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IN PRACTICE

From the Courthouse to the Statehouse: Parents as Partners in Child Welfare

by Diane Boyd Rauber

When a child is separated from a parent due to allegations of abuse or neglect, the separation is usually sudden. Often the parent is confused about the child welfare process and unclear about the road to reunification. Although the court appoints an attorney to represent the parent, that attorney does not always have the time to explain the process, answer questions, and guide the parent through the services ordered by the court. "Parent partners," who have experienced the system and reunified with their child(ren), are emerging in many communities to guide and support parents involved in the child welfare system. When a well-trained parent partner is involved, the respondent parent can complete the case plan requirements more quickly and the parent's attorney can argue for reunification more effectively.

"Parent partners," also known as "parent advocates," "parent mentors," or "veteran parents," accompany parents to court hearings and agency meetings, help them access services, and encourage them to advocate for themselves. In some instances, a parent partner may go to a family team meeting with the parent right before or after the child is removed (a meeting the parent's attorney is often not permitted or welcomed to attend). Since many child welfare cases involve substance abuse, a parent partner may provide insight and support to a parent new to recovery. As one parent leader in Minnesota noted, having access to a parent partner provides "a place where parents, even in the midst of turmoil, can connect with another parent….[t]he moment that your child is removed from the home, someone who is there right away."[1]

In addition, some state and local programs include veteran parents in policy planning so parents' voices are heard in decisions that affect families in the child welfare system. This involvement goes beyond appointing one "token" parent to participate; rather, these programs recruit and train parents who can participate as equal partners on local and statewide policymaking committees.

This article describes several parent partner/advocate programs operating around the country, including programs that train parents to serve as parent mentors and programs that train parent leaders to sit at the decision-making table and influence child welfare policy. Many programs provide both types of training. A second article will discuss how attorneys can work with parent partners and advocates to provide their clients with the best possible representation and address ethical concerns and other challenges.

Center for Family Representation

The Center for Family Representation (CFR), founded in 2004 in New York City, uses the Community Advocacy Team (CAT) approach to serve families. The CAT approach provides each family with a team of professionals to help it navigate its case. The team includes an attorney, social worker, and a parent

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What's Inside:

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advocate. CFR has grown significantly since 2004 when it first served 75 families. In 2007, CFR was awarded a contract from the Family Court in Manhattan to represent families in child protection matters, and served 700 families in 2008.

Parent advocates at CFR are full-time employees who have successfully navigated the child welfare system and reunified with their children. Parent advocates collaborate with the attorney and social worker on the case. They support parents by helping them access services and going with them to court and other meetings.

CFR has compiled impressive statistics. Of the 700 families that received services through the CAT approach:

- Fifty-six percent of children never entered foster care.
- The average stay for children who did enter care was 98 days, compared to an average stay of 11.5 months for children in New York City who reunify in one year.
- Less than one percent of children reenter care, compared to a citywide average of 11.4 percent who reenter care within one year.[2]

Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP)

The Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) started in 1994 with a grant from the Child Welfare Fund to the Hunter College School of Social Work in New York City. CWOP now has offices in the East Harlem, Highbridge, and Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhoods of New York City.

CWOP uses parent mentoring and parent organizing to improve the child welfare system through several primary strategies:

- **Parent Organizing and Education.** CWOP hosts meetings to educate parents about the child welfare process and teach them how to advocate for themselves: (1) weekly peer-led support and self-help groups; (2) monthly general member meetings focused on a theme of interest to parents, often led by outside experts; and (3) parent organizer/attorney-led parents' rights workshops in substance abuse programs, halfway houses, shelters, etc.[3]
- **Meaningful Parent Participation.** CWOP ensures parents' voices are heard in a meaningful way, by helping them participate at local and state legislative bodies, professional conferences and education programs, public forums, and through media contact.
- **Publications.** CWOP works with parents to have their experiences and stories inform internal and external publications, including *The Survival Guide to the NYC Child Welfare System*.
- **Leadership Curriculum.** CWOP's Parent Leadership Curriculum prepares parents to work at CWOP and public and private agencies as parent advocates.

Jefferson County, Kentucky

The Parent Advocacy Program in Jefferson County, Kentucky started in 2004 when the Annie E. Casey Foundation selected the county as a demonstration site for its Family to Family Initiative.[4] To be an advocate, a parent's Child Protective Services (CPS) case must be closed for at least a year, with no outstanding CPS issues and a stable situation. They must be able to attend meetings and trainings, be willing to share their experience with other parents and CPS staff, and complete 15 hours of training before being paired with a parent. Families assigned an advocate either (1) have children under the age of five; (2) are involved with CPS for the first time; or (3) live in a "high child removal rate" area.[5]

Jefferson County evaluated its program in 2007 and 2008, using data from the Parent Advocacy Program and The Worker Information SysTem (TWIST). The 2007 evaluation showed parent partners performed many tasks, including: (1) encouraging the family to visit with the child; (2) attending team meetings with the family; (3) providing information about services; (4) helping the family find services; (5) transporting the family to services; (6) providing information about the agency to the family; and (7) going to court hearings or agency meetings with the family.[6] Key evaluation findings included:

- Children in families receiving parent advocate services had fewer placement moves in their current episode of care, 0.8 moves v. 1.8 moves, than those who did not receive services.
- Children in families receiving parent advocate services overall spent less time in care, 10.2 months v. 18.2 months, than those who did not receive services.
- Children in families receiving parent advocate services had higher percentages of reunification than those not receiving services.
- Children in families receiving parent advocate services exited to adoption and emancipation less frequently than those not receiving services.[7]

Additional data analyzed in 2008 considered an additional 240 families served between September 2005 and April 2008.[8] The data showed that parent advocates served their respective families for an average of 3.76 months.[9] Some other findings included:

- Of the 250 closed cases, 215 children did not have subsequent

CPS referrals; 25 children had a substantiated finding of abuse or neglect within one year.

- Of the 202 children receiving parent advocate services who left out-of-home care before 2008, 70.3 percent reunified with their parents or relatives. This rate compared to 56.7 percent of children who did not receive parent advocate services.[10]

Iowa

Through its Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC) and funds from the Annie E. Casey Program, the Iowa Department of Human Services started a Parent Partner program. Iowa has six sites, some encompassing multiple counties, and is planning a seventh. The goal is to have programs statewide, so every family in need can be served.

Each local program matches a parent partner, who has been involved with the child welfare agency and has successfully reunited with their child for at least a year, with a parent currently involved in the system. Parent partners are paid to mentor and help parents find community resources. They commit to working with a family for a minimum of seven to 10 hours per month.

A statewide steering committee implements the local sites, and includes parent partners, program coordinators, child welfare agency staff, and trainers.[11] Through the Parent Partner programs, Iowa aims to:

- influence policy and practice in the state to reflect parents' perspectives;
- change the agency culture to reflect parents' strengths;
- reduce rates of reentry into foster care;
- shorten length of stay; and
- increase skills and opportunities for parents.[12]

National Coalition for Parent Advocacy in Child Protection Cases

Parents Anonymous® Inc. and the National Center on Shared Leadership have started the National Coalition. Its mission is "[t]o mobilize parents and advocacy organizations to create positive public policy and program changes that prevent removal of children from their families by child protective services, strengthen and ensure the rights of families whose children have been removed, and return children to their families."

The Coalition has drafted a Birth Parents' Bill of Rights, including 15 distinctive rights. Some rights are already included in federal law while others are considered best practice in certain states. These rights include the parent's rights to:

- know why they are being investigated;
- an emergency hearing within 24 hours;
- speak and be heard at every step of the process;
- privacy; and
- "see and communicate with their child every day while their child is in care, at times and locations that are convenient to the parent and at no cost to the parent."

The Coalition aims to have this Bill of Rights become part of state and federal laws that improve the child welfare system. Members of the California State Parent Team are involved in launching the Coalition.

The steering committee and local programs have developed informational and training materials to help implement a program and achieve these goals. These materials include a tool kit for parent partner coordinators, parent partner job descriptions, and a parent partner pledge.[13]

Even though the statewide steering committee provides guidance to local programs, each local site is free to structure its program to suit its demographics. For example, each program decides at what stage of a case the parent partner is assigned and might decide to limit assigning parent partners to certain cases, e.g., only families with substance abuse issues or families involved in the system for the first time. Each Iowa site was required to identify $50,000 in local funds before starting their program. The site receives limited state funds and must supplement those with local funds to sustain itself.

Washington

Washington State has a Parent to Parent Program operating in six counties. Veteran Parents (VPs) meet with parents before they go to the shelter care hearing. In addition to providing support during the hearing, the VP obtains information from the parent and signs them up for the Dependency 101 class. During the shelter care hearing, parents are encouraged to attend this class.

Through the Parent to Parent Program, Washington offers several opportunities for parents to interact with VPs. The Dependency 101 class teaches parents about the dependency process, and VPs are involved in presenting the class.[14] In Dependency 201 class, VPs address promoting healthy parenting through: (1) healthy support systems; (2) boundaries; (3) self-care approaches; (4) community service;

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Parent Advocate Stories: 'We're Here for You'

Support and straight talk from my parent advocate helped me trust my lawyer and her team.

by Ebonie King

On my first day in family court after my son was placed in foster care, I walked up to my court-appointed attorney, introduced myself and asked, "How can you help me?" He just stared me up and down. In court, he said nothing on my behalf. I was furious.

That day, I saw a woman zipping quickly around the waiting area, talking to other women. She seemed to really care, so I followed her. I asked, "Are you a lawyer?" She said, "I'm a social worker," and breezed away.

Alone and Hopeless

For a month after that court date, I did not begin any of the services, did not visit my son or go to court, and fell deeper into my addiction to crack cocaine. I felt hopeless. I believed that I could trust no one to help me.

My mother had called in the neglect report because I was abusing crack and was neglecting my beautiful 8-month-old baby boy. I was taking advantage of my mother's kindness. I often left my son with her and didn't return for days at a time.

One day, when I returned from running in the street, my son was gone. I knew immediately that he was in foster care. My mom told me, "What I did was necessary."

I was devastated. I felt my son was my only reason to breathe.

A Glimmer of Hope

A friend convinced me to visit my son and stop feeling sorry for myself. After I saw my son, I went to the next court date.

This time, instead of the lawyer who had first represented me, I found out that a whole team from the Center for Family Representation had been assigned to represent me: a litigation specialist, staff attorney, social worker and parent advocate. The social worker, Adjara, was the woman I had seen zipping around!

My team told me, "We're here for you." They spoke to me with respect and gave me a glimmer of hope.

> Monique didn't judge or disrespect me. She pushed me hard in a good way. I knew what she was telling me was right.

Straight Talk

I was not ready to be clean, and I was honest about that. The CFR team was straightforward, too. They told me that if I didn't get myself together, they would not be able to be of any help to me.

Monique, the parent advocate, then took a walk with me and took me to lunch. She asked me to go into treatment and do the right thing in order to be proud of myself and to have a son who is proud of his mom.

Monique didn't judge or disrespect me. She pushed me hard in a good way. I knew what she was telling me was right. So I promised to enter treatment, and Monique made a date to escort me to the program.

The day of our appointment, though, I stood Monique up. I went to the treatment program on my own. I was overwhelmed by her genuine concern. It made me afraid.

My Strong Points

In the program, I found out that I had a bigger problem than drugs. Even once I got clean, I was in pain and full of distrust because of abuse I went through in my past, so my behavior was bad. Every time I went to court, the report from my treatment facility was very negative. I felt ashamed that my personal information was being shared in court and feared that I would not get my son back.

But my CFR team jumped on my strong points. They told the judge that all of my drug tests were clean and I did not miss visits. I also got certificates for completing a number of programs. I was surprised that my CFR team continued to speak to me with respect even after they heard the bad things about me in court. It's hard to talk to someone in a positive way about her negative behavior. But my team didn't talk down to me. They were careful with their words and they stayed positive.

Hitting Bumps

Soon I got unsupervised visits, but I hit more bumps in my case. First, the treatment program asked me to leave because of my behavior. Immediately, the agency dropped my visits back to once a week, supervised, even though I was still testing clean. I called my lawyer. I don't know how she did it, but unsupervised visits were reinstated the next day.

On my own, I got into outpatient treatment and started therapy and anger management. A year and a half after my son went into foster care, he came home on trial discharge.

During the trial discharge, I got a new case called in on me. I called Monique right away and she told

me, "Don't let anyone in until I get there." Monique was right there when the child protective worker arrived, and she helped me get the case dropped.

Proud of Me

Looking back, I don't think I showed how much CFR's help meant to me. Every time my team saw me, I had an attitude about something that was going wrong, and I was pushy. I was annoyed about going through the system.

But I called CFR every time I ran into trouble. I grew to trust them because, in court, they stuck to reuniting me with my son. They cared and they touched me by being themselves.

Now everyone from CFR looks at me with pride. When I got my son on trial discharge, I needed a stroller. Monique called to say, "Come and get it." At the CFR office, my team welcomed me and gave me Pampers, wipes and a Maclaren stroller. I was so grateful.

Soon after, Monique came to visit me at home—at the apartment she found for me. "I couldn't wait to see you with your son at home!" she told me, and I gave her a big hug.

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and (5) healthy alternative activities.[15] Next, VPs and parents move to Dependency 301, which consists of one monthly community service project and one monthly healthy alternative activity. The community service projects are intended to: (1) build self-esteem; (2) develop self-worth; (3) improve the community; (4) improve the lives of parents and VPs; and (5) strengthen peer-to-peer relationships.[16]

Training is Key

For a parent partner program to succeed, extensive training is required. Adequate training can address concerns judges and attorneys may have about involving a parent partner in a case. Training requirements vary, but examples include:

- Regardless of prior experience, **CFR** requires parent advocates to participate in training for new staff, which is typically about 10 weeks. Each parent advocate is then supervised by a social worker.
- **CWOP** requires six months of initial training.
- Parents in the **Jefferson County Parent Advocate Program (KY)** participate in the *Building a Better Future* curriculum.[17] This curriculum takes about 15 hours over multiple sessions and is led by a social services professional and a birth parent. The parent partner learns how the child welfare agency works, as well as advocacy and communication skills. A key session explores feelings of grief and loss in parents and children when they are separated.
- The **Iowa Parent Partner Program** provides about 40 hours of training over a year.[18] Parent partners must complete training before they are assigned to a parent. Training includes participating in the *Building a Better Future* curriculum, and supplemental sessions on the child welfare agency, mandatory reporting, and boundaries and ethics. Other sessions that must be completed within one year include mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, and family team meetings. Parent partners are provided ongoing training and opportunities to participate in conferences.

In addition to training parents to help other parents one on one, other programs train them to be involved on the decision-making level and empower them to speak out for their rights, and advocate for child welfare reforms.

California State Parent Team

California is working to involve parents in major policy-making decisions. The California State Parent Team grew out of the 1992 revisions to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requiring meaningful parent engagement in child abuse prevention. Since 1996, the California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, has contracted with Parents Anonymous® to create the California State Parent Team (CSPT). The CSPT includes parent leaders who partner with parents, professionals, and policymakers. CSPT members serve on committees and task forces to help parents engage in planning, implementing, and evaluating family support and child welfare services statewide. Parents Anonymous® provides recruitment, training, mentoring, stipends, and ongoing support to the CSPT.

The CSPT focuses on five major initiatives:

- **California Parent Engagement Center (CPEC),** www.caparentengagement.org. This online resource shares parent engagement program strategies, promotes using evidence-based programs and strategies, and contains Web site links, publications, articles, and tool kits.
- **Permanency Planning Committee of the California Child Welfare Council (CWC).** A CSPT member serves on this legislatively created permanency planning committee. CWC works

Web Resources:

Find more online:
An expanded version of this article can be found at the ABA's National Project to Improve Representation for Parents Involved in the Child Welfare System Web site: www.abanet.org/child/parentrepresentation/home.html.

To learn more about the programs in this article, visit:

- **Center for Family Representation**
  www.cfrny.org
- **Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP)**
  www.cwop.org
- **Iowa Parent Partner Program**
  www.dhs.state.ia.us/cppc/Parent_Partner_Program/index.html
- **Jefferson County Parent Advocate Program**
  http://chfs.ky.gov/dcbs/parentadvocates.htm
- **Catalyst for Kids (Washington State)**
  www.catalystforkids.org/index.html
- **California Parent Engagement Center (CPEC)**
  www.caparentengagement.org
- **National Coalition for Parent Advocacy in Child Protective Services**
  www.parentadvocacy.org/index.html

to achieve reunification for children and youth in foster care and helps them maintain and develop permanent connections with relatives and other important people.

- **California Coalition for Parent Advocacy in Child Protective Services.** CSPT will build a statewide network of parent advocates and programs based on the model of the National Coalition (see textbox).
- **Annual Statewide Parent Leadership Conference.** In its third year, this conference, cosponsored by Parents Anonymous®, the CSPT, and the Department of Social Services, shares best practices around parent engagement.
- **Parent Engagement Curriculum for Child Welfare Workers.** This curriculum, to be developed by CSPT members and Parents Anonymous® staff during 2010 – 2011, will be implemented at all regional training academies.

Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee (WSPAC)

Washington, with assistance from Catalyst for Kids, developed WSPAC, which calls on birth parents to advocate for strengthening the child welfare system and supporting family reunification. Activities include educating legislators, policymakers, and the public on key issues and systemic barriers for families.[19]

WSPAC includes about 25 people. Using the Casey Family Programs Better Together Model,[20] at least 51 percent of voting members are parents. To be considered for membership, parents generally have had their dependency case closed for at least a year. "Parents must be self accountable with the capacity to see beyond their particular situation, and acknowledge concepts of empathy and objectivity."[21] All members must assume leadership positions on a subcommittee, task force, or other project, and bring the parents' perspectives to their activities.

Washington encourages developing local and regional Parent Advisory Committees (PACs). About half of local PACs include veteran parents who provide the leadership. Local PACs partner with other stakeholders and organizations to improve the child welfare system. Local PAC members are charged to "[s]peak the truth as it is needed to enhance understanding and promote positive change, but not to grind an ax about a personal experience or to sling mud at any given individual or system."[22]

Conclusion

When parent partners and mentors are involved with parents from the beginning of a child welfare case, parents get the support and knowledge they need to navigate the system and improve their chances of achieving reunification. Parent partners relate to parents in a way that no other person in the case can by sharing their experiences and successes. Evaluations of CFR and Jefferson County's programs show that using a parent advocate improves case outcomes. For attorneys representing parents in the child welfare system, a well-trained parent advocate is a valuable addition to a case.

In addition, several states and local jurisdictions realize an important group has been missing from the policy-making process. These jurisdictions now recruit and train parent leaders to sit at the decision-making table. Parent leaders bring a long silent voice in the child welfare system—those of the parents whose lives and children are at the center of the case.

Diane Boyd Rauber, MEd, JD, is a

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Parent Advocate Stories: 'I Used to Be in Your Shoes'

As a parent advocate, I help lawyers and parents connect.

by Milagros Sanchez

I am a parent advocate at the Center for Family Representation (CFR) in New York City. CFR provides parents in child welfare proceedings a lawyer, social worker, family advocate, and parent advocate to support them.

Parents whose children were removed and put in foster care often feel like they can't trust anyone. Many parents are victims of childhood abuse or domestic violence; some use drugs to deal with their pain. They're used to manipulation and abuse. Most have intimacy issues. They fear that if you get too close, you must want something from them, or you want to hurt them. My job is to help parents trust us and see that we're going to help them.

Straight Talk

When a parent first comes to CFR, she meets with the social worker and the lawyer. Sometimes they will ask me, "Can you help me with this case?" Usually, that's because they're having a hard time connecting with the parent, or feel the parent is not being honest.

I can talk to parents in ways that social workers and lawyers cannot. My attitude is, "I know all the excuses, all the lines. I don't have to sugarcoat things or treat clients with kid gloves."

'You're Sabotaging Yourself!'

Not long ago, one client went off on an attorney who agreed to a recommendation that she go to inpatient instead of outpatient treatment. She was yelling, "That's not what I want!"

When the client walked out, I followed her and asked, "What is going on here? That's unnecessary drama. You're sabotaging your case! This attorney is working with you. Do you want to get your child back or not?"

She was too upset to put down her guard, but I chose my words carefully and spoke softly. She calmed down and by the time she went home she said, "I'm going to think about what you said."

Several days later, my client chose to go to the inpatient program. I'm proud to say she completed the program and reunited with her children.

Sharing My Story

One challenging case involved a mom with bipolar disorder who was using marijuana. She was participating in services and visiting her son, but was having trouble quitting marijuana and kept refusing treatment. She also had a habit of flipping out in court.

I don't always tell clients about my history or what I went through to reunify with my sons, but I had to share my story with her to gain her trust. I met her in court one day and told her, "I used to be in your shoes. I resisted treatment for many years and didn't believe anyone could help me."

Slowly she opened up. She told me, "I don't think I can stop using." She was also convinced that, even if she finished treatment, the system was not going to give her son back. She didn't understand that her son remained in the system because she was not complying. I told her, "Once you start taking care of you, things will fall into place. It will happen as a process, not overnight." It took her a month, but she entered treatment.

Patience Despite Frustration

Sometimes I can't make a connection. Some parents are not open. Everything is everybody else's fault. I tell them, "No matter what I do, no matter what the social worker or the lawyer does, if you don't do what you need to do, nothing is going to change."

Frustration comes with the territory. One day I told a parent, "You are not alone. Do you have any idea how lucky you are that you have a team? I didn't have a lawyer and fought the system on my own."

Still, I build trust with the parents by following through. They'll ask, "I need help with housing. Can you meet me?" If they owe rent or are getting evicted, I go to housing court to advocate for them. If public assistance is going to cut them off, I guide them. I also make home visits. I go to their homes to see if they're OK.

Encouraging Success

Without a team, it would be hard for the attorney and the parent to succeed. The attorney is busy with the court process and can only do so much. What happens to the rest of the process? The parent is going to be lost without someone to encourage her and show her how to succeed.

Some caseworkers don't understand that to help the child, you have to help the parent. They also have a lot to do to make sure the child is safe in foster care and cannot always guide and support the parent. Plus, parents don't always trust the agency that removed their children, so they try to do everything on their own.

At CFR, I feel lucky to be able to help the parents get back on track. We don't do the work for the parents. I always tell them, "You've got to do the footwork." But they can trust us to stick by them.

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consultant for the ABA Center on Children and the Law and the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Legal and Judicial Issues. She has co-authored or edited numerous ABA publications, including *A Judge's Guide: Making Child-Centered Decisions in Custody Cases* and *Representing Parents in Child Welfare Cases.*

The author thanks Susan Jacobs, Executive Director of the Center for Family Representation (CFR), and Mike Arsham, Executive Director of the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP), and their staff members, for allowing her to spend a day with them meeting parent advocates and parents. She would also like to thank administrators, advocates, and parents from the programs in California, Kentucky, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Washington cited in the articles for their input and insight.

The *Parent Advocate Stories* were developed by Rise, a New York City program that trains parents to write about their experiences with the child welfare system to support parents and parent advocacy and guide child welfare practitioners and policymakers in becoming more responsive to the families and communities they serve. Learn more at www.risemagazine.org

Stay tuned: A second article in next month's *CLP* will focus on practical suggestions for parents' attorneys and others on how to work with parent partners to improve representation quality.

Endnotes

[1] Telephone interview with Danisa Farley, St. Paul, Minnesota, September 8, 2008.

[2] Center for Family Representation. "Community Advocacy Teams - Common Sense Approach Yields Uncommon Results." *Family Matters,* Winter 2009. <www.cfrny.org/pdf/newsletter_winter09.pdf>

[3] Child Welfare Organizing Project. *Current Programs and Accomplishments.* <www.cwop.org>.

[4] The Family to Family Initiative emphasizes four core strategies: (1) building community partnerships; (2) team decision making; (3) resource family recruitment, development, and support; and (4) self-evaluation. For more information about The Annie E. Casey Foundation Family to Family Initiative, see www.aecf.org/Major Initiatives/Family%20to%20Family.aspx.

[5] Commonwealth of Kentucky, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community-Based Services. *Parent Advocacy Program Evaluation. Jefferson County, Kentucky,* June 11, 2007, 8. The evaluation notes that the sample size of the parent advocate families (63) was considerably smaller than the other referral families (3034). Therefore, the results "should be reviewed as preliminary" and "interpreted cautiously." Ibid., 13.

[6] Ibid., 12.

[7] Ibid., 14 - 16.

[8] Lianekhammy, Joann and Ruth Huebner. *Parent Advocate Program Evaluation Outcomes for Families Served in Jefferson County September 2005 to April 2008.* Jefferson County, Kentucky, August 21, 2008, 1.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Iowa Department of Human Services, Community Partnerships for Protecting Children. 2007-2008 Iowa Parent Partner Program Update. <www.dhs.state.ia.us/cppc/Parent_Partner_Program/index.html>

[12] Telephone Interview with Kyla Marsden, Iowa Parent Partner State Coordinator, August 14, 2009.

[13] See www.dhs.state.ia.us/cppc/Parent_Partner_Program/index.html.

[14] Nancy Roberts-Brown. *Parent to Parent Dependency 101.* Seattle, WA: Catalyst for Kids, 2009.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] The Annie E. Casey Foundation recruited individuals in 2003 to develop a parent advocacy program and a training curriculum. Jimenez, Sandra and Naomi Weinstein. *Building a Better Future.* Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004.

[18] Information about the various parts of the Iowa training regimen can be found at www.dhs.state.ia.us/cppc/Parent_Partner_Program/index.html.

[19] Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee. *Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee (WSPAC) Membership Responsibilities.* Seattle WA: Catalyst for Kids, 2009, fn 1.

[20] For more information about the Casey Family Programs Better Together Model, see www.casey.org/Resources/Initiatives/BetterTogether.

[21] Washington State Parent Advocacy Committee, 2.

[22] Nancy Roberts-Brown. *Parent Advocacy Committee Description.* Seattle, WA: Catalyst for Kids, 2009, 1.

*(**Watson,** continued from p. 147)*

worker to gather information about the mother's boyfriend (criminal background, job history, residence) and obtain hospital records about the toddler's injuries. The service worker admitted she failed to follow the checklist and her supervisor's instructions by not gathering information about the boyfriend. The court found that the worker lacked discretion to ignore her supervisor's instructions, and she was therefore not entitled to state-agent immunity.

The great-grandmother also claimed the agency supervisors were not entitled to state-agency immunity, citing several instances of their lack of supervision and oversight of the case investigator and service worker in the case. However, since the grandmother's claims centered on their supervision without citing rules or regulations requiring the supervisors to act independently from the workers they supervised, they were entitled to state-agent immunity on that claim.