

New York FAR Quarterly



Spring 2012



New York State
Office of Children
& Family Services

www.ocfs.state.ny.us

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq.

Leslie Wilmot, Project Director

Jeanne Ferguson, Project Manager

Lara Bruce, Project Coordinator

Rebecca West, Graphic Designer

Melissa Thompson, Graphic Designer

In This Issue

New Partnership with Butler Institute
for Families, University of Denver by Gail
Haulenbeeck

1

Casey Family Programs: Promoting
Promising Practices by Jeanne Ferguson

2

New Yorkers in the Windy City:
6th Annual Differential Response
Conference by Kasey Matz

3

Students Picked for Albany Program
by Amber Marie Hurwitz

4

New Partnership with Butler Institute for Families, University of Denver

By: Gail Haulenbeeck, Director, Bureau
of Program Monitoring and Practice
Improvement



As you have heard, there have been some exciting changes in how we bring you support for your FAR program. Earlier in the spring the American Humane Association (AHA), a partner since the earliest stages of FAR, made a corporate decision about the direction of their work and is no longer providing direct training and consultation in child welfare.

We, in the OCFS Bureau of Training and Division of Child Welfare and Community Services, worked closely with AHA and the FAR team's project director, Leslie Wilmot, and our partners at Casey Family Programs to establish an exciting new partnership with the Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver. In April 2012, the FAR team, including Leslie Wilmot, Jeanne Ferguson, and Lara Bruce, joined the Butler Institute for Families as full-time, permanent staff. Kasey Matz, with Butler Institute will also rejoin the FAR team in July. We, at OCFS, are working on a smooth transition in order to provide the same high quality consultation, training, and coaching we have come to rely

on from the FAR team. We expect the FAR team, along with the trainers and coaches we have all come to know, will continue to be our primary provider of FAR support. It is our intent that this transition appears seamless to you, and there is no expected change to scheduled trainings or coaching opportunities.

Established in 1994, the Erna and Brad Butler Institute for Families is located within the Graduate School of Social Work, which has administered many externally funded projects targeting children and families over its 75-year history. The Butler Institute is nationally recognized for leadership and collaborative work at the national, state, and local level in human services and child welfare evaluation, research, technical assistance, education, and training. To learn more about the Butler Institute, visit www.thebutlerinstitute.org, or "Like" them on Facebook – www.facebook.com/ButlerInstitute.

We are very confident that this new partnership with Butler, along with our existing collaboration with Casey Family Programs, will enable us to continue supporting the outstanding work in FAR that has been happening around the state and provide the opportunity to expand FAR practice to more counties.



Casey Family Programs: Promoting Promising Practices

By: Jeanne Ferguson, MSSW, Manager, NY FAR Project,
Butler Institute for Families



Howard Knoll, Senior Director,

Howard Knoll is the Senior Director at Casey Family Programs in their New York City office. I caught up with him between phone calls on a Friday afternoon in January. After I got over being jealous that he worked in NYC and has daily access to the best pastrami sandwich on the planet (yes, Katz's Deli), we talked about Casey's contribution to New York's Family Assessment Response (FAR) initiative and where the focused

dedication to children and youth comes from within the Casey Family Programs foundation and within the staff themselves.

Casey Family Programs (CFP) has been a supporter of the NY FAR initiative since the early days when enabling legislation set the course for FAR to reach families across the length and breadth of New York State. The '2020 Vision' of Casey Family Programs is aimed at safely reducing the number of children and youth in foster care by 50% by the year 2020. Consequently, the match of their mission to that of FAR is very comfortable. CFP has partnered with New York's Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS) on several other ongoing projects, so organizing this partnership with all of us in NY was also a comfortable match.

The specific areas of work that CFP has supported in FAR implementation to date have been:

- The Quality Assurance (QA) Case Documentation Reviews for the first three rounds of FAR counties;
- The unique focus on the impact of FAR on Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) within the CPS system;
- The expansion of FAR to new counties and within existing FAR counties, who have launched an initial FAR unit and wished to expand their reach to additional children and families; and
- The exploration of FAR implementation in New York

City. (Note: This is an ongoing piece of their support that could have critical impact going forward. This interest was enabled by the passage of the permanent FAR legislation in 2011.)

So, where did this commitment to social justice and a dedication to the success of children and youth originate? It comes from the compassion and insight of Jim Casey, founder of shipping giant United Parcel Service, or UPS. It began when he was a young man starting his own business, originally the "American Messenger Service" in Seattle, Washington. He noticed that employees who worked for him, often coming from disadvantaged or challenged families, were the first ones to drop away from the promise of employment and success that hard work offered them. This was not because they didn't want to be successful, but because there were so many things stacked up against them that they frequently just could not hold on to their employment.

After his business successes made him a very wealthy man, Jim Casey decided to do something about the loss to the work force of many potentially successful citizens. In 1966, Jim Casey established Casey Family Programs, aimed at tackling the stressors that caused some children and families to lose their way and end up separated. With an original vision of long-term foster care, in 2002, Casey Family Programs reorganized itself from being primarily a direct service organization to being a more fully embracing prevention and systems improvement organization. Casey Family Programs now has strategic consulting efforts in the majority of states and is headquartered in Seattle, Washington. A sister organization, Casey Family Services, through its network of field offices, offers direct services to foster youth and families in California, Texas, Idaho, Washington, and Arizona. The Marguerite Casey Foundation, also a sister organization to Casey Family Programs, "is dedicated to creating a movement of working families advocating on their own behalf for change" by investing in



(continued on page 3)

system and cross-system change. In this effort they have contributed to FAR implementation across New York State by providing flexible funding dollars to our first round of FAR counties. This money was used to meet the needs of FAR families in those counties.

For Howard Knoll, a master's-level social worker in New York, the journey to FAR as the Senior Director for CFP has been a culmination of years of dedication to youth and their families. He was the Executive Director of the Isaacs Center in East Harlem for 21 years, was appointed by the Mayor to the New York City Youth Council, was Chair of the Board of Directors for the National Youth Employment Coalition, and is the recipient of the prestigious 2006 Louis Hines "Lifetime Achievement Award" presented by the National Child Labor Committee in honor of his service to children and youth. Knoll reports that receiving that award was one of the highlights of his professional life, and he is pleased to continue that important work at Casey Family Programs.

Two pieces of work CFP has supported for FAR that Knoll feels are very important to its continued success is the DMR in FAR analysis and the QA case review that allows each cohort of FAR counties to see what they're doing well, as well as what areas of documentation and practice are more challenging. Since any implementation is "a process, not an event," as the FAR team say constantly, looking to improve and replicate what's working, in addition to seeking to understand what will work better, is a continuous quality improvement process that is well recognized across many disciplines. CFP believes that continual assessment of systems, as well as families, is the best approach.

Knoll describes his contributions to the success of FAR through the supportive role of CFP to have been a very positive experience overall. He sees that the caseworkers and supervisors offering FAR to families are getting excellent training to be able to do so. He also describes the coaching that the FAR team and OCFS have created for direct service providers as a unique opportunity in all of child welfare. Knoll became aware, following his attendance at the FAR Symposium in October 2011, of the feeling of joy that

workers are reporting as a result of the Family Assessment Response work they are able to do with families. The opportunity to engage with family members, to help them reach for success that *they* choose, has been so rewarding, according to workers who spoke with great feeling about being invigorated in their FAR work. Knoll now sees that work as equally therapeutic for workers and families and believes it is a testament to the honor and integrity of the families, the workers, and OCFS that this family engagement approach is proving a very complementary addition to the investigative response most families are used to. Finally, Howard identified the view in the community of the role and function of CPS to be improving as a result of the FAR approach. Positive attributions for CPS are a rare commodity that should be treasured by all of us and enhanced by continued support for what works.

So, when you hear that "Casey" is supporting FAR in increasing numbers of counties across the State of New York, you know that this support is a potent strategy in the design of FAR and a great gift to the children and families we serve. OCFS, Butler Institute for Families, and the FAR team, are very pleased to have the opportunity to work in partnership with an organization such as Casey Family Programs. Their recognition of the importance of FAR, among the other significant child welfare initiatives being developed to improve the lives of children and families, is a point of honor for everyone engaged in this difficult work. We are deeply grateful for their continued support.



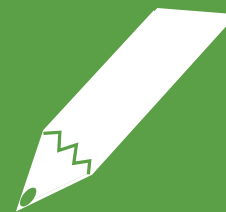
Write for Us!

Do you have a FAR story or case example that you would like to share with others?

Have you been trying new tools or techniques related to FAR that are working well?

Would you like to highlight the good work happening in your county?

If so, we want to hear from you! Articles should be between 500-800 words and can be sent at any time to get into the newsletter schedule.



Please reply to Lara Bruce at
Lara.Bruce@du.edu.

New Yorkers in the Windy City: 6th Annual Differential Response Conference

By: Kasey Matz, Training Specialist, Butler Institute for Families

The American Humane Association hosted its 6th Annual Differential Response (DR) Conference, "Giving Voice to Vision," in Chicago, Illinois, in November 2011. The goal of the conference was to provide opportunities for open dialogue and shared learning among individuals involved in or working along the child welfare continuum, with a keen interest in improving the outcomes of children and families who are involved in, or have the potential to become involved in, the child welfare system.

More than 300 child welfare professionals from all over the nation came together to share their expertise and experience, and the event was considered a huge success overall.

The State of New York was well represented by both veteran counties whose staff have developed into and are seen as highly skilled practitioners of Family Assessment Response (FAR), as well as those in their infancy who are just now in the beginning stages of exploring the possibility of FAR and all that this practice means.

AHA would like to extend their special appreciation to Gilbert Jacobs and James McGaheeran from St. Regis Mohawk DSS; Nicholas Kurtessis from the Albany County Department of CYF; Diane Wilby from St. Lawrence County; Ruben Calvillo from Columbia County; Mollie Lucas from Niagara County; Carolyn Eggleston and her mom, Brenda Kumpf, and workers Sarah Moshier and Donna Scott from Tompkins County;

Sandra Davidson, Derrick Hinds, and Marie Philippeaux, from the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) in New York City; Jeanette Feingold from Nassau County; Gail Godici from Oswego County; Michele Resue from Tioga County; and Debra DeCou-Winston from the New York State Office of Family and Children's Services. Your presence and willingness to share your unique experiences were crucial contributions to the conference and its affirmative outcome. Many of the break-out sessions included rich conversations related to the collaborative effort among the partners. That commitment has been fundamental to the success of FAR and its sustainability throughout the State of New York. Professionals from other states were hungry for the information and insight offered by those of you who have been unwaveringly committed to this work and who have been industriously devoted to its execution. Because of you, we are proud and we are grateful.

Call for Presentations

for the 2012 Conference on Differential Response in Child Welfare being held in Henderson, Nevada, November 14-16, 2012.

Visit: www.differentialresponseqic.org/conference for all the details! We hope to see you there!

All of the conference materials can now be found on American Humane Association's website: www.americanhumane.org/drconference.

Congratulations to Carolyn Eggleston, Tompkins County Youth

Based on an article by: Amber Marie Hurwitz (ijnews@gannett.com)



Carolyn (right) and her mom, Brenda Klumpf.

Carolyn Eggleston and her mom, Brenda Kumpf, were part of the family panel at the 2011 FAR Symposium and have been active participants in the implementation of FAR in Tompkins County.

Carolyn, an Ithaca High School senior, has been

chosen as one of two students to represent Tompkins county at the 2012 Students Inside Albany program, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc. Students Inside Albany entails a three-day interactive conference, March 25-28, 2012.

The program allows participating youths to experience the New York legislative process at work. Selected high school students from across the state will learn more about how state government works by participating in a series of interactive activities and lectures on such topics as the state budget process, the role of lobbyists in the legislative process, citizen rights to government information, and how media impact the political process.

The Tompkins County students will also tour the state Capitol and shadow their senator and assembly members.

This newsletter is being brought to you by the Butler Institute for Families, in collaboration with the American Humane Association.

