Governor Rendell signed HB 2338 – The Children in Foster Care Act – establishing a bill of rights for children in foster care. Pennsylvania now joins only a handful of states that have a “bill of rights” in statute for children in foster care. The act will ensure that all children (and their caregivers) are informed about basic protections and requirements of their care.

_We want to thank everyone who helped advance this important legislation – your voices were heard!_

Rep. Phyllis Mundy (D-Luzerne) sponsored HB 2338 to compile Pennsylvania’s laws and regulations – scattered among statutes, regulations and policy bulletins – into a single document that can be easily understood by those involved in the foster care system. The law takes a significant step to improve the consistent provision of services across Pennsylvania’s 67 counties.

Information will now be shared with every child in foster care and with caregiver and birth parent so all parties know that children have the right to contact their attorneys or guardian ad litems, get notice of court hearings, have education stability, access necessary health services, consent to medical and mental health treatment consistent with current law, participate in religious observances, visit and have contact with family, and more. These “rights” are required to be listed on the child’s grievance procedure form. This way the child understands their rights along with who they can contact when they need assistance.

Todd E. Lloyd, MSW
Child Welfare Director
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
116 Pine Street, Suite 430
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1244
The Need

At the center of Pennsylvania’s foster care system are children. Surrounding the children are numerous supporting players – including birth parents, caseworkers, resource parents, private providers, judges, courts and others – all devoted to serving the best interests of children. With more than 31,000 young people served annually in Pennsylvania’s county-administered foster care system, it’s critical that the children and those who are responsible for their care are provided with clear and accurate information on what children are to be provided while they are in foster care.

Ensuring that children, birth and resource families and other providers are informed of the legal requirements for children in foster care will help eliminate confusion and improve the transparency and consistency of care and services for Pennsylvania’s most vulnerable population.

For children….

- While children in foster care are some of the most vulnerable members of our communities, they can also be their own best advocate if they have a full understanding of the system. When government and private agencies are entrusted with their care, it is critical that every effort be made to assure their safety and well-being including taking steps to fully inform children and youth.

For caregivers...

- Resource parents and congregate providers have the tremendous responsibility for the care of children who are in the legal and physical custody of county government. Assuring that all caregivers understand what children are to be provided with while they are in foster care will help improve consistency of services and support.

For birth parents….

- Helping birth parents understand what services and supports are available to their children while they are in foster care provides them peace of mind and helps parents continue to support their children when their children are removed from their care.

For Pennsylvania...

- Improved understanding, efficiency and consistency in practice and services among the 67 different county administered child welfare systems and more than 200 private providers caring for Pennsylvania’s children in foster care.

Where are we Now?

Requirements for children in foster care are scattered throughout various state laws and regulations. A 2002 Joint State Government Commission report concluded that, “access to services needed by children and families is restrictive and confusing and often poorly coordinated.”

Continued on page 3
Recommendations

House Bill 2338 would codify existing state statute and regulations to ensure that children are provided with, among other things:

1. The ability to contact their attorney or guardian ad litem;
2. Notice of their court hearings and the opportunity to be heard;
3. Education stability consistent with the law;
4. Opportunity to develop job and life skills;
5. First consideration for placement with relatives if it is in the child’s best interest;
6. Consideration of any previous resource family as a preferred placement resource if relative and kinship resources are unavailable;
7. Permission to visit and have contact with family consistent with the family service plan and a permanency plan;
8. Access to necessary health services;
9. Consent to medical and mental health treatment consistent with current state regulations;
10. The ability to live in the least restrictive, most family-like setting that is safe, healthy, comfortable and meets the child’s needs;
11. Freedom from harassment, corporal punishment, unreasonable restraint and physical, sexual, emotional and other abuse;
12. Clothing that is clean, seasonal and age and gender appropriate;
13. Permission to participate in religious observances of the child’s preference;
14. A permanency and transition plan that is developed with the child and addresses the child’s need for safety, permanency and well-being;
15. Notification that youth may request to remain under the court’s jurisdiction after age 18 in certain circumstances;
16. A copy of the county or private agency’s grievance policy and procedure; and
17. Ability to file a grievance related to any provisions of the act.

The bill does not establish a private cause of action for violation of any of its provisions.

In order to remain active as a Consultant or Trainer with the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 6 hours of professional development need to be completed for each fiscal year. July 1, 2010 began a new fiscal year. Please remember to complete your Professional Development Hours by June 30, 2011.
HOLIDAY INVOICE PROCESSING

Just a reminder that the University of Pittsburgh is closed for the holidays from Friday December 24, 2010 through Monday January 3, 2011. The Training Program is recommending that you return all end-of-year training invoices as quickly as possible so that processing is not delayed due to the holiday break.

Signed invoices are returned with your training box materials at the completion of your training. The boxes are opened by staff at the Training Program on a daily basis and signed by the Training Specialist who scheduled your training. Please be advised that the invoices are not signed or processed until all training materials have been returned. Once all of the materials have been received, the signed invoice is sent to the Training Program Fiscal Specialist. The Fiscal Specialist then sends the invoice to the University of Pittsburgh who disperses your payment. The Fiscal Specialist sends all signed invoices to the University every Tuesday. Payments should be received by you six weeks after your training materials have been returned.

NEW TRAININGS OFFERED

Family Finding Training:

The Training Program, in conjunction with the Office of Children, Youth and Families and the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, is proud to offer a training regarding the Commonwealth's interpretation of Kevin Campbell's six-step Family Finding model. The Family Finding model offers methods and strategies to locate and engage relatives of children and to provide each child with the lifelong connections that only a family can offer. When used in conjunction with existing case practice techniques, the model not only has implications for finding family members when the child is in out-of-home care but will also prove useful when seeking family to support the child’s caregivers, and in turn the child, when the child is still in the home. The entire series is 24 hours – consisting of five modules with several options for delivery – and is eligible for 24 continuing education credits.

Achieving Positive Educational Outcomes (AKA the Education Screen Training):

The Training Program is proud to offer a training that serves as an introduction for child welfare professionals to the state-sanctioned Child Welfare Professional's General and Special Education/Disability Accommodation Screen and its related guidance. This screen stems from the Child and Family Services Review and serves as a means to help guide child welfare professionals in striving to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in Pennsylvania. This training has been rolled out using a county lead model similar to that of the Safety Assessment and Management Process. County Education Liaisons were identified and received training surrounding the Child Welfare Professional’s General and Special Education/Disability Accommodation Screen and its related guidance. County Education Liaisons have been tasked with training staff at their agency within the next year.
SAVE THE DATES

2011 DIVERSITY TASKFORCE SPRING EVENT

Mark your calendars for the Diversity Taskforce Regional Spring Events. Watch for details in an upcoming edition of the Consultant and Trainer Palette.

Central Region
April 7, 2011
The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program

Northeast Region
March 31, 2011
Mayfield Training Room

Southeast Region
April 14, 2011
Montgomery County Training Room

Western Region
April 28, 2011
Monroeville Training Room

Philadelphia
May 5, 2011
Temple University—Center City Campus

NEW SOUTHEAST TRAINING ROOM

After much anticipation, we have relocated our Montgomery County training room. The new training room is still located at 1430 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA 19404 on the 1st floor. The new training room number is 1164, please follow the training room signs throughout the building or by stopping by the security desk for directions.

We hope that you will be happy with the new training room. All trainings scheduled to take place in the previous Montgomery County Room will take place in our new room location beginning immediately. Please contact Southeast and Philadelphia Region Training Specialist, Jessica Shiffler, at ims137@pitt.edu, for further questions or concerns.
WINTER WEATHER POLICY by Brandie Gilbert

As winter weather has approached, the question was raised — Will my training be cancelled? The Training Program has developed the following guidelines to assist us in making the decision to cancel or not to cancel a workshop.

**Anticipated Inclement Weather Policy:**

The Training Specialist will contact the trainer 48 hours prior to the scheduled workshop to discuss the issue of possible inclement weather, or Friday for a Monday workshop.

If the Trainer is anticipating inclement weather and has not been contacted by the Training Specialist, please contact the Specialist as soon as possible.

The Trainer and the Training Specialist together will make the decision on whether to cancel the workshop.

If the workshop is cancelled, the Training Specialist will call the participants to notify them of the cancellation.

**Emergency Inclement Weather Policy:**

The **Trainer** is responsible for contacting the Training Specialist no later than 6:00 AM the day of the scheduled workshop to cancel the workshop due to inclement weather.

If you need to cancel a workshop due to inclement weather, please call 717-991-8654.

Training Specialists will be on an on-call rotation to handle emergency weather situations.

The Training Specialist will then put a message on The Training Program’s voicemail indicating the cancellations for the day.

If a Charting the Course module is cancelled due to weather, the Training Specialist will contact the participating counties to reschedule on a per module basis. The remaining modules will go on as scheduled.
***TRAINER TIPS FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER OR TRAINER EMERGENCY***

**BY KATHY DONSON**

Is the 2nd day of your training going to be rescheduled due to inclement weather or trainer emergency? If it is, here are some thoughts and ideas for Trainers:

- **Immediately inform participants of the cancellation**
  This allows participants time to call their agencies and possibly their hotels to cancel their reservations, and track the storm for safe travel home.

- **Choose the rescheduled date by coordination with training specialist and participants**
  Possibly provide two different date options and see what works best for the majority of participants to attend.

- **Request participants to keep their handouts, manuals, etc. to bring back for follow-up training date**
  Ask Training Specialist to ensure that extras are sent to the trainer in case participants fail to bring materials back.

- **Request an Updated Invoice**
  If your new training date is a good bit away, you may ask to have a new invoice sent for the second day. You can then sign and return day 1 invoice so that it can be processed, and then you are able to be paid for the first day.

- **Complete evaluations the final day of training**
  Only one set of evaluations needs completed for training. You do not need to complete them for both day 1 and day 2.

- **Check on Training Materials**
  Training Specialists will be able to let you know if you should hold on to the videos, overheads, training key, etc, based upon other trainings that they may have scheduled and may need the materials for.

- **Refresh participants minds**
  Since day 2 was rescheduled due to weather, first thing in the morning refresh participants knowledge on the content that they learned during day 1. It may be fun to throw out a quick question and answer on the content learned previously.

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**STOP BULLYING!!**

The following message is sent on behalf of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services this week released a video message from Secretary Kathleen Sebelius telling lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth suffering from bullying and intolerance that they are not alone, and that it will get better. The Secretary’s message is in response to the recent news of young people taking their own lives after being victims of bullying because they were gay or believed to be gay.

We encourage you to view the Secretary's message at [http://Youtu.be/yXc-tc97XXA](http://Youtu.be/yXc-tc97XXA) and to share it with others. Additional resources for adults and children about bullying and how to stop it, can be found at: [www.BullyingInfo.org](http://www.BullyingInfo.org)
### NOVEMBER
1 - Donna Kreiger  
3 - Stephanie Ali  
4 - Samuel Harrison  
5 - Charito Mateyko  
6 - Scott Willson  
7 - Jennifer Baumgardner  
8 - Deborah Gadsden  
9 - Marsha Ganter  
   Gil Stemmler  
10 - Susan Counts  
11 - Michele Kustra  
   Rachel Meaker  
16 - Stephanie Snyder  
22 - Kimberly Gavran  
26 - Rose Weir  
29 - Deborah Gonzalez

### DECEMBER
3 - Sherrian Carthy-Campbell  
4 - Miriam Hayes  
11 - Cashe' Featherson  
14 - Lucretia Moye Njie  
19 - Emily Taitt  
20 - Brad McGarry  
   Oswald Smalls

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**WELCOME TO THE TRAINING PROGRAM**

Brian J. Davis, MSW, LSW is a new Curriculum and Instructional Specialist at The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program. Brian has a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work from Edinboro University and a Master’s Degree in Social Work from Widener University. His professional background is in direct child welfare practice. Brian began his career at the Erie County Office of Children and Youth as an intern in 2002 and then as a caseworker in 2003. In 2004, Brian moved to Fayette County Children and Youth Services and then to Adams County Children and Youth Services in 2007.

As a caseworker, Brian worked in intake and assessment and developed specialized interests in the areas of child sexual abuse, forensic interviewing, and the assessment of unsafe home conditions. Brian looks forward to applying his field experience to the enhancement of Child Welfare Curriculum in Pennsylvania.
**SHARED CASE RESPONSIBILITY: Bulletin Update**

3130-10-01 Effective: 10/01/2010

Released by: OCYF

Provides a framework for how CCYA and JPO can collaborate and support the practice of Shared Case Responsibility (née Shared Case Management). While the OCYF has no regulatory authority of JPO, the Juvenile Court Judge’s Commission encourages JPO to support and implement the SCR policies and procedures set forth in the bulletin, as is demonstrated in the cover letter. Shared legal responsibility may be Court-order via dual adjudication, where a youth is found to be both dependent and delinquent, with assigned responsibility to CCYA.

Replaces and Recinds:

- OYCF Bulletin 3140-82-01
- OYCF Bulletin 3140-83-04

Covers:

- Need for an intake protocol that ascertains whether both JPO/ CCYA have been involved/ ought to be involved.
- CCYA as the sole responsible party to perform formal safety assessments, in accordance with the safety assessment and management process interval policy.
- Completion of FSP and CPP.
- Title IV-E funding eligibility and use of CY-60 (to obtain Medicaid).

Clarifies criteria and reporting requirements in SCR cases for AFCARS.

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**BE KIND . . . REWIND**

Please keep in mind the next trainer scheduled for the workshop you are training and rewind all VHS tapes back to the beginning before returning your training materials.

Thank you!!
Thank you for your continued cooperation with obtaining the required insurance coverage and providing the documentation to CWTP which supports our ability to timely process your training and consultation contracts. However, to minimize abrupt rescheduling and cancellation of training sessions, trainers must obtain and document the existence of the required insurance coverage no later than 30 days prior to the date of the assigned training. Exceptions may occur in those instances when CWTP must reschedule a trainer for a training session which falls within the 30 days. In those instances only, the trainer must obtain and document the requisite insurances within the time frame designated by the CWTP representative. Otherwise, if a trainer has not been able to obtain and document the existence of the required insurance coverage no later than the 30 days prior to the date of the assigned training another trainer, who already has a completed contract with CWTP, will be scheduled to train that training session.

Regarding waivers for automobile coverage, we will provide waivers for automobile insurance in extremely limited situations and only for those trainers who always intend to travel by public transportation to the training site either because they do not own a car or because they always use public transportation. Automobile insurance waivers will be valid during the fiscal year (2010/2011) when requested. In the future all requests for waivers must be made 30 days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. For instance requests for fiscal year 2011/2012 must be made by June 1, 2011.

Waivers regarding automobile insurance will not be provided to trainers who:

- Travel by car to their place of employment and then travel by public transportation to the training site.
- Travel by car to the public transportation site and then travel by public transportation to the training site.
- Are driven by another individual to the training site.
- Intend to travel by public transportation to some training sites initially and then later within the fiscal year plan to obtain automobile insurance.

In all instances of trainers who have obtained automobile insurance, documentation in the form of a receipt of the cost associated with taking the public transportation must accompany each of the trainer’s invoices for payment.

Request for waiver forms are available from Pam Cordero at prc2@pitt.edu. The determination of whether or not the trainer has been approved for a waiver will be communicated to the trainer within 10 days of the request or sooner if the training was scheduled by CWTP within a shorter time frame.

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to Sharon S. England at sse8@pitt.edu.

HAVE YOU UPDATED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION LATELY?

It is important for the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program to have the most up-to-date contact information. We use this information to send your trainer boxes, contact you for the scheduling of trainings, contracts, and correspondence you receive from the Training Program. We are requesting that everyone send their current email address and an updated biography of themselves for their trainer files. Please also inform us of any changes in mailing address or phone numbers. If you have any changes or are not sure what information we may have, please feel free to contact Sue Castles at skc17@pitt.edu.