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?