formulation and skills for policy analysis, which is the thrust of the second semester course within most schools of social work.

B. Relevance of the Case Studies to this Course Sequence

These study cases are taken from the archived records of the Child Stat Program of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), the city agency with the legal mandate to protect and safeguard the welfare of New York City's dependent, abused, and neglected children.

All three cases are relevant to the Social Welfare Programs and Policies courses as they provide great insight to the importance of advocacy and the role of policy in service delivery. It is hoped that students will take the broader concepts of social programs and policies (i.e. the helper and investigator role, residual and institutional welfare, permanency planning, and policy analysis) and apply them to the three specific case examples.

All three cases used for this guide have come to the attention of ACS since 2001. Two of the cases (Anne M. and Mary S) were first investigated in 2007. While child welfare services have gone through many policy changes over the past 20 years, the policies that govern the investigation and determination of the three cases being studied here were most heavily influenced by the Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1996. This act endeavored to strengthen prevention and permanency planning services for families, and gave states new authority to expedite the movement of children out of foster care into permanent homes and in some situations made the process of termination of parental rights less cumbersome. Three primary directives from the Adoption and Safe Families Act have provided the framework for all of child welfare services; child safety, child permanence and child well-being.

Current reforms underway in New York City support a neighborhood-based model of care with a vision of child protection as the responsibility of the entire community and supported by a family-focused neighborhood-based system of care that endeavors to keep children safe in their own homes and communities.

Note to instructors: *Since the study cases focus primarily on the protective/investigatory role of public child welfare, it may be useful to use guest lecturers such as ACS workers who are knowledgeable about legal mandates to present a more comprehensive view of the range of services provided by the agency.*

C. Specific Learning Objectives Related to Using these Cases in this Course Sequence

The learning objectives in this social welfare programs and policy curriculum guide are tied to the learning objectives of the study of social welfare policy. As stated earlier, a common way to divide the course material is to have the first course concentrate on foundation material and the second course concentrate on more advanced topics. The learning objectives related to using these case studies are as follows:

Foundation material:
- Introduce child welfare as a specialized field of social work practice.
- Increase knowledge about the history and current structures of child welfare policy, services, and practices.
- Increase knowledge of policy development and analysis in child welfare.
- Enhance understanding of the legal framework of child welfare services, the role of the judiciary and legislature in child welfare policy formulation process.
- Increase knowledge about the role of practice in policy development in child welfare.
- Enhance understanding of the larger policy context within which child welfare services developed in the United States and the ways social workers can engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well being and deliver effective services.

Advanced material:
- Analyze current policies within the context of historical and contemporary factors.
- Support an understanding of the intent and goals of contemporary child welfare policy development.
- Support skills for analyzing competing values underlying child welfare policy development and assessing policy impact and goal achievement.
- Encourage a willingness to advocate social and economic just policies that are in the best interest of all children and families.

D. Overview of this Teaching Guide

This teaching guide addresses professional foundation issues and introduces students to child welfare as a field of social work practice; examines the historical foundation of American child welfare services and residual influences on contemporary policy and practice, and the implications of residual approaches for constraining services and program development for children and families. This guide also builds on this content and examines the legal framework of child welfare services; the underlying values and

intents of contemporary child welfare policy, and supports analytical skills for assessing child welfare policy impact and goal achievement.

This teaching guide gives consideration to the implications of poverty, culture, race, discrimination, oppression, and inequality in the development of child welfare services; identifies opportunities for the integration of content from other curricula areas; and endeavors to strengthen critical thinking skills that are essential for effective social work practice in child welfare settings.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

A. Strategy One: Child Welfare as Social Work Practice

1. Areas of the case to be highlighted:
This strategy focuses on child welfare as a field of social work practice and common issues that are found. It also focuses on the legal framework on the child welfare system. In the case of Andrea R., mental illness and the policies surrounding mental illness will be discussed. Domestic violence is the issue at hand for Anne M's case. This strategy also explores the worker's role as both helper and investigator in the each of the three cases.

2. Structure:
This strategy may be integrated within the first four weeks of class, in course content that presents information about the organizational structure of the institution of child welfare and the unique role of social work among the many helping professions and occupational groups employed in the field of social welfare. This teaching strategy may also be used when addressing content related to the role of the legislature and judiciary in the policy formulation process.

3. Teaching methods/activities: Lecture and class discussion
a. Suggested lecture content:
Social work has high visibility among the many helping professions present in the field of social welfare, sometimes referred to as the Health and Human Services. Social work has historically been the anchor profession in the field of child welfare and is the acknowledged discipline with the professional competencies needed for effective child welfare practice.

The National Association of Social Workers defines social work as involving:
> …*Professional activities of helping individuals groups and communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goals.*

> *Social work practice consists of the professional application of social work values, principles, and techniques to one or more of the following ends: helping people obtain tangible services, providing counseling and psychotherapy to individuals, families and groups, helping communities and groups provide or improve social and health services, and participating in relevant legislative processes*
>
> *The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior, of social, economic and cultural institutions and of the interaction of all of these factors.*
> (http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp)

A growing number of social workers are opting to work in independent private practice. The largest share of social workers, however, continues to be engaged in agency-based practice. Social welfare agencies employing professionally trained social workers are typically organized to help people who experience the effects of a specific social problem. School social workers assist in the resolution of problems that interfere with the educational process; medical social workers help with the resolution of problems associated with physical illness, and social workers practicing in the criminal justice system help in the resolution of problems that arise from interaction with the legal system.

Child welfare as a field of practice is concerned with the social problem of child abuse and neglect and problems that arise in relationships between parents and children. In the ideal, this field of practice should encompass all of the activities engaged in by society that protect the welfare of children and promote their most optimum level of development. American child welfare services, to the contrary, have evolved as a narrow set of services that are offered to children only after they have been hurt or at risk of abuse and neglect, and when their families have been found to be failing in the parental role. Child welfare services are strictly defined in federal and state legislation; carried out in close collaboration with the Family Court System and organized along a continuum of care that encompasses: child protective services, preventive services, substitute family care, and adoption.

Social workers practicing in child welfare settings need generic knowledge and skills combined with specialized knowledge, expertise, and techniques for assisting families to resolve problems that contribute to family dysfunction and jeopardize the safety and well being of dependent children. In addition, workers must be knowledgeable about child welfare policies and procedures as these are defined by the New York State Family Court Act, the New York State Social Services Law and the Administration for Children's Services administrative and operational procedures.

Among their varied responsibilities in carrying out professional responsibilities in the field of child welfare, social workers endeavor to improve

interpersonal deficiencies within family relationships and those resulting from deficiencies in community resources. Child welfare practice embodies the concept of *parens patraie* wherein, by virtue of the dependent status, the state is seen as the parent of last resort for all children when parents are unwilling or unable to fulfill child caring responsibilities.

Child welfare practitioners have a responsibility for assisting families in the resolution of problems internal to the family system, and for those external to the family resulting from institutional resource deficiencies that prevent parents from meeting material and emotional needs of children. Using the case studies as examples, situations like unstable mental illness (Andrea R.), physical abuse (Mary S.), domestic violence (Anne M.), demonstrate the interplay of individual, family, and community resources.

Early in United States history, children had no rights and were considered the property of their parents, who were free to do whatever they so chose to do in their efforts to rear children to be self-sufficient God-fearing citizens. Gradually, as more was learned about the importance of the period of childhood for future adult development, the absolute power and authority given to parents began to give way to a balancing of the rights of children and parents with parental authority ultimately being defined as encompassing both rights and obligations. Parental authority was no longer exercised in domination of the child, but viewed as a sacred trust invested in the parent to be exercised in the best interest of the child.

This changed ideology and recognition that children had rights separate from those of their parents, paved the way for the state to intervene in the special relationship that exists between parent and child, and led to the development of child welfare legislation and networks of agencies and services to protect and safeguard the well being of children. Child welfare services in the United States exist as a result of various state and federal laws authorizing and funding the operation of these programs. These laws outline the parameters of child welfare practice and define what child welfare organizations and workers, in their role of agents for these agencies, can and cannot do with families.

The legal framework for child welfare services consists of the following primary legislation: the 1974 Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act; the 1980 Adoptions Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act, the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act, the 1994 Multiethnic Placement Act, the 1997 Adoptions and Safe Families Act, and the 1996 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which articulates permanency planning requirements and calls for prevention and family preservation.

These laws define the boundaries and parameters of child welfare practice. The various provisions and mandates of these laws reflect the competing values inherent to child welfare practice related to the obligation and duty of the state to

protect and safeguard the welfare of dependent children, and the right of parents to raise their children to their own values and belief without governmental interference. Child welfare workers often are conflicted as they endeavor to integrate the expectations of their *investigative role with their role as helpers of parents* whose behaviors are often the cause and source of the distress of their children. In addition, these competing values and conflicts pose ethical and practice dilemmas for child welfare workers functioning under the residual influences of poor law traditions that require parents to be fit and deserving of the right to raise their children.

b. Class assignment:
Balancing the rights of children with those of parents, while at the same time acting as representative of the state for children who have been placed in protective custody can be daunting task for child welfare practitioners posing many dilemmas as workers endeavor to protect children and preserve families.

In a group setting, review the New York State Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Procedures. Ask students:
- What are the possible explanations of why the allegations in each report were treated separately and adjudicated as a discrete event in the family's history of involvement with the child welfare system?
- Review each case individually and brainstorm other questions that you would investigate and why

c. Class discussion:
It appears that case practice with the families in these case studies families focused predominantly on interpersonal problems that contributed to the failure of the children's parents or caretakers to successfully carry out the parenting roles. Yet contemporary child welfare practice recognizes that in complex modern societies all families are in need of a wide range of community support services to meet normative needs of children. This recognition validates a broad based approach to practice and advocacy as a legitimate role for the social workers practicing in the field of child welfare.
Facilitate a group discussion and ask:
- What are some larger systemic, institutional failures that may have contributed to Anne M., Mary S., and Andrea R. being at increased risk for experiencing the effects of social problems identified in the cases?
- Do you believe that these failures contributed to the forms of neglect identified in the CPS reports?
- How could the CPS worker work to repair or mend the failures that these families have faced?

4. Materials needed: None

5. Suggested readings:
Bernstein, N. (2001). *The lost children of wilder: the epic struggle to change foster care.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. (2008) Retrieved February 1, 2009, from http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp

Denby, R.W., Alford, K.A. & Curtis, C.M. (2003). Targeting special populations for family preservation: the influence of worker competency and organizational culture. *Family Preservation Journal, 7,* 19-41.

Parent, M. (1998). *Turning stones: my days and nights with children at risk.* New York: The Ballantine Publishing Group.

Pecora, P. J. Whittaker, J.K., Maluccio, A.N. & Barth, R.P. (2000). *The Child Welfare Challenge: Policy, Practice and Research.* New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

6. Evaluation:
Schools have different strategies for examinations and assignments. In the case that the instructor has discretion he or she could add a question related to this content to the examination. If this is not possible, this material could be reviewed at the end of the semester to evaluate the extent to which students understand its content.
Some possible evaluation questions are:
- How were children perceived in the 19th century?
- The Adoptions and Safe Families Act (1997) is a part of the legal framework of child welfare services. What are the major tenants of this act and how does it affect child welfare?
- Child welfare practitioners have a responsibility for assisting families in the resolution of problems internal to the family system, and for those external to the family resulting from institutional resource deficiencies that prevent parents from meeting material and emotional needs of children. What are some resources that social workers can utilize to assist the family system?

B. Strategy Two: The Historical Foundation of Child Welfare Services

1. Areas of the case to be highlighted:
This strategy highlights the history of child welfare services and references the case studies in relation to this history. This strategy also highlights an evaluation of the social problems that increase risk for child abuse and neglect and disparities in health, educational, and social outcomes, as they relate to each of the three families.

2. Structure:
This teaching strategy may be used in companion with course content supporting an understanding of the residual and institutional perspectives on the role of social welfare and how these have shaped social welfare policy development in the United States.

3. Teaching methods/activities:

a. Suggested lecture content:
American social welfare policy has its most significant identification with the Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1601. In child welfare, this Old World heritage established the practice of "rescue and punishment" based in residual assumptions about the worthiness of poor parents to be entrusted with the task of bringing up the next generation. These and other principles like that of "less eligibility", which requires that the situation of the dependent poor who are supported at the public expense must be worse than that of the lowest paid gainfully employed worker, fostered the development of an inadequate system of care that favored practices of apprenticeship and farming out of poor children as a means for rescuing them from the influence of inadequate parents and preventing the intergenerational transmission of dependency.

This orientation served as the foundation for the development of child welfare services in the United States. This view continued to hold sway well into the 19th century that saw the beginning development of public systems of care for dependent children. For example, early reformers, like Josephine Shaw Lowell, a key player in the New York City Charity Organization Society, supported the position that the honest laborer should not see the children of drunkards enjoy advantages that he could not hope for his own. Charles Loring Brace, considered the founder of the modern foster care movement and the most important child saver of his era, transported hundreds of children of poor white ethnic immigrants to the mid west where they were placed in homes to learn the values of hard work, industry and self reliance.

Children of color were excluded from Brace's great social experiment and early forms of care. In addition to strong self-help traditions within the African American community, separate facilities were developed for Black children like the Colored Orphan Asylum, founded by two Quaker women in 1836 as the sole alternative for care in the public almshouse. With the ending of legal segregation children of color would be drawn into a system enmeshed in residualist traditions, which also evolved to mirror the racism and discrimination and devaluation of their cultural experiences of the larger society. Today African American and other poor children of color are overrepresented at all levels of the child welfare system.

The residual approach, a by product of Social Darwinism, laissez-faire economic philosophy and capitalistic ideals favoring limited governmental intervention in the

lives of families, has had great staying power in the United States. Consequently, the removal of children from there own homes continued as a preferred child welfare intervention until well into the 20th century until the passage of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980. Importantly, despite nearly two decades of reform legislation the child welfare system continues to be troubled by residual influences from the past.

As noted in the preceding module social welfare policies and programs do not evolve in a vacuum but reflect the traditions, values, and norms of the host society. Child welfare services in the United States are rooted in a residual perspective, and have evolved as a highly specialized field of practice designed for children whose parents are unable or unwillingly to care for them in a manner consistent with prevailing child-rearing norms. An alternative approach to policy development of children and families, on the other hand, would ascribe to the provision of a comprehensive array of easily accessible family support services that meet the normative everyday needs of all families.

Although child welfare services continue to be defined as highly specialized systems of care, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980 broadens the scope of these services to include public services directed towards the accomplishment of the following purposes:
- protecting and promoting the welfare of all children including handicapped, homeless, dependent and neglected children;
- preventing or remedying or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation or delinquency of children;
- preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems, assisting families in resolving their problems;
- preventing break-up of the family where the prevention of child removal is desirable and possible;
- restoring to their families children who have been removed, by the provision of services to the child and the families;
- placing children in suitable adoptive homes, in cases where preservation to the biological family is not possible or appropriate;
- assuring adequate care of children away from their homes, in cases where the child cannot be returned home or placed for adoption.

The Andrea R. case study highlights the detrimental effects of a residual approach to service development for exacerbating the stresses experienced by families. For example, we learn from the case narrative that Andrea R. is receiving public assistance and food stamps. Both of these are programs based in a residual model, requiring families to meet stringent eligibility standards and legal definitions of poverty. These programs are stigmatizing, inadequate and recipients of these services are required to report periodically for re-certification of continuing eligibility status. Public assistance programs have been criticized for ambiguously endeavoring to help children by changing the behaviors of

parents believed to be the cause of the problems as opposed to ensuring that parents have adequate material resources to adequately care for children.

b. Video and class discussion: Supporting critical thinking skills:
The Orphan Trains video makes an effective use of narratives to illuminate the personal impact of policy that shape practice interventions.

Lead the class in a discussion about the Orphan Trains video:
- Ask students what stands out for them as the men and women recall their early childhood experiences as participants on the orphan trains and in the new foster homes. Is there one personal story that has special meaning for you?

c. Class discussion/assignment:
The situation of children of color who are overrepresented in the child welfare system today in many aspects is similar to that of white ethnic immigrant children of the 1800's who were removed from their own homes because their parents were too poor to care for them. Similarly, contemporary approaches anchored in a neighborhood based approach mirror efforts of the early Settlement House workers who saw that problems experienced by families were, in most cases, a problem of urban decay and failing community infrastructures.

- Break class into small discussion groups. Discuss policy changes that may be needed to ensure the success of these new neighborhood based approaches in the context of contemporary social problems prevalent in poor, underserved communities of today. Compare and discuss the groups answers.

d. Class discussion/assignment:
Although the preponderance of families served by the child welfare system are poor families of color, child abuse and neglect is not solely a problem of the minority poor. Children living in poverty are more likely to come to the attention of the child welfare system, not only because of what we know to be biases in reporting, but because they are more likely to be impacted by social problems that increase risk for child abuse and neglect and disparities in health, educational, and social outcomes, as is the case with the Andrea R. family.

- Ask students to identify the risk factors resulting from poverty that are observed in the Andrea R. case that seem beyond the control of the family. What services might be put in place to mitigate the effects of these on child safety and family well being?

4. Materials needed:
Video: Graham, J. (Producer/Director), & Gray, E. (Producer/Director). (1995). American experience: *The orphan trains* [Motion picture]. Alexandria, VA: PBS Home Video.

The Family Preservation Program: Removing risk from children. NYC Administration for Children's Services

5. Suggested readings:
Carten, A.J. & Dumpson, J.R. (2004). Family preservation and neighborhood base services: An Africentric perspective. In Everett, J. E., Chipungu, S.P & Leashore, B.R. (Eds), *Child welfare revisited: An Africentric perspective* (pp. 225-242). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Hill, R.B. (2004). Institutional racism in child welfare. In Everett, J. E., Chipungu, S.P & Leashore, B.R. (Eds), *Child welfare revisited: An Africentric perspective* (pp. 57-77). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Karger, H.J. & Stoesz, D. (2005). *American social welfare policy: A pluralistic approach*. New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon. (Chapter 15, Child Welfare Policy).

McSherry, D. (2004). "Which came first, the chicken or the egg? Examining the relationship between child neglect and poverty. *The British Journal of Social Work, 34*(5), 727-733.

Samantrai, K. (2004). *Culturally competent public child welfare practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson Brooks Cole.

Trattner, W.I. (1999). *From poor law to welfare state: A history of social welfare in America*. Sixth Edition. (Chapter 6, Child Welfare). New York: The Free Press.

6. Evaluation:
Assignments or questions that could be used for evaluative purposes are:

- Unlike other industrialized countries, the United States does not have a national family policy. Students are asked to find a country that has a national policy on families in place. See for example, the Scandinavian countries, Japan, France and Israel. Compare child poverty rates and other indicators of child and family well being outcomes in this country and the United States. Consider what accounts for these differences? What national values influence policy development in the US and the comparison country?
- Assume that you are the worker who is assigned the Mary S. case at the time of the SCR report when Jason is allegedly physically abused and threatened by his maternal grandmother/legal guardian. Although the family seems to be stabilized or at least not in crisis, what plan of action would you take with the family at this time?
- What are some residual and institutional concepts of social welfare that can be of assistance to cases of Andrea R., Anne M., and Mary S.?

C. Strategy Three: The Purpose and Goals of Contemporary Child Welfare Policy Development

1. Areas of cases to be highlighted:

This strategy focuses on permanence planning and how it relates to the three families. The impact of policy on practice will also be discussed. This strategy also looks at the three cases in their entirety to evaluate how changes in policies could have affected the outcome of the cases.

2. Structure:

This strategy should be utilized towards the end of the semester, allowing for students to clearly understand and be able to apply concepts from various analytical models covered in the class and to conduct an analysis of policy development in the field of child welfare generally or an analysis of one specific policy.

This teaching strategy may be used to assist students as they apply concepts from various analytical models covered in the class to conduct an analysis of policy development in the field of child welfare generally or an analysis of one specific policy identified in Teaching Strategy 1: Child Welfare as Social Work Practice.

3. Teaching methods/activities:
a. Suggested lecture content:

The First White House Conference on Children held in 1909 established the principal that no child should be deprived of a home life but for urgent and compelling reasons and never for the reasons of poverty alone. Although this principal has not been fully integrated in child welfare policy development in the early years of program and service development, since the passage of the Adoptions Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980 child welfare policy has been firmly rooted in the principal of permanency planning, or the child's basic right to stability in a home, preferably their biological family.

Child welfare legislation requires that permanency planning is central to the service plan developed for each child. In an effort to correct past practices that resulted in the unnecessary removal of children from their own homes, permanency planning assumes that the birth family is essential to the care and rearing of children, since it is here that the child's first attachments are formed and primary sense of belonging is first established.

Translated into practice, permanency planning, as mandated under-requirements of the Adoptions Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980 and Safe Families Act of 1996 requires the use of case practices that help a child live in a home where caring lifetime relationships are established; the development of a comprehensive service plan developed and delivered in a way that helps secure such a home on behalf of children, and service delivery strategies that help

children live with families that offer continuity of relationships with nurturing parents or substitute caretakers and the opportunity to establish lifetime relationships.

In addition to strengthening permanency planning provisions of the 1980 Act, the Adoptions and Safe Families Act builds in a process of review of the performance of states in the development and implementation of performance standards. Beginning in 2001 the federal government began conducting Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) that focus on outcomes of child safety, permanency, and child and family well being. The case of Mary S. is a good example of deciding permanency and weighing what is in the best interest of the child.

Social workers are eclectic in their approach to practice, drawing on many theories to help understand and explain causal relationships in presenting problems of clients and to support the development of effective interventions. Social workers may also be eclectic in the choice of analytical models to evaluate the effectiveness of social policies and programs in solving and ameliorating the social problem that were designed to treat.

The analysis of child welfare policy may be conducted as (1) process, or the consideration of the social, economic and political forces shaping the process of policy formulation over time; (2) performance, or the success of various policies in achieving stated policy goals; and as (3) product, in the examination of how the social problem is being defined, and underlying assumptions about problem causal relationships, and value preferences as reflected in problem solving strategies.

Students may also have the option of conducting an analysis of factors contributing to the outcomes of the study cases and presenting recommendations for alternative approaches that may have changed the final outcome of each of the cases. Students may be given an opportunity to present their work in class discussions.

b. Class discussion/assignment:
Case decision making in the Andrea R. case study was firmly grounded in permanency planning principles. Despite five SCR reports, Vincent remained in the care of his mother although there was limited evidence of significant changes in the family's situation to suggest that his mother was able to provide a safe and nurturing home environment for him.

Lead a group discussion in permanency planning.
- Ask students to consider what conditions should exist that would suggest that efforts to maintain permanency with birth families is not in the best interest of the child.

- In the Andrea R. case, were there alternatives that may have preserved family ties while ensuring Vincent experiences that promoted healthy psychosocial growth and development?

4. Materials needed: None

5. Suggested readings:
Chambers, D. E. & Wedel. K. R. (2005). Social policy and social programs: A method for the practical public policy analyst. New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon. (Chapter 10, "An example of social policy and social program analysis: Selected features of federal child welfare legislation of the 1970-1998 era concerned with child abuse").

Finn, J. L. & Jacobson, M. (2003). Just practice: Steps towards a new social work paradigm. *Journal of Social Work Education, 39*(1), 57-79.

Hu, T., Snowden, L.R., Jerrell, J.M. & Nguyen, T.D. (1991). Ethnic populations in public mental health: Service choices and level of use. *American Journal of Public Health, 18*(11), 1429-1434.

Phillips, N. K, & Straussner, S. L. A. (2002). *Urban social work: An introduction to policy and practice in the cities.* New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon. (Chapter 10, Knowledge for social work practice: Diversity of urban populations.")

Mechanic, D. (1989). *Mental health and social policy* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs: NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Mental health: culture, race and ethnicity, a supplement to mental health: A report to the Surgeon General. (2001). Retrieved on February 1, 2009 from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/bv.fcgi?rid=hstat5.chapter.971

6. Evaluation:
Students to write an essay on the following:
- Social welfare policies can have both intended and unintended consequences for clients. In a retrospective view of the situation of the three families throughout the history of each of the cases, what can be identified as the impact of policy reforms? Consider those believed to have a positive or negative impact on services outcome for this family, as well as unintended negative consequences.

CONCLUSION

A. Recap

This teaching guide helps to introduce students to child welfare as a field of social work practice, examines the historical foundation of American child welfare services and residual influences on contemporary policy and practice, and the implications of residual approaches for constraining services and program development for children and families. In addition, students are encouraged to examine the legal framework of child welfare services and the underlying values and intents of contemporary child welfare policy. The three case studies can be utilized to help teach students analytical skills for assessing the impact of child welfare policy by strengthening critical thinking skills that are essential for effective social work practice in child welfare settings.

B. Suggestions for Future Courses: Integrating Cross Curriculum Content

1. Practice:
New York City communities with the highest rates of CPS reports are also communities where social problems of poverty, unemployment, and substandard housing are prevalent. Social work's person in the environment approach is anchored in systems theory and the ecological perspective affirming the interrelatedness of individuals, families and communities to larger social systems. This perspective posits that people can neither be understood nor helped in absence of an understanding of the various systems within which they interact. This conceptual approach has a practical application in the development of intervention and service plans that match services to the expressed needs of families. Each of the three families presented with multiple service needs, yet the primary services offered were substance abuse treatment services for the mother. In future courses students could be asked to identify other social welfare services and programs that may have been integrated into the service plan for the family.

Families seen by child welfare system are characteristically receiving services from multiple agencies as is the case with each of the three families. Case management is an effective practice tool for ensuring that at-risk families are engaged in continuous and coordinated systems of care with service providers collaborating to ensure the achievement of agreed upon goals established in consultation with families. Explore the ways in which case management may have been used to improve service delivery and outcomes for each of the three families.

2. Human Behavior in the Social Environment:
The Supplement to the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, identifies children in foster care as a population with complex mental health needs, and underserved by the mental health system. Students can be asked to speculate on each child's mental health status and the possible outcomes of the case studies. Students are asked to identify theories that support their conclusions or hypotheses.

The study cases offer scant information that helps us to understand the problems and needs of the family. What missing data is needed to assist in the conducting and development of comprehensive assessment and service plan for the families? What theories may be drawn on to inform hypotheses in the assessment, and the development of a plan of intervention that mitigates the effect of poverty on Alex' development as he matures from early infancy to adolescence.

3. Research:
Pose qualitative and quantitative research questions useful for the design of research studies to contribute to an expanded knowledge base for the provision of mental health services to children and families in need of child welfare services.

Child welfare policy advancement and practice innovations are increasingly supporting policy evidenced-based research. There are a number of seminal research studies that have supported child welfare policy development. For example, the Kempe study conducted in 1962 introduced the term "battered child syndrome" and presented child abuse as an under-reported medical psychiatric problem prevalent among middle and upper income groups. The study led to the enactment of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act 0f 1974 that established the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect as a national entity for the administration of grants to states to conduct research into the causes of child abuse and neglect, its prevalence and ways to prevent it. Mass and Engler (1959) identified what was to become known as "foster care drift", which referred to children being unnecessarily removed from their families and left to linger in foster care until they reached their maturity. Findings from this study were supported by other seminal studies conducted by Fanshel and Shinn (1978) and Mott (1975) paved the way for permanency planning reform and the landmark Adoptions Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980. Billingsley & Giovannoni (1972) conducted an historical analysis of the experience of African American children in the child welfare system pioneered in the subsequent proliferation of literature in culturally competent cross cultural child welfare practice.