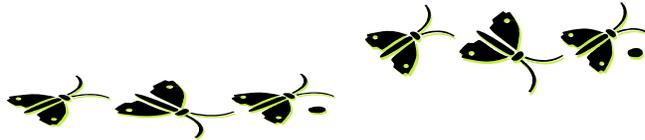




Welcome Back CWEP Students

We wish a warm welcome to all new and continuing CWEP students and we hope you have a great semester!



Fall Course News



The following courses will be offered in the Fall 2007 semester:

REQUIRED COURSES for Concentration Year students:

- **SOCW7343 SW Practice with Families**
Two sections will be offered, one taught by Dr. Cheung.
- **SOCW7348 Issues Children and Families**

Two sections will be offered, taught by Dr. Taylor and Shetal Vohra-Gupta



RECOMMENDED ELECTIVE COURSES

(in order of CWEP competency requirements):

- **Independent Study: Family Violence**
CWEP Instructor, Shetal Vohra-Gupta
- **SOCW 7377 Drugs in Society**
- **SOCW 7365 Crisis Intervention**



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Texas 80th Legislature Legislative Summaries: Child Welfare



HB 8

This bill, by Debbie Riddle, enacts *tougher penalties on sexual predators that target children*. This bill imposes a 25-year minimum sentence for sexually violent offenses against children under 14 years of age, eliminates eligibility for parole for certain sex offenders, and makes a second conviction of a sexually violent offense against a child under 14 years of age a capital felony. In addition, it provides for global positioning system (GPS) monitoring for offenders committed under the sexually violent predator statutes, extends the statute of limitations for sexually violent offenses against children under the age of 14 to 20 years past his or her 18th birthday, clarifies that harboring a sex offender in violation of registration is an offense punishable by up to a third degree felony, and creates the new crime of continual sexual abuse of a child.



HB 401

This bill, by Rep. Brown, adds the use of *text messages or other electronic message services* to the list of ways in which the offense of online solicitation of a minor may be committed. The bill also expands the offense of improper relationship between educator and student to include online solicitation of a minor, regardless of the age of the victim. This bill becomes law September 1st, 2007.

HB 417

This bill, by Reps. Hartnett and Naishtat, addresses several areas of *guardianship law*. The bill requires the term of a guardian or attorney ad litem that is appointed in each case in a proceeding for the appointment of a guardian to automatically expire upon the appointment of a guardian or denial of the application for a guardian unless the court determines that retention of the guardian or attorney ad litem is in the best interest of the ward. This bill also authorizes a court to appoint a guardian ad litem or court investigator to investigate the need for guardianship in the case that no such application has been filed, and the bill authorizes unmarried parents of an incapacitated adult to be appointed as joint guardians unless the ward was the subject of a suit affecting the parent-child relationship in which only one or neither of the parents was named guardian.

Additionally, the bill makes *several changes regarding the appointment of a guardian for a person who is mentally incapacitated*, the grounds by which a person may be removed from the guardianship position, and other changes suggested by practitioners of probate law.



HB 662

This bill, by Rep. Dukes, *directs DFPS to work with the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families to develop a long-range strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services*. HB 662 calls for two reports with recommendations, one by December 2008 and the other by December 2009. Also added to this legislation is the Child Abuse Neglect and Prevention Trust Fund language that was originally contained in HB 3015 (also by Rep. Dukes). These provisions protect the money in the Trust Fund by dedicating it to child abuse and neglect prevention programs and by restricting the ability of the Legislature to appropriate money out of the Fund for any other purpose.



HB 764

By Rep. Dutton, this bill amends current law to *delete the statutory mandate that one-half of the family protection fee collected be provided to the comptroller for deposit to the credit of a child abuse and neglect prevention trust fund account*, because of an attorney general opinion that it is unconstitutional. This bill became effective immediately on 6-15-07

HB 1204

This bill, by Rep. Giddings, authorizes a juror to designate *a portion of the juror's per diem payment to be donated for the compensation to victims of crime fund, the child welfare board, battered women's shelters, safe houses, and other programs* approved by the county's commissioners' court (Under previous law, a juror only had the option of donating all of the per



HB 1481

This bill, by Rep. Castro, *allows certain family members of a child to file suit requesting managing conservatorship of the child* when the parent-child relationship between the child and every living parent of the child is terminated in a suit filed by DFPS. It became effective immediately after being signed by the Governor on 6-15-07.

Alumni Spotlight



This month we are highlighting **Baruah, Ruprekha (Roopa)**.

1. What is your current position?

I am a Foster Adoption Supervisor currently. I got into this position in March of 2006.

2. What did you like most about the CWEP program?

The most important thing about the CWEP Program to me was that it offered me the opportunity to go to Grad School without having to pay a penny. Besides, I enjoyed the camaraderie we shared as a group. Many of us got to work in group projects together. I think we were well supported.

3. How did CWEP prepare you for your job?

My Grad School experience through the CWEP Program has helped me in many ways some of which are stated below:

- To question a belief before accepting it blindly
- Hone my skills to read between and under the lines
- To look at the bigger picture of things' e.g., poverty and child abuse issues
- To see the connection
- To look for details
- Help network
- Learn about more resources in the community
- Understand human behavior better and have a better insight into people's functioning

4. Do you have any advice for current CWEP students?

Hang in there and make the best of your opportunity to go to school for free. Give back to the agency that helped you realize your dreams.

5. What are your plans for the future?

To improve my skills and earn more money.  **Thanks Roopa**

HB 3008

By Rep. Pierson, this is a *mentoring bill* that establishes a North Texas pilot program to connect foster care youth age 14 and over to volunteer adult mentors for the purpose of assisting the youth's transition to adult living.



SB 6

This bill, by Senator Zaffirini, *increases the penalty for sexually explicit online communication with a minor* who is 14 to 16 years old from a state jail felony to a third degree felony, increases the penalty for online sexual solicitation of a minor who is 14 to 16 years old from a third degree felony to a second degree felony, and provides that sentences for certain offenses arising out of the same criminal offense may run concurrently or consecutively. This bill also directs the Crime Stoppers Advisory Council to emphasize programs targeted at detecting unregistered sex offenders. It also requires that the attorney general establish an internet service provider database and establishes requirements relating to the preservation of certain records and information and penalties for violation of said requirements.



SB 9

This bill, by Sen. Shapiro, *requires a national criminal history background check for all certified public school employees*. Current non-certified employees are required to submit to a statewide criminal review, while non-certified employees hired on or after January 1, 2008 will be required to submit to a national criminal history background check. Individuals who have been convicted for a Title 5 felony offense or a sex offense when the victim of the crime was a child, a primary or secondary school student would be prohibited from employment with a public school district.

This bill also creates a clearinghouse at the Department of Public Safety for this information to be shared between school districts when an employee transfers to another employer to increase efficiency and reduce the costs associated with background checks. This bill became effective immediately 6-15-07.



SB 10

By Sen. Nelson, this bill is known as the *Medicaid reform bill*. It was successfully amended with language that will allow former foster youth to be covered by Medicaid until they turn 23, if they are enrolled as a student in Texas. Prior to this, former foster youth only could keep their medical coverage until age 21.

SB 156

This bill, by Sen. Shapiro, *establishes a competitive grant program to fund the establishment or expansion of nurse-family partnership programs by March 2008*. HHSC will award grants for programs that can serve at least 2,000 people in multiple communities for at least two years. Programs funded would have to adhere closely to the model developed by the Nurse-Family Partnership National Service Office. Legislators appropriated \$7.9 million to HHSC to support this program.





SB 723

This bill, by Sen. Lucio, directs DFPS to *collect data on kinship placements that fail for financial reasons* so that it can better identify what would be necessary to help these placements succeed.

Amended to this bill were provisions from HB 2670 by Rep. Giddings, which allows DFPS to create a database of all licensed foster care homes that identifies those currently providing services. Law enforcement would be able to provide DFPS with a street address and automatically be given information as to whether the address is a licensed foster home and if a foster child currently resides at the address. DFPS will have to conduct a background search to determine whether law enforcement has responded to any domestic violence reports before issuing or renewing a foster home license. Law enforcement agencies must report to DFPS each time they respond to a call from a licensed foster home.



SB 758

This bill has been considered “*CPS reform II.*” The most significant components of this bill are:

- ◆ Removing the Independent Administrator and the mandate to privatize substitute care services from SB 6;
- ◆ Removing the mandate to privatize case management services from SB 6 and instead opting for a case management pilot project involving 5% of the cases statewide by Sept. 1, 2008, with an evaluation;
- ◆ Redefining “case management,” “conservatorship services,” “permanency services,” “substitute care provider” and “substitute care services;”
- ◆ Establishing a program to provide in-home support (limited funding for non-recurring expenses) for families in which poverty is the primary underlying cause of neglect if the support can prevent removal of the child from the home or quicken the child’s reunification with his or her family;
- ◆ Supporting the DFPS workforce by studying the impact of reimbursing caseworkers’ educational expenses and focusing recruitment on those with a bachelor’s or advanced degree in a human services field;
- ◆ Creating a new process for child-placing agencies to report and check information on a foster or group home that has been closed through a searchable database, and requiring foster homes transferring to a new child placing agency to notify the child placing agency of prior licensing violations;
- ◆ Establishing a Committee on Pediatric Centers of Excellence;
- ◆ Directing DFPS to work with the OneStar Foundation, focusing on faith-based organizations, to increase the number of foster families;
- ◆ Increasing the adoption subsidy for youth who would otherwise be in long-term foster care;
- ◆ Establishing eligibility for free prekindergarten for any child who has ever been in the conservatorship of DFPS;
- ◆ Requiring DFPS to consult with the child’s caseworker, attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem or CASA volunteer whenever possible before making a placement decision; and
- ◆ Directing DFPS to develop a Child Protective Services Improvement Plan that addresses many areas still in need of improvement.

Announcement

➤ **Dr. Monit Cheung has three new publications in press:**

1. Cheung, M. (Accepted 2007). Promoting effective interviewing of sexual abused children: A pilot study. *Research on Social Work Practice*.
2. Cheung, M., & Nguyen, M.N. (2007). Pilot-Testing the Vietnamese Parental Attitude Scale: Three major factors. *International Journal of Social Work*, 50(2), 213-227.
3. Kindle, P.A., & Cheung, M. (2007). [A book review of Payne, M. (2005). *Modern social work theory* (3rd ed.). Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc.] *Research on Social Work Practice*, 17(3), 439.

➤ **Dr. Monit Cheung has presented or will present at the following conferences or workshops:**

1. Leung, P., Cheung, M., Cheung, A., & Tsui, V. (2008). Vietnamese male victims of partner abuse: Prevalence rates between 2001 and 2007. Juried paper submitted for the Society for Social Work and Research, 12th Annual Conference, Washington, DC, 1/17-20.
2. Leung, P., Cheung, M., Tsui, V., & Cheung, A. (2007). Chinese male victims of partner abuse: Prevalence rates between 2001 and 2007. Juried paper accepted to be presented at the 53rd Annual Program Meeting, Council on Social Work Education, San Francisco, 10/27-30.
3. Brandes, B., & Cheung, M. (2007). Multidisciplinary interactions in improving outcomes for adolescents with sexual behavior problems. Juried paper accepted to be presented at the 53rd Annual Program Meeting, Council on Social Work Education, San Francisco, 10/27-30.
4. Cheung, M. (2007). Teaching clinical practice with therapeutic games and guided imagery. Juried workshop (3 hours) for the Faculty Development Institute, 53rd Annual Program Meeting, Council on Social Work Education, San Francisco, 10/27.
5. Cheung, M., Leung, P., & Tsui, V. (2007). Male domestic violence victims: Prevalence and service characteristics. Juried paper to be presented at the International Consortium for Social Development, Hong Kong, 7/16-20.
6. Cheung, M. (2007). Therapeutic games and guided imagery: Tools for professionals working with children and families. Invited by the Title IV-E Roundtable Conference, San Marcos, Texas, 6/1.
7. Cheung, M. (2007). My Asian American child and my expectations. Keynote speaker at the Asian-American Career Day, Houston Independent School District Asian Initiatives, Houston, Texas, 4/28.

Texas 80th Legislature Legislative Summaries: Child Welfare (...Continued)

SB 759

This bill, by Sen. Nelson, *requires courts to consult with children in an appropriate manner regarding a child's permanency plan* if the child is at least four years old and if the court determines it is in the best interest of the child. It also entitles DFPS, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, biological parents, and guardian ad litem to be present during a placement or permanency hearing. This bill also requires that a child be present at each review hearing unless the court excuses the child's attendance. It became effective immediately when signed by the Governor on 6-15-07.



SB 813

This bill, by Sen. Janek, also *dealt with the privatization of CPS*. It assures that, regardless of how CPS privatization proceeded, Harris County and other child welfare boards, local government boards, and children's advocacy centers would be able to continue providing CPS services if they had done so prior to September 2006.