

New Serve America Act Includes Mentor Programs for Foster Youth

On April 21, President Barak Obama signed into law the *Serve America Act* (Public Law No. 111-13), aimed at increasing the number of service and volunteer opportunities across the nation. Programs geared to mentoring youth in foster care are specifically mentioned. The law will cover programs that provide academic or direct mentoring services to youth in foster care as well as support of mentoring partnerships. It will also expand and modify the existing Foster Grandparent program—which provides opportunities for seniors to serve as mentors, tutors and caregivers to underserved youth—by lowering eligibility of individuals from age 60 to age 55 and increasing tax-free stipends to \$3 an hour. To read the new law, go to thomas.loc.gov and search for H.R.1388 in the “Search Bill Summary and Status” field.

New York Agencies Issue Handbook for Relatives Raising Children

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services and the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance have issued a handbook, *Having a Voice and a Choice: New York State Handbook for Relatives Raising Children*. This resource for relatives raising or considering raising children—including kinship, foster and adoptive

families—covers topics such as legal arrangements, financial support, health care resources and educational issues. This handbook could serve as a model for other states that want to develop similar guides. It can be downloaded by going to ocfs.state.ny.us and searching for the title.

Guidebook Identifies State Policies That Help Children and Families

Policy Matters: Setting and Measuring Benchmarks for State Policies, a child welfare state policy guide, was published in April by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. This guide identifies state policies that promote strong families, supportive communities and effective systems as well as policies that promote child safety, permanency and well-being. To access the guide, go to policyforresults.org and search for “Benchmarks for State Policies.”

Analysis Links More Attachment Issues to Adoptions After Age 1

An analysis of 39 studies on attachment in adopted children revealed that children adopted after age 1 had more “insecure attachments” than their non-adopted peers but fewer attachment disturbances than institutionalized children. “Fostering Security? A Meta-Analysis of Attachment in Adopted Children” by Linda van den Dries, Femmie Juffer, Marinus van IJzendoorn and Marian Bakermans-Kranenburg was published in the *Children and Youth Services Review* (volume 31, issue 3). Children adopted before age 1 were comparable in attachment security with nonadopted peers, and those adopted after age 1 were comparable to

foster children. In contrast, studies using self-report measures (rather than observational measures) as a group did not find significant differences between children adopted before and after age 1. For an abstract, go to sciencedirect.com and search for author Linda van den Dries.

Center for the Study of Social Policy Offers Website to Improve Services

With the help of experts at other nonprofit organizations and the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Center for the Study of Social Policy has launched policyforresults.org. The new website offers legislators, government officials and child welfare policymakers a range of data and resources to improve services to children and families during the nation’s economic recession. The site also includes a blog that enables individuals to share ideas and strategies.

Manual Explores the Responsibilities Essential to Child Care Providers

The Role of Professional Child Care Providers in Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect, a manual in the Child Abuse and Neglect User Manual Series, is now available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway website. The manual explores the responsibilities that are essential to child care providers: recognizing physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological maltreatment and neglect; reporting child abuse and neglect; minimizing the risk of maltreatment in child care programs; preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect; caring for maltreated children and children at risk for maltreatment; and supporting parents. Read the manual at childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/childcare. The entire User Manual Series is available at childwelfare.gov/pubs/umnew.cfm. 

