

# RUTH H. YOUNG CENTER

**The University of Maryland**  
**School of Social Work**

**Ruth H. Young**  
**Child Welfare Center**  
**2003 Annual Report**

## Director's Remarks



This annual report is designed to provide you with a brief understanding of the accomplishments made by the Ruth H. Young Child Welfare Center during the past year.

I will be happy to answer any and all questions you may have about the Center and its programs.

With warm regards,

Donna Harrington, PhD  
Associate Professor and Director,  
Ruth H. Young Child Welfare Center

## Center Research Projects

### Managed Care Project

The Child Welfare Managed Care Project (CWMCP) is evaluating whether the managed care model of service delivery is a cost effective way of improving permanency outcomes and well-being for children in foster care.

The theory behind managed care is that providers of service should be held accountable for outcomes of the service they provide by bearing some financial risk for achieving those outcomes. Outcome measures include: reduction in foster care days; percentage of children achieving permanency; placement stability; reduced numbers of placement settings; reduced re-entry into foster care and reduced re-allegations of abuse and neglect; child well-being; caregiver satisfaction; and others. The CWMCP evaluation has three components-outcome, process and cost effectiveness-and uses an experimental design with random assignment of 500 children to managed care providers and 250 children in the control group to receive standard DSS services.

The team evaluating this project includes members from the University of Maryland Schools of Social Work and Medicine; the UMBC Departments of Policy Sciences, Economics, and Social Work; the Institute for Policy Studies at the Johns Hopkins University; and the Institute for Human Service Policy.

### Publications:

Lawrence-Webb, C., Field, T., & Harrington, D. (in press). Permanency for Children: An Organizational Analysis of First year Start-up Issues in a Child Welfare Managed Care Organization. *Children and Youth Services Review*.

## **Subsidized Guardianship Assistance Project**

The purpose of Maryland's Subsidized Guardianship Assistance Project (GAP) is to test the effects on children, caregivers, and the State's child welfare system of providing a \$300/month subsidy to relative caregivers who pursue guardianship of state-committed children already in their care. Through this Title IV-E waiver-based demonstration project, Maryland is able to offer a previously unavailable subsidy for the permanency option of guardianship, similar to the subsidy available for adoption. The waiver from the federal government to engage in this process is based on three conditions: 1) that the project is externally evaluated; 2) that the project is cost neutral to the federal government; and 3) that the project goals are commensurate with the law (i.e., it focuses on child welfare).

In Maryland, the GAP project is a five year project that began in May 1998 and was completed in May 2003.

The final report for the GAP project was submitted in October 2003:

Harrington, D., et al. (2003). Maryland Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project Evaluation Final Report. Submitted to the Maryland Department of Human Resources, Baltimore, MD: University of Maryland School of Social Work. (contact # DHR SSA/OSS-98-008).

### **Other Publications in progress:**

Mandell, M.B., Harrington, D., & Orlin, M.B. (under review). The Effect of Subsidized Guardianship on Exits From Kinship Care: Results From Maryland's Guardianship Assistance Demonstration Project. *Social Work Research*.

Okundaye, J., Lawrence-Webb, C., Harrington, D., & Mandell, M.B. (under review). Cost Analysis of the Maryland Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Project. *Research on Social Work Practice*.

## **University Based Fellowships for Research in Child Abuse and Neglect**

In September 2003, the Center was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to support fellowships for one faculty member (Donna Harrington, Ph.D.) and three doctoral student candidates (Clara Daining, MSW, Pamela Love, M.S.W., and Chika Monu, M.S.W.) to conduct research in child abuse and neglect.

The four projects focus on different aspects of child maltreatment, including: 1) client satisfaction of foster parents who have received services from a local department of social services compared with those receiving services from a child welfare managed care entity; 2) identification of personal and interpersonal factors that contribute to resiliency of young adults who have left out-of-home care; 3) examination of the effectiveness of providing enhanced risk assessment training for department of social services employees; and 4) predictors of language development for children and youth who are in out-of-home care. Three projects will be completed using secondary data from projects conducted with foster care samples from a large urban jurisdiction. The fourth project will use an experimental design to test the effectiveness of providing enhanced risk assessment training to the social services agency employees who work with the foster care samples included in the other three projects. In combination, the four projects will contribute to policy, research, and practice in the area of child maltreatment and child welfare, especially as it applies to large urban jurisdictions that primarily serve minority populations.

Dr. Harrington's project, "**Resilience of Language Development: Impact of Child Maltreatment**" examines the impact that child maltreatment has on language development using a secondary data

analysis of Maryland's Child Welfare Managed Care Demonstration Project evaluation, which was conducted under a Title IV-E Waiver. The objectives of this project are to: a) describe the language development of a sample of children and youth placed in out-of-home care because of child maltreatment; b) examine predictors of language development; and c) examine predictors of change in language development from baseline to one year follow-up.

Ms. Daining's project is "**Resilience of Youth in Transition from Out-of-Home Care to Adulthood.**" Her goal is to identify personal and interpersonal factors that contribute to resilience of young adults who have left out-of-home care of a large urban child welfare system. The study is a secondary data analysis of a single cross-sectional study conducted in 2002-2003 to assess the outcomes of a cohort of 186 young adults who left Baltimore City Department of Social Services out-of-home care between October 1, 1999 and September 30, 2000. The study will explore the relationship between social support and life stress and the young adults' resilience composite score comprised of key outcomes (employment, education, and avoidance of homelessness, early parenthood, drug use, and criminal activity). Ms. Daining successfully defended her dissertation proposal on December 11, 2003.

Ms. Love's project, "**Examining the Effect of a Goal Setting Intervention on Transfer of Training by Social Services Employees in Maryland,**" will compare the relative effectiveness of three alternate methods of a goal setting intervention with Maryland Department of Social Services (DSS) employees on their transfer of training in the work setting. DSS trainees who attend risk assessment training conducted by the University of Maryland School of Social Work Training Department will be randomly assigned to receive a goal setting intervention with or without implementation intentions or no goal setting intervention.

Ms. Monu's project, "**Caregiver Satisfaction with Child Welfare Services,**" will examine client satisfaction of foster parents who received services from a local department of social services compared with those who received services from a child welfare managed care entity. The project will use secondary data from the Child Welfare Managed Care Demonstration Project evaluation. The research objectives are to develop a model of child and caregiver characteristics that are associated with satisfaction, to compare caregiver satisfaction with services received within a managed care setting and services received within a public child welfare agency, and to examine the predictors of change in satisfaction with services from baseline to one year follow-up.

## Grants Awarded

This year two faculty members, Drs. Jim Kunz and Heather Girvin received Ruth H. Young Center grants. A brief summary of their projects and current progress made in their area of study is discussed in more detail.

Dr. Jim Kunz, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Maryland School of Social Work, was funded to conduct a project titled, **Access to Substance Abuse Treatment Centers in the Child Welfare Caseload: An Exploratory Analysis using Geographical Information Systems.**

This study analyzes the spatial (e.g. geographic) accessibility of substance abuse treatment centers (SATC's) to the child welfare caseload in Baltimore City. Four research questions are being addressed: (1) where are the SATC's that offer outpatient services in Baltimore City and the surrounding metropolitan area located; (2) where is the level of need for these centers among the child welfare caseload, as measured by the number of reported and substantiated cases in each census tract; (3)

what is the relationship between level of need and spatial accessibility of these centers; and (4) how has spatial accessibility changed over time. The project was funded in June 2003, and work on the study began in January, 2004 with data collection on the location of SATC's from Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc. and child welfare caseload from the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance.

Dr. Heather Girvin, Ph.D., MSS., Assistant Professor, University of Maryland School of Social Work, was awarded a grant to support research titled, **Caregiver Motivation, Depression, and Substance Abuse Among Families At Risk of Child Neglect: Differential Experiences in a Preventive Intervention.**

This study is a secondary analysis that explores the way in which expectations of change, depression, and drug/alcohol abuse shape parenting, child safety, and child well-being among families enrolled in Helping Families Prevent Child Neglect, a University of Maryland's Center for Families Program. In January 2004, a paper based on this work was presented by Diane DePanifillis (Co-Director, Center for Families) and Heather Girvin at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work and Social Research.

## Other Center Activities

### Program for Drug Abusing Women Project

Dr. Maureen Schuler, Principal Investigator, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Harrington served as the statistical consultant for the grant.

Nair, P., Schuler, M.E., Black, M.M., Kettinger, L., & Harrington, D. (2003). Cumulative Environmental Risk in Substance Abusing Women: Early Stress, Child Abuse Potential and Child Development. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27, 997-1017.

Schuler, M.E., Nair, P., & Harrington, D. (2003). Developmental Intervention, Parenting Outcome of Drug-Exposed Children Through 30 Months: A Comparison of Bayley and Bayley-II. *Psychological Assessment*, 15, 435-438.

Schuler, M.E., Nair, P., & Harrington, D. (April 2003). Cognitive Outcomes Among Drug-exposed Children: Effects of an Early Home Intervention From 3 to 6 Years. Presented at the 2003 Biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Tampa, FL.

### Dissertation Defended

In May 2003, Dr. Pamela Smith Thornton successfully completed her dissertation, "**Adaptive Coping Strategies of Othermothers: An Examination of Social Support, Spirituality, Stress, and Depression.**" The dissertation was conducted using data from the Subsidized Guardianship Assistance Project evaluation and the project was supported by a Maternal Child Health Bureau (US Department of Health and Human Services) New Investigators in Maternal and Child Health Dissertation Grant. Dr. Thornton is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan.

# Contact Information

## Web Site

*[www.rhycenter.umaryland.edu](http://www.rhycenter.umaryland.edu)*

## Center Offices Phone Number:

410.706.3136

## Fax Number:

410.706.6046

## Office Location:

550 W. Baltimore Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

## Mailing Address:

University of Maryland School of Social Work

Louis L. Kaplan Hall

525 W. Redwood Street

Baltimore, MD 21201



University of Maryland School of Social Work  
Ruth H. Young Child Welfare Center  
Louis L. Kaplan Hall  
525 West Redwood Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: 410-706-3136  
Fax: 410-706-6046  
[www.rhycenter.umaryland.edu](http://www.rhycenter.umaryland.edu)

Published by the Office of Communications  
Spring 2004