Call for Abstracts
Effectively Addressing the Needs of Child Welfare Involved Families Affected by Substance Abuse
A Special Issue of Child Welfare Journal

Special Issue Editors: Nancy K Young, Ph.D. and Julie Collins, LCSW; co-sponsored by Child Welfare League of America and the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

Over 8.3 million children in the United States under the age of 18—representing 11.9 percent of children nationwide—live with a parent who is dependent on alcohol or needs treatment for a substance use disorder.\(^1\) Parental substance abuse places the family at an increased risk of child abuse, neglect, and trauma. Sixty-one percent of infants and 41 percent of older children in foster care had a caregiver who reported active alcohol or drug abuse.\(^2\) These families face many challenges that affect their engagement and retention in services, and multiple agencies must collaborate effectively to meet their needs. Research over the past decade has documented promising outcomes and innovative models for collaborative practice between the fields of child welfare, substance abuse treatment and dependency courts.

CWLA is committed to ensuring that children and their families are provided with effective services that lead to their optimal well-being. In the summer of 2015, CWLA will work in partnership with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare to develop a special issue of CWLA’s journal, Child Welfare, to highlight state of the art models that serve families affected by substance use and co-occurring mental disorders, and child abuse and neglect. Of particular interest are articles that address the following:

1. Prevalence and impact of substance use disorders on families involved with child welfare and the courts.
2. Models of collaborative practice that improve systemic responses to the needs of parents and children affected by substance abuse who are involved with child welfare and the courts.
3. Policy development and implementation that address the needs of families affected by substance use disorders who are involved with child welfare and the courts.
4. Trauma-informed engagement and retention of parents in services and recovery supports (e.g., screening, assessment, and treatment), and services for children and families who are affected by parental substance abuse and child abuse and neglect.
6. Outcomes in child safety, permanency, well-being, and family recovery.
7. Outcomes in parental engagement, retention, and completion of substance abuse treatment.
8. Cost studies, including cost efficiencies and cost avoidance studies of practices put in place to serve families affected by substance abuse who are involved with child welfare and the court.
9. Family outreach and engagement, including family drug courts, recovery support specialists, and specialized outreach.
10. Collaborative practice with community partners and supports, such as housing, adult and children’s mental health, juvenile justice, early childhood education, and primary care providers designed to assist families affected by substance abuse.
11. Gender responsiveness and cultural competency in developing trauma-informed substance abuse treatment and child welfare practice, policy, and systemic improvement.
12. Training and staff development related to serving families involved with child welfare and affected by substance abuse.
13. Organizational responses to resistance to working across systems to address parental substance abuse that affects children, including barriers and attitudes toward substance abuse issues that affect collaborative practice.
14. Collaborative approaches to working with Tribal communities affected by substance abuse and child abuse or neglect.
15. Implementation, use, and sustainability of evidence-based or evidence-informed practices for children and families affected by substance use disorders.

Submission Guidelines

Prospective authors should submit an abstract that describes their article by Midnight (Eastern Time) Monday, June 16, 2014. Abstracts should be no more than 750 words, typed, and double-spaced and submitted to Rachel Adams, managing editor, at radams@cwla.org. Please use "Special Issue on Substance Abuse, Child Welfare and the Courts" as your subject line. Abstracts should clearly identify the topic of the article, the background and need for the article, the methodology used to address the topic, and a brief statement about the application of the knowledge gained from the article.

Authors will be notified by July 7, 2014 if they will be invited to submit a full article. If authors are invited, manuscript specifications include:

- Microsoft Word
- Times New Roman, 12-pt font, double-spaced
- 1-inch page margins
- 5,000 word maximum, including references

Those authors selected must submit their manuscript by October 1, 2014. After a final review by a peer review panel, the final edited papers are due by January 16, 2015. An invitation to submit a paper is not a guarantee of publication.

For additional information, contact Julie Collins, Director of Standards for Practice Excellence, CWLA, at jcollins@cwla.org or 202-688-4155.

---