

4th Annual DCFS Partnering with Parents
Cook County Birth Parent Council Institute Day



Making Things Happen:
No More Trauma Drama

PARTNERING



WITH PARENTS



Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

June 4, 2010
The Crowne Plaza –
Chicago Metro
733 W. Madison
Chicago, IL 60661

Dear Parents and Colleagues:

Welcome to the Department's Fourth Annual Cook County Birth Parent Institute Day!

This Institute was developed by members of the Parent Core Council and Steering Council and is designed to reach out to DCFS birth parents and child welfare staff who serve them. The theme this year: Keeping our Kids: "No More Trauma Drama" helps parents to recognize and manage the many behavioral manifestations of trauma.

The Department of Children and Family Services is committed to the development of Birth Parent Councils through out Illinois that provide the advocacy parents need to ensure that their voices are heard and we are very proud of the efforts made here in Cook County to reach parents.

This year parents will learn how to distinguish the signs and symptoms of trauma and strategies to effectively cope. They will also learn how to overcome the traumatic situations with which they are confronted so that they can better parent their children.

Workshops are designed to present both professional and birth parent perspectives on distinguishing the signs and symptoms of trauma and coping strategies necessary to manage resulting behavior.

Workshops will also inform you about the rights and responsibilities of fathers, how to access resources needed for successful reunification and how to strengthen visitation between parents and their children.

The entire day will provide key information that enhances parents and staff's reunification efforts and once again, I encourage you to participate fully.

On behalf of the entire DCFS staff and partner agencies, I thank you for taking the time to attend this Institute for Birth Parents.

Sincerely,



Erwin McEwen
Director

Office of the Director

100 West Randolph, 6-200 • Chicago, Illinois 60601-3249

312-814-4650 • 312-814-8783 / TTY



Pat Quinn
Governor



Erwin McEwen
Director

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Fourth Annual Cook County Birth Parent Institute!

The theme for the Institute is Keeping our kids: “No More Trauma Drama”. Our purpose is to provide skills and information that all parents involved with DCFS need to know to better work with their caseworkers and others who make important decisions about your family.

This year workshops include very important information about the signs and symptoms of Trauma and ways to effectively cope. In addition, you will learn about the rights and responsibilities of fathers, how to access resources need for reunification and how to strengthen visitation between you and your children.

I commend the Birth Parent Council and members of the Steering Council for their leadership in developing this year’s institute and encourage you to learn more about the Cook County Birth Parent Council. Please be sure to complete the evaluations for each session as your feed back helps us to better serve you and your children.

I also encourage you to speak to child welfare experts and staff throughout the day who will be available to answer your questions with helpful information.

Thank you, I look forward to meeting each of you at the Institute.

Sincerely,

Shaun Lane
Deputy Director
Division of Support Services

Division of Support Services
100 West Randolph, 6-200 • Chicago, Illinois 60601-3249
312-814-6800 • 312-814-8783 / TTY

Cook County Birth Parent Council History and Mission

The ultimate purpose of child welfare agencies is to help families in crisis become stable and unified. In child welfare, birth parents have been sorely overlooked, which hinders and many times defeats the purpose. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) introduced the Partnering With Parents Initiative to address the concerns and needs of birth parents as the agency recognized the need for change on behalf of parents receiving child welfare services. Its main goal is to give families a voice regarding the policies, programs and services provided to them. To that end, the Birth Parent Councils of Cook County were created, which includes a Core Council and currently there is one council in each Region: North, South, and Central and meetings are scheduled as parents register to attend.

The mission of all councils is to identify issues concerning birth parents and present these issues to the appropriate government officials to bring about durable policy changes that will aid all parents with DCFS involvement, now and in the future. All members of the councils are birth parents.

The Council of parents recently elected officers to serve in the following positions to represent Cook County Birth Parents: Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr., Chair; Leon Alexander, Co-Chair; Ramona Randall, Secretary and George Lyke, Co-Secretary.

The Council also has developed committees chaired by birth parents to continue the planning and development of the Cook County Council. The committees are:

- The Support Committee, which helps to recruit and retain parents, encourage parents and mentor parents when requested. Help to identify resources and services within the community and the Council to assist parents as they navigate the child welfare system.
- The Media Committee, which helps to develop newsletters, flyers and materials for the Web site
- The Training Committee, which helps to plan in-service training sessions based on parents' priorities and identify the presenters for sessions, they also plan the Birth Parent events that will be held such as: Institute Days, In-Service trainings and Birth Parent presentations to new child welfare staff attending Foundations and Child Protection training.

Members of the Birth Parent Council have provided training to child welfare staff in Foundations training sessions by sharing their parent perspective on DCFS services provided to them during their involvement with DCFS.

Birth parents have participated in several Focus Group discussions providing a birth parent perspective including: DCFS Transformation Team addressing Race Issues and Youth Development. Parents have presented at Loyola University School of Law as panelists discussing birth parent issues and concerns.

Birth parents are members of the University of Illinois Steering Committee in the School of Social Work. They are providing parent's perspective on the child welfare social services curriculum. There is birth parent participation in the Cook County Juvenile Court's voluntary Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program. Fathers active in the Birth Parent Council provided their input in development of the Father Engagement Curriculum co-sponsored by Northwestern University and DCFS for the Statewide Learning Collaborative.

Birth parents that are interested in joining the Cook County Birth Parent Council or would like more information may contact 773-371-6000.

By Ramona Randall

Welcome to the Fourth Annual DCFS Birth Parent Council Institute Day!

We want to welcome each of you today, we are so glad you are here! We hope that you will enjoy the entire day which has been planned for you. The Birth Parent Council and Steering Committee Members have developed every workshop and planning event to enhance your knowledge and awareness! We want you to enjoy yourselves and participate in all of the sessions. Be sure to visit the Resource Exhibitors this year!

2010 Birth Parent Core Council Officers

Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr., Chair

Leon Alexander, Co-Chair

Ramona Randall, Secretary

George Lyke, Co-Secretary

2010 Birth Parent Core Council Members

Leon Alexander

Greg Cox

Letitia Franklin

Cynthia Hoyle

Jacqueline LeNoir

Reverend Terry LeNoir

George Lyke

Angela MacGruder

Natasha Oglesby

Eric Prater

Ramona Randall

Rayvese Woodfork-Smith

Verna Townsend

2010 Steering Council Members

Special Thanks to our Steering Council Members who work to assist the needs of birth parents and to further the development of Birth Parent Councils in Cook County.

Sheila Freeman

Kelly Hancock

Karen Harrington

Janice Hopson

Rita Houston

Jacqueline Johnson

Diane Mariani

Theresa Matthews

D. Jean Ortega-Piron

Dorretta Evans Parker

Lourdes Rodriguez

Monique Smith

Donna Steele

Carmen Valesquez

Jeff Walker

Special Thanks

Thank you to our Program Staff members: Donnella Bishop-Ward, Marsha Harris and Marnie Winston; the DCFS Division of Communications; and our community partners for their support of the Cook County Birth Parent Council Program.

Community Partners from the following organizations graciously have allowed the Cook County Birth Parent Council Regional Councils to meet in their facilities: Marillac Social Center and St. Vincent DePaul Center.

Special thanks to The McDermott Center – Haymarket, Forever Free and A Safe Haven for its support of the Cook County Birth Parent Council.

We also want to thank all our Exhibitors for their willingness to share resources and information with our attendees.

Birth Parent Council Institute Day Agenda

- 8:30 a.m.** **Registration/Continental Breakfast**
Musical Selections Provided by Joyce Hall, DCFS Cook Central Regional Administrator and Donna Steele, DCFS Cook Central Field Services Manager
- 9 a.m.** **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Donnella Bishop-Ward, Program Administrator
- Introductions**
Shaun Lane, Deputy Director, DCFS Division of Support Services
Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr., Chair Cook County Birth Parent Council
- 9:15 a.m.** **Keynote Address**
Introduction of Speaker – Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr.
Dr. Carl C. Bell, MD. President of Community Mental Health Council
- Skit**
- 10:15 a.m.** **Break**
- 10:30 a.m.** **Workshops**
- Rights and Responsibilities of Fathers, Ballroom A
 - Child and Family Team, Ballroom B
 - Reunification Resources, Ballroom C
 - Visitations That Work, Ballroom D
- Noon** **Lunch**
- 2 p.m.** **Workshops**
- Rights and Responsibilities of Fathers, Ballroom A
 - Child and Family Team, Ballroom B
 - Reunification Resources, Ballroom C
 - Visitations That Work, Ballroom D
- 3:30 p.m.** **Break**
- 3:45 p.m.** **Closing Session**
Jacqueline Jackson, Steering Council
Rayvese Woodfork-Smith, Birth Parent Council
Ramona Randall, Birth Parent Council
- 4 p.m.** **Special Event**

Exhibit Tables will be located on the second floor during lunch, afternoon break and closing session from 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

CEU's are available for parents and staff. Please complete the application located in the Registration area before the end of the conference and submit to the Registration staff.

Keynote Presenter

Carl C. Bell, MD



Dr. Carl C. Bell, M.D. is the President and C.E.O. of Community Mental Health Council (CMHC) & Foundation, Incorporation. in Chicago, Illinois. CMHC is a large multi-million dollar comprehensive Community Mental Health Center employing 390 social service geniuses. Dr. Bell is also Clinical Professor of Psychiatry & Public Health and Director of the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR) - University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He was a member of the IOM Committee on the Pathophysiology and Prevention of Adolescent and Adult Suicide and serves on the National Mental Health Advisory Council of the National Institute of Mental Health. During 40 years, he's published more than 450 articles, chapters, and books on mental health and authored *The Sanity of Survival*.

He has been interviewed by Ebony; Jet; Essence; Emerge; New York Times; Chicago Tribune Magazine; People Magazine; Chicago Reporter; "Nightline"; ABC News; NPR; "CBS Sunday Morning"; The News Hour with Jim Lehrer; the Tom Joyner Morning Show; Chicago Tonight; and the "Today" show.

A 1967 graduate of University of Illinois At Chicago, he earned his MD from Meharry College in Nashville, Tennessee in 1971. He completed his psychiatric residency in 1974 at the Illinois State Psychiatric Institute/Institute for Juvenile Research in Chicago.

Birth Parent Council Institute Day Workshops

Rights and Responsibilities of Fathers

Ballroom A

10:30 a.m. - Noon and repeated from 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Like mothers, fathers are an important part of children's lives. They are stake holders in the child welfare process and need to understand and receive quality services in a respectful manner without discrimination. This workshop describes the importance of fathers in children lives, their legal rights, shared parenting role, and the impact of trauma on father's engagement in service contact opportunities and resources available to fathers. Participants will also learn what services fathers are eligible for when involved in a child welfare case.

Presenters: Jeff Walker, DCFS Cook Central Administrative Case Review Administrator

Karen Harrington, DCFS Agency Performance Team

Kelly Hancock, DCFS Legal - Supervising Attorney

Parent: Eric Prater

Child and Family Team Meeting

Ballroom B

10:30 a.m. - Noon and repeated from 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

This workshop defines the Child and Family Team Meeting, its significance for parents and staff, its timelines and value to the planning process, as well as distinguishes it from other similar meetings i.e., Administrative Case Review. It also discusses the important role of parent advocates and extended family members in impacting the positive outcomes of family preservation and reunification goals. Participants will learn how to use the Child and Family Team Meeting process to help them successfully end DCFS child welfare involvement.

Presenter: Monique Smith, DCFS Trauma Informed Practice

Parent: Letitia Franklin



Reunification Resources

Ballroom C

10:30 a.m. - Noon and repeated from 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

This workshop features a panel of expert State, County and community service providers that will provide practical, useable strategies for locating and accessing the many resources needed to preserve and reunify families. It will also exhibit the DCFS Statewide Data Base as well as important timelines, tasks and service planning necessary for sustaining successful reunification. Participants will learn how services are determined for families involved with the child welfare system including Reunification Funds.

Presenters: Lourdes Rodriguez, DCFS Statewide Burgos Coordinator

Janice Hopson, CEO Bradley Youth Services

Panelists: Arthur Bishop, DCFS Deputy Director, Field Operations

Sheena Brewer, Dawson Technical Institute

Mike Burns, DCFS Statewide LANS Coordinator

John Egan, DCFS Office of Housing and Cash Assistance

Carol Kennedy, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services

Jennifer McCraw, Program Manager Metropolitan Family Services

Darnell Motley, DCFS Statewide Provider Database

Diane Scruggs, CEO Healthy Families Chicago

Maria Talis, Illinois Department of Employment Security

Julius Union, Chicago Department of Family and Support

Parent: Jacqueline LeNoir

Visitations that Work

Ballroom D

10:30 a.m. - Noon and repeated from 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Visits help to preserve the parent-child relationships. This workshop describes the importance of results-oriented family visitation, as well as timelines, duration, types i.e., supervised, unsupervised, the importance of documentation, productive use of visiting time with children, the trauma of mismanaged visits and the impact of service planning on the visitation goal. Each participant will receive tip sheets on effective visitation, as well as current DCFS policy and procedures and more!

Presenters: Sheila Freeman, DCFS Agency Performance Team

Rita Houston, DCFS/DASA Statewide Coordinator

Parent: Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr.

Presenter Biographies

Arthur Bishop, MA Reverend Bishop joined DCFS in 1995, after 20 years of direct service and administration in community mental health and substance abuse settings. At DCFS, he has served as a follow-up worker, supervisor and field service manager in the Cook Central Region. In August of 2001, Bishop was promoted to the position of assistant chief of staff. Bishop currently serves as the Deputy Director for the Division of Field Operations. Bishop holds a Master's degree in Human Service Administration from Spertus College in Chicago, and is an ordained minister.

Leon Alexander is the co-chair of the Cook County Birth Parent Council and has been actively involved since 2006. He is a husband and father of three children. Mr. Alexander is a retired Lieutenant with the Chicago Fire Department, and a Nutritional Specialist, Entrepreneur and Vietnam Veteran. He is a DePaul graduate and currently participates as a council member for the Chicago Public Schools in his community. Mr. Alexander is a 1996 recipient of Mayor Daley's We Care Role Model award. This program is rooted in building self-esteem, the motivation to remain in school and the importance of planning for a career which are lessons that will be a benefit to all children the rest of their lives.

Mr. Alexander has participated in the development of the Fatherhood Initiative curriculum for child welfare staff. He is a strong advocate for parents participating in therapeutic counseling services.

Sheena Brewer is the New Student Recruiter for City Colleges of Chicago, Dawson Technical Institute of Kennedy King College. She has worked for the Dawson Technical Institute for 3 years, and is dedicated to helping, encouraging, and uplifting prospective and current students evolve in the Construction Technology Trades. Ms. Brewer wears many hats as: Counselor, Mentor, Outreach Representative, Resume Writer, Information Liaison, and Recruiter. Ms. Brewer also strives to be a source of encouragement to the students. She really enjoys helping individuals define a skill for themselves that will help to secure a brighter future for them.

Throughout her professional experience, she has worked with young men and young women whether as high school students, adults, ex-felons, or union workers. At Dawson Technical Institute Ms. Brewer and the staff provide opportunities for individuals to experience short-term affordable training in the Construction Trades.

Mike Burns, MSW DCFS Associate Deputy graduated with a degree in Social Science and minor in Political Science, from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1973 and earned his MSW, from Jane Addams-University of Illinois, Chicago. He began employment with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in 1974 as a Social Service Career Trainee. Mr. Burns has held the position of Social Worker, Social Service Program Planner in the Preparation for Adult Life (PAL) program, Local Area Network (LAN) Liaison and is currently the Statewide LAN Coordinator. Mr. Burns is the chairperson of the African American Advisory Council for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. He has played a vital role with the Department's Permanency Enhancement Program and serves as a liaison to local action teams throughout the state. Mr. Burns has received various awards in recognition of contributions to social services. He has awards from the National Association of Black Social Workers as Social Worker of the Year, Chicago Chapter National Association of Black Social Workers, Metropolitan Family Services Community Partnership Award, C & A LAN 86 Members' Award and the African American Advisory Council Outstanding Achievement Award.

John Egan, MSW has worked as the Housing Specialist for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services' Office of Housing and Cash Assistance for fifteen years. He develops, administers, monitors and evaluates programs to meet the housing needs of low-income families, adoption and foster care families and youth exiting from DCFS custody. He has worked with various local, statewide and federal organizations on issues related to housing and homelessness since receiving his Masters in Social Work from the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1988.

Letitia Franklin received her G.E.D. from McKinney Job Corp Center and also has worked as a hospital Ward Clerk. Ms. Franklin describes herself as a worker for God who is a mentor for women's support and 12 step groups. She is the mother of six children, three of whom have been adopted by relatives and a former foster parent. Two of her children have reached adult age, and her sixth child was returned to her custody in April 2007. Ms. Franklin has been involved with DCFS since 1994 and has participated in numerous meetings and services in an effort to have her sixth child returned home. She is an active member of the Partnering with Parents Council. Ms. Franklin's believes her strong faith in God has helped her during her DCFS involvement and maintaining nearly four years of sobriety. Ms. Franklin is a member of the University of Illinois Steering Committee working on Social Work Curriculum to develop a student curriculum that includes a birth parent perspective.

Sheila Freeman, BS, is currently an Agency Performance Monitor for the DCFS Division of Monitoring and Quality Assurance. She has been employed at the Department of Children and Family Services for 20 years, and for nearly 18 of those years she has been responsible for monitoring private agency service providers. She is a Purchase of Service Coordinator for the DCFS/DASA Program, and is a member of Health and Safety Committee for her division. Ms. Freeman volunteers in the St Agnes P.A.D.S. program and Meals on Wheels in the south suburbs of Chicago. Ms. Freeman was a teacher at Crete-Monee High School for several years and was a supervisor at two community based correctional facilities. Ms. Freeman is an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Steering Committee and DCFS/DASA Program.

Joyce Hall, LCSW, is the DCFS Regional Administrator for the Cook Central region. Ms. Hall has worked in the child welfare field for over 25 years and has been a licensed clinical social worker for over 18 years. During her career, she began as a DCP investigator on a Specialized Sex Abuse Team. She has served as DCP and Placement Supervisor, Field Services Manager, and was also a member of the prototype for the Child and Youth Investment Team. She is also a certified trainer for DCFS. Ms. Hall has been a DCFS Field Placement Instructor for several of the Chicago area Schools of Social Work and managed the utilization of the Cook County Diagnostic Shelter. In 2002, Ms. Hall organized the Cook Central Choral Group "Expressions In Excellence." The group has performed during the years at luncheons, Cook Central Youth graduations, the African-American Advisory Council Conferences, the Cook Central African-American celebration, and programs at local Westside churches. Ms. Hall is always willing to share her expertise and skills to assist parents, staff or members of the local community.

Kelly Hancock, JD, recently returned to the Department of Children and Family Services as a supervising attorney in the Office of Legal Services at Juvenile Court. Prior to her return, she worked for ten years in guardianship administration at The Northern Trust Company, where she managed estates of minors who had received settlements from medical malpractice and wrongful death cases. Kelly began her legal career at the office of the Cook County Public Guardian. She is an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Council Steering Committee.

Karen Harrington, BA, is an Agency Performance Liaison for the IDCFS Division of Monitoring. Ms. Harrington has worked in the field of social services for 29 years and has been with IDCFS for 20 years. She has held numerous positions throughout her employment with IDCFS: as Multi-service worker, Intact Family worker, and Placement worker until her current position. Ms. Harrington has experience in working in the field of Domestic Violence as well as the field of Developmental Disabilities. As a result of attending the Permanency Symposium, she is an active member of the Cook South Action Team. Karen is serving on the Steering Committee for the Birth Parent Council and has assisted in the planning for the Parent's Institute Day.

Janice Hopson, MSW received her Master's in Social Work from the Aurora University, George Williams College-School of Social Work in June of 2002. She's a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Janice is Founder and CEO of the Bradley Youth Center an organization dedicated to helping youth transition into independent living. For the past four years she has also worked as a community organizer with the neighborhood alliance group in the North Lawndale community. This group organizes the community against the foreclosure crisis developing in the surrounding communities and gives information about the Tax Increment Financing, (TIF). After undergraduate school she worked for the Department of Children and Family Service for 13 years where she received a Direct Child Welfare Employee Licensure. After leaving DCFS she worked in residential treatment facilities in the capacities of Clinical Supervisor and Program Manager. She has experience writing grants, program policies, procedures, and personnel policies.

Rita Houston, MS, MSW is a DCFS Public Service Administrator; she is the Statewide DCFS/DASA Coordinator and has been an employee of DCFS since 1979. In her present role since 2008, she has served as a member of a small team of staff whose goal is to facilitate the accessibility of much needed services to DCFS parents in need of a range of recovery services that will benefit our children and families. Ms. Houston has also developed regional DCFS/DASA Partnership Meetings which have covered several cross training topics relative to child welfare and substance abuse have been held in all three of the Cook Regions and in Central Region. Ms. Houston has also developed Community Partners Meetings in several of the Cook Regions. These Community Partners Meetings were designed to link community organizations, public agencies, educators, parents, child welfare staff, and substance abuse providers with DCFS and our common goals to strengthen and sustain families. Prior to this position, she has worked as a caseworker, team supervisor, Targeted Case Management Coordinator, Cook County Sexual Abuse Coordinator and Clinical Services.

Ms. Houston is known throughout the child welfare community as a resourceful and creative professional who understands the need for linkage and connection with all members of the child welfare team.

Cynthia Hoyle is a Case Manager & Retention Specialist with Haymarket Center's Family Enrichment Program. Ms. Hoyle is a single parent of five children, all girls, and the grandmother of two. She graduated from Joliet Central High School and currently works for The Haymarket Center – McDermott Center in a program called The Family Recovery Program. The program is designed to work with DCFS-involved mothers by providing support and assistance. Ms. Hoyle is a Lead Case Manager in this exciting program and works as a Case Manager for the Family Enrichment Center at Haymarket. Ms. Hoyle became involved with DCFS in 1995 due to neglect of her children. The children were in placement for two years and were returned to her home April 22, 1997. Being a very good parent and grandparent is one of her greatest accomplishments, and she is described as a friend to her friends and a worker among workers. Ms. Hoyle is very committed to her job and to being a very productive member of society. She is an active member of the Partnering with Parents – Cook County Birth Parent Advisory Council.

Jacqueline Johnson, MA has served as a State Certified Social Worker with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services for 12 years. In her current capacity as a Public Service Administrator, she supervises court facilitators for the DCFS Office of Legal Services located in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building. In this role, she assists caseworkers and attorneys with a wide array of social work and clinical issues in a number of courtrooms serving abused/neglected and delinquency children from all over the Chicago land area. Mrs. Barnes-Johnson represents the DCFS Office of Legal Services at Juvenile Court in the innovative Benchmark Hearings, which are held to assist in the development of transition plans for older wards of the state before they age out of the system. In addition to her duties in the Cook County Juvenile Courts, Mrs. Barnes-Johnson is regularly called upon to assist clinicians in other states and countries in developing comprehensive plans to improve the services provided by those facilities. She is a certified mediator from Center for Conflict Resolution and a peer reviewer for the Council on Accreditation. She also participates in an internship program at the Management Planning Institute in Chicago doing clinical counseling as she works towards obtaining her license as a Licensed Clinical Practice Counselor. Mrs. Barnes-Johnson received a B.A. in Sociology from Knoxville College and later went on to attain a M.A. degree in Guidance and Counseling from Chicago State University. She is a long-time member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., one of the oldest black Greek sororities in the history of the U.S. Additionally; she is a member of the National Black Social Workers Association, National Council of Negro Woman, African American Advisory Council and National Social Workers Association.

Carol Kennedy is the Program Director, Workforce Services Unit, City Of Chicago's Department of Family and Support Services. In that capacity she has oversight over specialized workforce programs such as those serving ex-offenders, individuals with barriers to employment, the homeless and other disadvantaged populations.

Jacqueline LeNoir is the mother of six children, four boys and two girls, and the grandmother to two granddaughters and eight grandsons. She became involved with DCFS nearly 14 years ago. She successfully completed services but became re-involved with DCFS. All of her children were placed in various foster homes and group homes and during this time Mrs. LeNoir also battled with substance abuse problems that resulted in many years of treatment. Mrs. LeNoir is a strong supporter of the importance of the worker/parent relationship because she experienced firsthand what happens to families when there is an ineffective and dishonest caseworker. Mrs. LeNoir believes that her family's life changed for the better when they were assigned a new case worker that did not judge them and was honest, helpful and consistent with them. As a result of Mrs. LeNoir and her husband are overcoming many challenges raising three teenage boys. Mrs. LeNoir is also a very active member of the Birth Parent Council and makes presentations for Foundations Training as well as helps other parents work through their struggles with Child Protective Services, and DCFS Placement Services.

Rev. Terry LeNoir, Sr. is the father of five children who became part of the child welfare system and learned firsthand what happens to fathers who are not legally connected to their children when in Department custody. As a result of his treatment in the child welfare system, Rev. LeNoir works to ensure that fathers are included in the provision of services provided by DCFS. Prior to his receiving the call to ministry in 2004, Rev. LeNoir worked as an entrepreneur and small business owner until circumstances forced him to give up his businesses. Rev. LeNoir has battled with substance abuse but overcame his substance abuse addiction and has been clean and sober since 2003. He is currently raising his three sons and granddaughter with his wife Jacqueline. Together they support one another in ministry and in participation on the Cook County Birth Parent Council.

Rev. LeNoir is currently the Cook County Birth Parent Council Chairman, sits on a Steering Committee for the Jane Addams College of Social Work at University of Illinois - Chicago, has been involved with

the implementation committee for the Fatherhood Initiative, made presentations to groups of DCFS Providers of Service on behalf of the Birth Parent Council, key liaison between DCFS and Southside Baptist Pastors of Chicago and Vicinity, as well as making presentations to Foundations Training classes.

Theresa Matthews, LCSW, possesses a wealth of varied and valuable professional child welfare experience totaling more than 20 years. She has served as a Department of Children and Family Services Child Welfare Specialist, Child Welfare Supervisor, Child Protection Investigator and Public Service Administrator. She is currently a Senior Public Service Administrator in the Division of Guardian and Advocacy where she manages the Statewide Consent and Immigration Units. Previously, she served as a Prevention Coordinator for the Human Resources Development Institute. Ms. Matthews is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She holds a Master's degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Augustana College, Rock Island, IL. Ms. Matthews is also an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Steering Council.

Jennifer McCraw, LCSW is the Program Manager at the Calumet office for Metropolitan Family Services. Ms. McCraw has been with Metropolitan Family Services for over 5 years and currently manages the Clinical, Child and Youth Development, Violence Prevention and Intervention, and Parent Development programs at the site. Ms. McCraw has been working in the social work field for over 15 years with children and families. Experiences include working with youth at risk, foster and biological families, trauma issue related to abuse and neglect, and incarcerated youth.

Darnell Motley, BS received his Bachelors Degree in Psychology from Princeton University in June 2006. Returning to the Midwest soon after, Darnell began work as a teacher for Willowglen Academy-Indiana, a residential treatment facility for adolescents with moderate to severe trauma and high risk behaviors. Eager to put his skills to work, he quickly acquired the additional responsibilities of Group Supervisor, overseeing therapeutic and psychodynamic groups, and Data Manager, collecting and analyzing unusual incident report data for treatment planning. Using the skills he gained in those roles, Darnell transitioned in 2008 to an Interviewer for the Statewide Provider Database (SPD) maintained by Northwestern University and Illinois DCFS. During his tenure with the SPD team, he has interviewed a wide variety of service providers in addition to facilitating partnerships between the SPD team and community providers. His interest in facilitating collaborations has led him to his current role as Training Coordinator, wherein he facilitates trainings for service providers who are interested in using the SPD.

Frances E. Nance is currently employed as a Chronic Care Outreach Worker - Lawndale Christian Health Center and has worked for the Center for 8 years. Her interest in community health care began when she joined Ameri - Corps in 1998. In 2001 Ms. Nance was hired by Lawndale Christian Health Center as a Community Health Worker where she ministered to the residents in North & South Lawndale, West Garfield and Austin communities by educating the community on health issues like diabetes, hypertension, nutrition, exercise. Ms. Nance also is responsible for gathering statistics on the health disparities in North and South Lawndale.

Ms. Nance completed a very structured training program directed by the University of Illinois - Chicago Campus, and the Chicago Department of Public Health. She learned how to take blood pressures correctly, and provide information to the community on nutrition, exercise, and diabetes. Ms. Nance also identified other resources for the community in this position. In 2004, she worked on a project entitled Diversity and Disparity, where she surveyed residents of the North Lawndale and Humboldt Park communities and compiled statistical data.

Ms. Nance is committed to educating the communities she serves by promoting healthy lifestyles and the need for change to improve the quality of life. She will work anywhere in the community to get the information to communities including barbershops, senior buildings, Laundromats, libraries, schools, banks, grocery stores, DHS offices and churches. She attended Arturo Velazquez City College and received a Certificate of Completion in Community Health.

D. Jean Ortega-Piron, JD is the Deputy Director of the DCFS Division of the Guardian and Advocacy. Since 1996, Ortega-Piron has been charged with the responsibility of guardian of all children/youth committed to the Department by the juvenile courts of the state of Illinois. Additionally, from 1994 until her current appointment, Ortega-Piron worked for Governor Edgar in his Office of Special Counsel for Child Welfare Services where she focused on the development of innovative public/private relationships with the state's child welfare system to improve the provision of services and participated in all policy discussion, analysis and initiatives related to Juvenile Court reform. She has also served as the DCFS chief administrative law judge and administrator of the Appeals and Hearings Unit. Prior to that, she worked as chief legal counsel for the Illinois Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. Ortega-Piron attended Rosary College, and the Illinois Institute of Technology's Chicago Kent Law School.

Eric Prater is a single parent who became involved with DCFS when his two daughters were placed in foster care in 2005. Mr. Prater successfully worked to get both daughters returned to his care in 2007 and 2008. He is an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Council and is a strong advocate for parents, especially fathers. Mr. Prater recently participated in a review of the Fatherhood training curriculum and provided insight to the professional staff about the needs of fathers first hand.

Ramona Randall has been an outspoken and active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Council since its inception in 2006. She currently serves as an officer of the Core Council in the positions of Secretary and Media Chairman. As a council member, she has advocated for change on behalf of birth parents through presentations to court officials and DCFS staff, and is responsible for creating the council's newsletter. Ms. Randall is also employed full-time at Haymarket Center, a comprehensive alcohol and substance abuse treatment facility. She began as a clerk in the agency's Business Office in 2006 and was promoted to Administrative Assistant to Haymarket's Vice President of Support Services in 2008. In this position she performs many administrative duties and acts as a liaison between agency clients and representatives from outside agencies such as DCFS and law enforcement. Ms. Randall recently became certified as a Strengthening Families Parent Café Host/Facilitator and is currently seeking a Bachelor's as a student of National-Louis University's Human Services Program. As an active member of her church she serves on several committees and works with the youth who attend services. She is the mother of seven children and her personal experiences have given her a passion for parents involved with DCFS and that passion was given a voice when she was introduced to the Partnering With Parents Initiative.

Lourdes Rodriguez, BSW has been a human service professional since 1981, when she earned her BSW degree from Lewis University (Illinois). Ms. Rodriguez has worked solely in child welfare since 1975 in a variety of settings and levels, including as a supervisor of counseling for Jobs Corps, executive director of The Spanish Center, health services coordinator for Head Start of Will County, and with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services since 1983, serving as a caseworker, investigator, and child welfare administrative case reviewer, and since 2005 as DCFS Statewide Burgos Coordinator. Ms. Rodriguez currently serves on the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations Advisory Council, DCFS Birth Parent Council, and DCFS Latino Advisory Committee. Over the last 30 years she has served on numerous boards, committees and councils working with youth, HIV prevention, homelessness and anti-poverty initiatives and Latino families.

Diane Scruggs, LCSW is the Executive Director of Healthy Families Chicago. She has over 35 years experience in the field of child and family services. Diane is a member of several committees of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services concerned with mental health services, the redesign of child protective services and the development of best practices for intact families. She currently serves as co-chair of the Family Centered Services Steering Committee, SCAN (Statewide Advisory Committee on Abuse and Neglect) and Chairperson of the Illinois Death Review Team B in Cook County. Diane is a certified team leader for the Council on Accreditation (COA) for programs serving children and families. Diane's numerous accomplishments and reputation for her staunch commitment to children and families won her recognition as the recipient of the Friends of Children award presented by Prevent Child Abuse Illinois. Diane holds a MSW from the University of Illinois and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Roosevelt University. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers of NASW.

Monique Smith, LCSW has 20 years of experience in the Behavioral Healthcare field. She has held a variety of clinical, administrative and training positions with various social service agencies and universities in the Chicago area. Ms. Smith received her Bachelor's of Arts degree in Social Services/Criminal Justice from Bradley University and her Master of Social Work degree from the University Of Illinois-Jane Addams School of Social Work. Ms. Smith is currently employed as a Trainer Specialist with Chicago State University. She is also an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Steering Council.

Donna Steele, MA is the Cook Central Regional Program Manager with more than 20 years experience with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. She oversees staff and programs within the Division of Program Operations for the Cook Central Region. Ms Steele is an active member of the Birth Parent Steering Committee and the LAN 67 Action Team. One of the other many roles Ms. Steele enjoys is training of staff. She has trained and collaborated with foster parents, private agency personnel and community providers who are working within various neighborhoods to assist families in need within their own communities. She has been a social worker for more than 21 years where she has worked with the children, the elderly and the adult mentally ill. Ms. Steele also provides Field Instruction for BSW and MSW students

Ms. Steele has over 30 years of experience in working collaboratively with adult learners through a variety of educational mediums. Ms. Steele is an adjunct professor at DePaul University, teaching Social Responsibility, Ministry in Contemporary Society, and Future of Race in America. She also has been a guest lecturer for St. Francis University. She has been the guest speaker for workshops and conferences for organizations such as NAACP, and National Association of Black Social Workers. She is an ordained minister who has provided leadership and instruction for over 30 years.

Ms. Steele holds a Masters Degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago and a Bachelors Degree in Music with a concentration in Therapy from DePaul University. She holds numerous certifications and licenses.

Maria Talis Biography not available at the time of printing.

Julius Union Since the early seventies, Julius Union, has worked extensively in the field of social services. He is widely known for his work with at-risk populations providing substance abuse counseling, job training, and job development; and for his work with the homeless population providing, emergency shelter, transitional shelter, and housing programs. Mr. Union currently works in the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services as District Manager of Garfield Community Service Center, located at 10 S. Kedzie Avenue in Chicago, Illinois.

Jeff Walker, MSW, MBA, began his employment with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in January 1989 as a Child Welfare Services Caseworker. He then worked as a Child Protective Investigator from January 1994 through June 1998. Mr. Walker became the Special Assistant to the Deputy Director of Administrative Case Review in June 1998 and held this position until May 2000. He became the ACR Program Manager for Cook North region and subsequently became the ACR Program Manager for Cook Central in June 2002. Mr. Walker became the acting ACR Program Manager for Cook South in March 2004 and Cook County ACR Administrator in May 2004. He has worked in the Division of Administrative Case Review for the past 10 years. Mr. Walker has a Masters of Arts in Social Work and a Masters of Business Administration. He is also an active member of the Cook County Birth Parent Steering Council.

Rayvese Woodfork-Smith is the birth parent of five boys. Her case came into the system as a result of a substance-exposed infant. Ms. Woodfork-Smith's case has been closed since 1998. She has been employed at TASC (Treatment Alternative for Safe Community) as a Recovery Coach worker since 2005. She is also employed as a respite worker for NCO Youth and Family Services since 2003. When her boys were returned home she began to work on the Parent Education Program, working with DCFS clients to educate them on court proceedings at the Cook County Juvenile Court. She went on to work for HRDI (Human Resources Development Institute) as an educator for substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, ex-offenders program, and as a gambling counselor. Ms. Woodfork-Smith has obtained her associates degree and is working towards a BA in psychology. Ms. Woodfork-Smith has also obtained her addiction studies certificate as a CADC for the state of Illinois. She mentors women at Leslie's Place (for women who have been incarcerated) and Abigail 7 House that provide housing to women with substance abuse issues. She serves on two aldermanic committees, the Partnering with Parents Birth Parent Advisory Council to DCFS, and is an active member of her church.

Exhibitors

A Safe Haven
A Knock At Midnight
Catholic Charities – Forever Free
CEDA
Chicago Children’s Museum
Chicago Christian Industrial League
Chicago Park District
Chicago Public Library
Christian Family Center
City of Chicago – Department of Public Health
Community Mental Health Center
Cook County Birth Parent Council
Dawson Technical Institute
Dawson Technical Institute – GED Services
DCFS – DASA Project – TASC
DCFS – Administrative Case Review
DCFS – Division of Child Protection –
Investigations/Intact Services
DCFS – Division of Field Operations –
Local Area Networks (LANS)
DCFS – Division of Program
Operations – Placement Services
DCFS – Education Access Project
DCFS – Norman Services
DCFS – Office of Latino Services
DCFS – Resources
DCFS – Service Interventions Intact Families
DCFS – Special Services Team
DCFS – Transformation Team
Department of Employment Security
Department of Human Services
Department of Public Health
Haymarket – McDermott Center
Healthy Families Chicago
Lawndale Christian Health Center
Mary & Tom Leo & Associates
Metropolitan Family Services
Passages
Paternal Involvement Center
Salvation Army Social Services
Strengthening Families – Illinois
YMCA Metropolitan Chicago

Exhibitor Coordinator, DCFS, Carmen Velezquez, Statewide Coordinator Team Decision-Making

Department Content Experts

Located 2nd Floor • Available by appointment during Institute

Donna Steele, DCFS Program Administrator – Division of Program Operations, Cook Central
Theresa Matthews, DCFS Regional Administrator – Division of Child Protection, Cook South

