Instructor’s Manual: Chapter 6

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# Learning Objectives for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

After reading this chapter, you should be able to  
1. Define family in light of contemporary family structure.  
2. Describe the tension between the rights of children and the rights of parents.  
3. Describe services and programs designed to help children and families.  
4. Describe the belief systems that underpin opinions about child and family services.  
5. Identify how the education system could be improved to help families and children.  
6. Explain how diversity affects family and child welfare.  
7. Apply the dynamic advocacy model to family and child welfare.

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# Lecture Notes for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

The definition of family has evolved over time and includes a diversity of family forms today. Families face multiple challenges, such as domestic violence, child abuse, and poverty. Social workers advocate for social legislation, policies, and social welfare programs to address the rights and needs of children and family members. In practice, social workers both assist with the day-to-day trials and tribulations of children and families, and identify ways to protect and advance their rights.

**Today’s Families**

The definition of what constitutes a family has changed. A family is a social unit containing two or more members. However, families can vary sig­nificantly by composition, complexity, and size. A family structure could or could not be based on **kin­ship**, which is common ancestry, marriage, or adoption. Traditionally, families were classified as a **nuclear family**, where one or more parents live with their dependent children apart from other relatives, or an **extended family**, where in addition to parents and children other relatives live in the same household or in close proximity.

**Diverse Family Forms**

* Divorce - In the United States, the probability of a marriage ending in divorce is between 40% and 50%. Divorce rates are lower for spouses with college degrees.
* Separation - Separated spouses maintain the legal status of being married. This is an important attribute with regard to medical insurance, taxes, and financial matters.
* Blended Families - A family unit with two married persons, children from previous marriages or relationships, and children (if any) from the newly formed marriage. Children often need to share time between two sets of parents.
* Single Parent Households - Single parents face challenges in caring for and financially supporting the children, however single parents having fewer everyday obligations and commitments to a spouse. Children in these homes often develop a sense of responsibility and independence at a younger age.
* Gay Marriage and Parenting - In 2004, Massachusetts was the first state to legalize gay marriage. Since then, many other states have passed legislation legalizing same-gender marriages. Other states legally recognize civil unions for gay and lesbian couples; civil union is a legal status that can be helpful with regard to child custody, family leave rights, and similar matters.
* Cohabitation - When two adults live together in a dwelling without legally formalizing their relationship through marriage, they are cohabitating.

**Family Problems**

Social workers intervene with various family-based problems and advocate for programs and policies that strengthen and enrich family functioning, and promote the rights and safety of children.

* Domestic Violence - a broad range of acts of violence (including assault, injury, rape) against family members. Domestic violence is typically an issue of power and control.
* Child Maltreatment – includes the abuse and victimization of children. Previously considered a private matter, it is now viewed as a public matter. Influences on this shift include professional organizations (social workers, nurses, schoolteachers, counselors, and legal advocates) bringing attention to the matter, and women entering the labor force in greater numbers who acquired newfound power to advocate for children’s rights.
  + **T**he practices, policies, and services put in place to promote child well-being and safety are generally referred to as child welfare. Child protective services,programs through which social workers, law enforcement personnel, and healthcare workers respond to reports of child maltreatment, are a key component in publicly funded child welfare agencies.
  + Types of child maltreatment
    - Physical abuse - hitting or punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, burning, choking, and stabbing.
    - Sexual abuse - engage sexually with a child or to exploit a child for sexual purposes. Examples of sexual acts include touching the genitals, engaging in sexual intercourse, penetrating the child, sexually exposing oneself to a child, and engaging in voyeurism if a child becomes exposed or is engaged in sexual acts.
    - Neglect – failing to meet a child’s basic needs, including physical, emotional, educational, and medical needs.
    - Psychological maltreatment – intentionally conveying that the child is worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or valued only in meeting another’s needs. Can include public embarrassment, verbal cruelty, intimidation, threats, and deprivation of love.
  + Social workers receive special training for detecting and documenting various forms of child maltreatment. They look for behavioral indicators of maltreatment, such as a child’s extreme passivity and withdrawal to avoid the attention and provocation of a caretaker.

**Child Welfare Services**

Public child welfare agencies typically serve large numbers of people, offer a variety of programs, and are less costly to clients. Public child welfare programs are often located in county-based departments of social or human services and include adoption, family life education, foster care, child protective, in-home family centered intervention, and residential services. Private child welfare agencies usually focus on specific problems and subpopulations, rely on pay for service, see fewer clients, and are less bureaucratic in nature.

* History of Child and Family Services –
  + Early 1800s - young children were often left alone to care and fend for themselves while their parents worked or sought work, sometimes traveling to the growing cities for work. By the mid-1800s government run institutions were being established to house abandoned and needy children.
  + Mary Ellen McCormack – victim of almost daily whippings and beating by her adoptive mother. Her case was brought to the attention of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, one of the only protective agencies in existence. Her case led to the creation of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NYSPCC) in 1874, which is believed to be the first child protective agency in the world.
  + 1960s - recognition of child abuse as a social issue occurred. Battered child syndrome was recognized as clinical condition, professionals were required to report cases of child abuse to authorities
* Parental versus Children Rights - Parents often assert the right to raise and discipline their children as they see fit. Some parents attempt to justify child maltreatment as a parental right.
* A Global Context for Child Protection – establishing widely shared definitions of what constitutes “abuse of children” is an ongoing challenge. Religious beliefs may include spanking.
* Key Child and Family Services
  + Child Protective Services – the “front lines” of child welfare, investigations
  + Family-Based Services – services designed to enhance and strengthen the family
  + Family Preservation Services – services to keep the family unit intact
  + Family Foster Care – children are cared for by a certified foster family
  + Family Reunification Services – enhance parental skills, address trauma
  + Adoption Services - permanent rendering of legal and parental rights
  + Residential Care – structure and stabilization in a non-family group setting
  + Independent Living Services – teenagers “aging out“ of family foster care services
  + Intensive Treatment – therapy and counseling in a non-residential setting
* Social Policy and Legislation Supporting Child and Family Services – services to children and families are typically mandated by state and federal laws. Sometimes legislators pass laws requiring services without providing the necessary resources. Examples of laws to promote child and family welfare include:
  + National School Lunch Program (1946) – free and reduced lunch for low income
  + Supplemental Social Insurance (1972) – children with disabilities plus low income
  + Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (1974) – mandated reporting
  + Education of All Handicapped Children Act (1975) – requires school services
  + Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996) - TANF
* Public Attitudes toward Services for Children and Families – there are two distinct viewpoints concerning social welfare programs and services.
  + Institutional or primary view of social welfare:Humans are inherently good but are confronted with challenging needs (for example, employment, healthcare, housing) and circumstances (unemployment, illness, divorce, loss of a loved one). Communities and society as a whole have a responsibility to help people by providing economic and social support services.
  + Residual or secondary view of social welfare: People, including the poor and down-trodden, should be responsible for their own lot in life and not expect government intervention. Social welfare programs should be limited to helping people only in the direst of situations and should only provide a safety net—that is, those services that spare people from perishing.
* Social Workers’ Attitudes Toward Child and Family Services - With the NASW Code of Ethics as a moral compass, social workers stay client-centered and resist imposing or reinforcing counterproductive belief systems concerning children and families. A large part of the social work belief system is belief in client self-determination and the inherent dignity and worth of each person and each family.

**Social Work in Schools**

School social work emerged in American schools in eastern cities (e.g., New York and Boston) toward the beginning of the 20th Century to both address student needs and promote quality educational experiences. In addition to counseling troubled youth, school social workers intervene with family members, school officials, lawmakers, and community leaders to identify ways to enrich the social conditions and the circumstances for student success. National and state policy has promoted the credentialing of professionals in school settings, which has led in turn to certification, licensure, and advanced training for school social workers.

* Challenges Facing School Social Workers
  + Violence and Bullying - up to 41% of students in the U.S. have been involved in bullying at school, either as a victim (23%), bully (8%), or both bully and victim (9%). Social workers are often part of a team at school that develops and implements bully prevention programs.
  + Poor and Homeless Students – may arrive at school hungry and sleepy. These students are at great risk of poor school attendance and performance. They may adopt maladaptive behaviors, experience social and cognitive setbacks, and are prone to poor grades and high dropout rates.
    - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act - allows homeless children to start school in a new place without all their previous school records, documentation of residency, and immunization records.
  + Students with Physical and Mental Challenges - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), mandates a variety of supports and services for these students.
  + Teen Pregnancy - interrupts attendance at school and extra-curricular participation.
* Improvements in Education to Help Parents and Children – Schools are funded with a combination of state and local tax dollars. Therefore, students living in affluent areas are able to attend highly sought after primary and secondary schools. Students living in economically disadvantaged areas, disproportionately from racial and ethnic minorities, are relegated to struggling school systems.

**Diversity and Family and Child Welfare**

* *Age*- Young children are especially vulnerable and dependent upon family members for affection and basic needs, including food, shelter, clothes, and medical attention.
* *Class-* Children living in economically challenged circumstances struggle with obtaining a safe living environment, quality childcare or schooling, proper nutrition, suitable clothing, reliable transportation, and other basics.
* *Ethnicity-* Members of a particular ethnic group also share values and expectations about individual behavior.
* *Race-* Despite decades of advocacy for desegregation, school systems in the United States remain segregated on the basis of race and social-economic status. The inability for all students to attend schools characterized by quality instruction, extra-curricular activities, and integrative support with family members is one form of structural discrimination and institutional racism that persists in the United States.
* *Gender-* Mothers often assume custodial responsibilities for the children. Women face unique and demanding situations and rely on child and family services for support in ways that often differ from their male counterparts.
* *Sexual Orientation -* Marital and parental rights for gays and lesbians are currently grounded in state law and amidst change. In part, this is a social justice issue involving the ability for parents and children to be treated the same regardless of the sexual orientation of the parents.
* *Intersections of Diversity -* It is not unusual for parents and family members to represent several types of diversity.

**Advocacy on Behalf of Families and Children**

During the 1970s, recognition of the need for child advocacy led to strengthening of the services and programs serving children and families. The child welfare advocacy movement advanced the following major themes:

* Child development is influenced by interaction with families and transactions with other social systems (e.g., schools, child care providers, courts, medical providers, and court systems).
* Society has a responsibility for and obligation to children.
* Child and family services are a matter of right and entitlement.
* Children have rights in relationship to the social systems affecting them.

It has taken many decades to implement the conceptual shift from rescuing and saving children from unfit parents to the development of comprehensive, integrated child and family services that support the healthy physical and emotional development of children and families.

* Current Trends in Advocacy for Child and Family Services - The contemporary social worker is moving away from viewing advocacy for children and families as mainly a social work responsibility toward viewing it as an interdisciplinary collaboration.
  + Children’s Advocacy Centers offer a seamless continuum of services to families entering the child protection team. They can decrease the trauma experienced by child victims of abuse and improve the efficiency of the investigative process.
* Dynamic Advocacy and Family and Child Welfare - For social workers involved and child and family services, the “best interest of the child” is a primary consideration. Cries for help can take a number of forms (e.g., acting out, bed wetting, withdrawal, pleading or frightened facial expressions, clinginess, and physical distance).
  + Social and Economic Justice – Guardian Ad Litem pro­grams appoint individuals to speak and advocate on behalf of children in court sys­tems. School social workers advocate for changes in policies, pro­grams, and personnel in educational systems to benefit students.
  + Supportive Environment – Residential location impacts access to extended family members, employment, public transportation, healthcare, education, daycare, social services, shopping, and recreation. Exposure to crime and pollution are also based on residency.
  + Human Needs and Rights – Children deserve the right to successful childhood development, and it is the social worker’s professional and ethical responsibility to pursue social change for one of society’s most vulnerable population groups.
  + Political Access – The availability of supports is a political issue, based on dominant belief systems. One way that social workers may advocate for more funding and resources is by becoming more involved in the political process

**Your Career and Family and Child Welfare**

When working with children and families, social workers may be protective service workers, information and referral specialists, therapists, or program professionals. In each of these roles, social workers collect information and rely upon data to inform best practices. Social work roles that require expertise in using date include:

* *Program evaluators* - provide information to help make decisions about the aspects of service programs that work best for children and families and the ones that need to be adjusted.
* *Advocates* and*educator* - educate the public, politicians, administrators, and other decision makers concerning the experiences and problems of children and families.
* *Community organizers* **-** gather and rally consumers of services, professionals, and community members to promote changes in policies, practices, and laws to address the needs of children and families.

All of these roles depend on the ability to use qualitative and quantitative research skills to collect and analyze information.

* **Qualitative research** - data that is descriptive in nature and not quantified into numbers, gathered through methods such as case studies, focus groups, observation, interviews, and archival research.
* **Quantitative research** - data that is converted into numbers and analyzed statistically, gathered through methods such as surveys and checklists.

# Key Concepts for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

child maltreatment

child protective services

child welfare

domestic violence

extended family

family

kinship

nuclear family

qualitative research

quantitative research

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# Case Study for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

Thomas is an early childhood intervention social worker at a community-based children and family services agency. He is passionate about the impact of the underfunding of early intervention services in the county, particularly for children under the age of 6. His urban area has very few child-centered early intervention programs aimed at improving child development and promoting well-being. Children in his city typically don’t qualify for daycare services. Temporary placement for children is often limited to voluntary agreements with relatives facing similar social and economic problems. Although a few private therapists have agreed to work with children on an au gratis (free) basis, physical proximity, child care, and transportation are barriers to delivery of service. Because Thomas acquired special education and training thorough his MSW program and subsequent continuing education workshops and courses, he is very prepared and confident with intervening with young children living in very challenging and often traumatic conditions.

As an illustration of the breadth of Thomas’ commitments and responsibilities as a social worker, he has been very committed to advocate for additional federal, state, and local funding to support specially designed services to intervene families with young children in the context of their specific family and social-economic environment. Additional family-centered services are needed to focus on the unique needs of children, while parents acquire employment assistance, adult education, self-help, healthcare insurance, housing, and childcare. He believes that provision of mental health and substance abuse programming for parents and children, a subject examined in other parts of this book, is paramount. In Thomas’ client load, parental neglect is common, frequently resulting in youth being placed both temporarily and on a long-term (more permanent) basis into foster care. Thomas has witnessed how early detection and intervention via community support services can be effective and improve child development and well-being outcomes. He sees parent hotlines, crisis nursery and daycare services, crisis intervention, mental health services, and parental support groups as very exciting and powerful lifelines for parents seeking to protect their children.

1. Given the breadth of services Thomas sees as necessary for the well-being of his clientele, sufficient funding and support for all of them can be difficult to obtain. Where do you think Thomas should focus his strongest initial efforts and time?

2. Thomas is clearly devoted to his work, as many social workers are. While devotion is admirable, it can be easy for social workers who are very passionate to struggle to keep a healthy work-life balance. What do you think you can do as a social worker to make sure you do not burn out at an early stage of your career? How can you keep work at work and keep healthy boundaries for yourself that allow you to have the energy necessary to keep striving for social justice on the job?

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# Discussion Questions for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

Discussion Question #1

Studies have indicated that minority parents are more likely to have their children removed and placed into foster care than Caucasian parents. Why do you think this occurs? Is it a problem? If so, what should be done about it? If not, why not?

Discussion Question #2

Child protective services hotlines receive many, many calls about abuse and neglect. They have to investigate all of them, but some are likely to receive more scrutiny than others. What factors do you think make it more likely that an allegation will be investigated more thoroughly?

Discussion Question #3

In the past, social norms in America allowed men to physically “punish” their wives, as they were effectively seen as property of the men. Of course, times have changed and we now generally recognize that such practices were sexist and terribly destructive. Do you believe we are moving in a similar direction when it comes to the physical punishment of children? Why or why not?

Discussion Question #4

Single parenting is a challenge faced by many in our society. Single parents are more likely to struggle financially and may find themselves under more stress when it comes to meeting their children’s needs. When it comes to child welfare, do you believe single parents should be allowed to adopt children or be foster parents? Why or why not?

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# Chapter Exercises for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

1. Given the multiple definitions of family in contemporary society, determine whether

gay and lesbian parents should have comparable rights to heterosexual parents. Base

your conclusions on statistics from your state or locale describing the outcomes for

children raised by same-sex parents, single parents, grandparents as parents, foster

parents, and residential care for children.

2. On the Internet, identify a child welfare BSW or MSW program near you. How appealing is the program? Does the program sponsor an open house or any opportunities to talk with or contact the program coordinator, students, or recent graduates?

3. In a private setting with friends or family members, broach the topic of government spending for services and programs to protect children. Identify belief systems that support their opinions. Are their views surprising to you? What are the probable sources of their belief systems and thoughts?

4. Consider volunteering at a residential program for children. Research the type of

commitment you would be making. Does it involve a criminal background check,

references, and drug screening? Ascertain if and how services for families and parents

are integrated with the residential program.

5. Research your local child protective services agency. Who provides and advocates for

such services? For example, does your local child protective services agency hire

licensed helping professionals (social workers and counselors), or are these positions

filled by nonprofessionals? If the latter, in what areas of providing and advocating for

services to children and families do you think the nonprofessionals would need to

improve their skills?

6. Visit a family court and determine who appears to be looking out for the best interests

of children. Is a guardian ad litem present? How are the views and interests of parents

placed before the court?

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# Class Activities for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

**Class activity #1**

Break the class into groups of 4-5 students each. Provide them with the following vignette and ask them to read it aloud and answer the questions that follow. After some time, discuss as a full class.

The Jackson family comes in for an evaluation following a referral from the 14-year-old daughter Keera’s school social worker, as Keera’s grades have been declining for the last two years. The family consists of Keera’s parents (Jayson and Shinara), Keera, and her brothers Maxwell (age 10) and Jackson (5). It is quickly evident that there are a lot of problems to deal with in the family. There is plenty of tension between Keera’s parents, whom she says have been on the edge of divorce for years. Keera seems overwhelmed, as do her siblings. The family lives in public housing and much of the surrounding area is heavily gang-controlled and fraught with violence, particularly at night. The apartment itself continually has problems maintaining sufficient heat in the winter and staying cool in the summer. The father, Jayson, is unemployed, and has been for 18 months.

The mother, Shinara, says if Jayson doesn’t get a job soon, she will leave him and take the children. Jayson says he wants to work; he lost his job due to technological advances at the factory, and he has struggled to find new work due to lacking a high school diploma. Keera says she thinks her dad has secretly given up trying to find a job and is satisfied making ends meet with the meager public assistance the family received. Shinara says she is “fed up” with Jayson’s lack of drive, which she attributes in part to his daily marijuana habit. She says the kids do not know about Jayson’s use of pot, but Keera tells the social worker one-on-one that she is worried about her dad’s drug use.

As this family’s social worker, where do you start? How do you determine what steps to take first?

You may also choose to provide some groups with the above vignette and some with the vignette below, which is identical except the names have been replaced with ones that students would more typically assume to come from a non-minority family. It may be interesting to ask the groups how they pictured the family in their minds when the stories were read, and to ask if the race of a family in this situation would impact the sort of assessment or services they received.

The O’Reilly family comes in for an evaluation following a referral from the 14-year-old daughter Maggie’s school social worker, as Keera’s grades have been declining for the last two years. The family consists of Maggie’s parents (Mick and Catherine), Maggie, and her brothers Lochlan (age 10) and Liam (5). It is quickly evident that there are a lot of problems to deal with in the family. There is plenty of tension between Maggie’s parents, whom she says have been on the edge of divorce for years. Maggie seems overwhelmed, as do her siblings. The family lives in public housing and much of the surrounding area is heavily gang-controlled and fraught with violence, particularly at night. The apartment itself continually has problems maintaining sufficient heat in the winter and staying cool in the summer. The father, Mick, is unemployed, and has been for 18 months.

The mother, Catherine, says if Mick doesn’t get a job soon, she will leave him and take the children. Mick says he wants to work; he lost his job due to technological advances at the factory, and he has struggled to find new work due to lacking a high school diploma. Maggie says she thinks her dad has secretly given up trying to find a job and is satisfied making ends meet with the meager public assistance the family received. Maggie says she is “fed up” with Mick’s lack of drive, which she attributes in part to his daily marijuana habit. She says the kids do not know about Mick’s use of pot, but Keera tells the social worker one-on-one that she is worried about her dad’s drug use.

**Class activity #2**

Tell your students to imagine they are employed as social workers at an agency that trains, screens, and approves or denies people who are applying to be foster parents. Ask them to write down answers to the following questions.

1) What would you want to look for when visiting the house of the prospective foster parent(s) for the first time?

2) What sorts of questions do you think would be most important to ask?

3) If you met with a pair of parents who gave good answers and had a safe, clean home in a good neighborhood, but you had an uneasy feeling about the couple, what would you do?

4) You may gain additional information about a prospective foster parent by talking to others who know him/her. Whom would be essential to contact, in your mind?

After these questions have been answered individually, have the students gather into groups of four or five to discuss their answers together. Then discuss as a class.

**Class activity #3**

Break your students into small groups and have them discuss the following scenario and the questions that follow. After sufficient time has passed, discuss their answers with the class.

You are a school social worker at a large public high school of about 2,200 students. In the past few weeks, several female students have approached you and reported that they have been sexually assaulted and/or raped while on dates, and they feel very alone, as they’ve told no one (or, in one girl’s case, her best friend didn’t believe her). This has left them feeling self-destructive at times, though no one currently reports feeling suicidal. Although you cannot introduce them to each other individually without violating their confidentiality, you have considered whether it might be helpful for them to have a support group where they could talk to each other and receive support and validation. You approach them individually with the idea and they are very open to it, so you decide to schedule a meeting with the administrator who serves as your boss.

Upon presenting the idea to your boss, you are surprised to find yourself having to defend the need for the group. The administrator is adamant that establishing a group like this will give the impression that sexual assault and rape are a problem at the school, and she does not wish it to appear that way to the community. She especially bristles at the idea that the group would meet during school hours, causing the girls to miss class occasionally. She says she thinks it is best for you to continue to help the girls individually and refer them to an outside counselor for any further services.

What can you do at this point? Do you need to give up on your idea? Is there a way to continue to try to get the group approved? What options do you have?

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# Video and Multimedia for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

#### Video Clips

* [People React to Lesbian/Gay Parents in a Restaurant](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmKFtDU0vBw)   
  How do people react when a server treats a pair of same-sex parents rudely?
* [In Her Own Voice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lOeQUwdAjE0)   
  Part of the film ReMoved, a dramatized look at foster care through a child’s eyes.
* [Bully Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjjeHeAzZZM)   
  The trailer for the award-winning documentary Bully, depicting the problem and potential solutions.
* [The Aftermath of Bully](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9090Yg8FBSg)   
  Alex Libby, protagonist of Bully, talks about life after the movie came out.

#### Audio Clips

* [The Pernicious Impact of Bullying](http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=172965377&m=172965367)   
  A recent study suggests the effects of bullying can last well into middle age.
* [Racial Inequality in the Foster Care System](http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=5688674&m=5688675)   
  Native American children are being removed from their homes at an alarming rate in South Dakota.
* [The U.S.’s Strained Foster Care System](http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=225148325&m=225148522)   
  Over 400,000 American kids are currently looking for permanent homes.

# Web Resources for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

* [LGBT Parents: Legal Rights and Information](https://www.aclu.org/lgbt-rights/lgbt-parenting)   
  A list of resources for LGBT parents.
* [AdoptUSKids](http://www.adoptuskids.org/for-families/how-to-foster)   
  Resources regarding how to become a foster parent in the United States.
* [National Domestic Violence Hotline](http://www.thehotline.org/help/)   
  Help for victims of domestic violence is available 24/7.

# SAGE Journal Articles for Chapter 6: Family and Child Welfare

[**SAGE Journal User Guide**](http://www.uk.sagepub.com/sageEdge/orvis3e/files/SJ-userguide.pdf)

Article 1.

[Ausikaitis, A. E., Wynne, M. E., Persaud, S., Pitt, R., Hosek, A., Reker, K., et al. (2014). Staying in school: The efficacy of the McKinney–Vento act for homeless youth. Youth & Society](http://yas.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/0044118X14564138v1?ijkey=Eb0aLyvbADSGc&keytype=ref&siteid=spyas), doi:10.1177/0044118X14564138

Using data from three focus groups with homeless youth, this article presents the perspectives of youth on the experience and meaning of homelessness.  The findings suggest ways to improve the services to homeless youth and enhance their ability to advocate for themselves.

#### Questions:

1. What were the goals of the McKinney-Vento Act?
2. According to research participants, what were the benefits and drawbacks of disclosure of their homeless status?
3. How does the lack of awareness of rights (among homeless youth) affect their ability to engage in self-advocacy?
4. What could schools do to better support students experiencing homelessness?

Article 2.

[Okech, D., Morreau, W., & Benson, K. (2012). Human trafficking: Improving victim identification and service provision. International Social Work, 55(4), 488-503](http://isw.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/55/4/488?ijkey=CBI3gjSUyddHg&keytype=ref&siteid=spisw). doi:10.1177/0020872811425805

This article provides an assessment of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and suggests ways that social workers be involved in improving victim identification and service provision for survivors.

#### Questions:

1. Consider the three main goals of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA):  prevention, protection, and prosecution.  How does TVPA attempt to achieve these goals?
2. What do the authors suggest about the apparently diminishing numbers of trafficked individuals in the U.S. since 2000?
3. Describe the issues affecting services for identified victims of human trafficking.  What policy and programmatic barriers exist?
4. What can social workers do to improve victim identification and service provision with respect to human trafficking?  List and describe three recommendations.