

# Immigration, Child Welfare and Borders

A conference hosted by the Migration and Child Welfare National Network



## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

San Antonio, Texas  
January 26-28, 2009

**University of Texas at San Antonio**  
**School of Social Work**  
501 W. Durango Blvd.  
San Antonio, Texas 78207

**Radisson Hotel**  
Downtown Market Square  
502 W. Durango Blvd.  
San Antonio, Texas 78207

Hosted by:



AMERICAN HUMANE

*Protecting Children & Animals Since 1877*

## Leadership and Sponsorship

Immigration, Child Welfare and Borders is conducted under the leadership of the Migration and Child Welfare National Network and hosted by the American Humane Association, steering committee includes members from the following organizations:

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American Bar Association  
American Humane Association  
Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Casey Family Programs  
Hunter College  
Immigrant Child Advocacy Center at the University of Chicago  
International Social Services of the United States  
Jane Addams College of Social Work  
Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops/Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services

The Migration and Child Welfare National Network would like to thank the following agencies and organizations for their generous contributions to make this year's conference a success:

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Catholic Charities of San Antonio  
The Office of Refugee Resettlement, Division of Unaccompanied Children's Services  
SIMMON  
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services  
The University of Texas at Austin  
The University of Texas at San Antonio

## Conference Planning Committee Members

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Victor Azios  
Bill Bettencourt  
Linda Brandmiller  
Lara Bruce  
Jorge Cabrera  
Selina Catala  
Elena Cohen  
Theresa Cole  
Howard Davidson  
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Irene Lee  
Yali Lincroft  
Laurie Melrood  
Abel Ortiz  
Glen Paddock  
Marcella Ronquillo  
Laura Stockert  
Gretchen Test  
Amy Thompson  
Gary Urdiales  
Sonia Velazquez  
Maritza Villagomez  
Maria Woltjen

## **Immigration, Child Welfare and Borders**

Immigration has been a defining feature of the United States since the country's inception. Over the past 20 years, the number of different immigrant communities across the United States has grown dramatically. Immigrant families are spreading out across the country to find work and homes. Different regions are experiencing new challenges when working with these families, particularly when they come to the attention of the public child welfare system.

In July 2006 in Chicago, IL, the American Humane Association and Loyola University Chicago convened leaders and practitioners from around the United States for the first roundtable of what would become the Migration and Child Welfare National Network. This roundtable identified national key issues critical to effective child welfare practice with immigrant families.

In April 2008, also in Chicago, the Migration and Child Welfare National Network held its second forum, The Intersection of Immigration and Child Welfare: Emerging Issues and Implications, which presented an opportunity to further the growing awareness of the relationship between immigration and the child welfare system nationally.

This year's conference, Immigration, Child Welfare and Borders, from Jan. 26-28, 2009, in San Antonio, Texas focuses on the specific challenges and needs of states and communities along the borders of the United States and Mexico, and Latin and Central America. The conference will create practice solutions, raise unanswered practice and policy questions and build connections between border states and communities to better prepare participants to assist immigrant children and families when they come to the attention of the child welfare system.

### **Conference Overview**

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**The conference is divided into three areas:**

- What is the well-being of children and families on both sides of the border?
- What are the salient issues to be addressed concerning practice and policy to ensure healthy and thriving children?
- How can we enhance our ability to serve families that struggle with immigration and child welfare issues?

**The conference will focus on:**

- Immigration status in the United States and how it relates to child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being;
- State and federal policies that directly impact child welfare agencies' ability to work with immigrant children and their families;
- What immigrant-serving agencies, including public child welfare, can do to influence policy locally; and
- How to integrate best practices with immigrant families into daily practice.

## Conference Agenda Monday, Jan. 26, 2009

### Monday morning sessions located in the Radisson

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#### **8 a.m. Registration Opens and Breakfast**

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Radisson Hotel

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#### **8:15 - 8:30 a.m. Welcome**

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*Presenter: Randy Capps, Migration Policy Institute, Washington, D.C.*

Location: Salon de Gala (Salon A)

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#### **8:30 - 9 a.m. Barriers to and Receipt of TANF and Implications for Well-Being Among "Not-Qualified" Latino Immigrant Families in a Rural California County**

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Citizen children with undocumented parents are eligible for "child-only" TANF grants. In such cases, the adults and many of the children are not part of the assistance unit because they are considered "not qualified" immigrants. With funding provided by the American Humane Association, researchers at the Child and Family Policy Institute of California, Urban Institute, and American Humane conducted a case study in one California county. The study examined how families with and without adult cash assistance make do; the barriers to receipt of benefits for eligible family members; services children need that, were they available, might promote optimum development; and possible compromise to children's general well-being -- and hence the potential role of the child welfare system -- from minimal TANF support.

*Presenter: Richard Speigman, Child and Family Policy Institute, California*

Location: Salon de Gala (Salon A)

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#### **9 - 9:30 a.m. Texas Immigration and Child Welfare Learning Laboratory: Preliminary Findings**

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Over the past few months, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the American Humane Association have supported a qualitative study of the child welfare practices that affect immigrant children and families who come to the attention of public child welfare in the San Antonio area, specifically the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' Region 8. The presenters will discuss the preliminary findings to date.

*Presenters: Raquel Flores and Lara Bruce, American Humane Association, Colorado*

Location: Salon de Gala (Salon A)

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#### **9:30 - 9:45 a.m. Break**

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#### **9:45 a.m. - noon Preconference Issue Sessions of the Migration and Child Welfare National Network Subcommittees**

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The Migration and Child Welfare National Network would like to invite all registered conference participants to attend open meetings of the four network subcommittees. The subcommittee co-chairs have identified specific critical issues for discussion in these sessions. Information regarding the session topics follows.

**The Research subcommittee** develops and maintains a research agenda for the field, conducts original research, analyzes and disseminates research findings and develops policy and practice recommendations to improve outcomes for immigrant children and families involved in the child welfare system. The subcommittee examines the state of policy and practice with this population, and uses research findings to promote improvements. In this session, the subcommittee will develop a research agenda for the field. We will identify the existing research and current research priorities concerning immigrant children and families in the child welfare system. We will also develop a plan to advance this agenda through our work, support others in pursuing this agenda and advance empirical knowledge with this population.

*Subcommittee Co-Chairs: Alan Dettlaff, Jane Addams College of Social Work, Illinois; and Ilze Earner, Hunter College, New York*

Location: Guadalupe Room



**The Policy and Advocacy subcommittee** has participated in a lobbying and advocacy training by the Alliance for Justice to create an advocacy agenda. The subcommittee also reviews current policies introduced at the local, state and national levels and determines the level of support to provide to each piece of legislation. This subcommittee is composed of immigration attorneys, social workers, advocates and administrators. The subcommittee will use this session to set a lobbying and advocacy agenda and discuss current pending legislation and the state of immigration legislation under the new administration.

**Subcommittee Co-Chairs:** *Howard Davidson, American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, Washington, D.C.; and Maria Woltjen, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Illinois.*

Location: Zaragoza Room

**The Promising Practices subcommittee** has been developing best practice guidelines for social work practitioners and professionals in related fields to use when working directly with immigrant children and families. The subcommittee has developed a best practices toolkit that will help child welfare and human/social service organizations review their planning and implementation procedures to ensure that policies, programs and practices are appropriate to a child's and family's cultural values, traditions, needs and expectations. In this session, the subcommittee will develop a plan for field-testing this toolkit and a self-assessment process to guide child welfare agencies and those working with them to identify strengths and weaknesses and develop an agency plan for continuous improvement. They will also discuss dissemination plans for the toolkit and invite feedback from practitioners regarding its relevance in their day-to-day practice.

**Subcommittee Co-Chairs:** *Jorge Cabrera, Casey Family Programs, California; and Lyn Morland, Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services, Washington, D.C.*

**Facilitators:** *Glen Paddock, Casey Family Programs, Washington; and Lara Bruce, American Humane, Colorado*

Location: Nacional Room

**The Transnational subcommittee** recognizes that the intersection of immigration and child welfare issues does not begin or end at U.S. borders and maintains its focus to build relationships and collaborate with individuals and agencies working toward making families' migrating experiences as safe as possible. In this session, the subcommittee will focus on issues of safe repatriation, reintegration and acculturation. They will also discuss other models of practice for addressing transnational child welfare challenges. The committee will bring together participants from the United States, Mexico and Central and South America to form a transnational network to better assist immigrant children and families as they move from one country to another.

**Committee Co-Chairs:** *Sonia Velazquez, American Humane Association, Colorado; Julie Rosicky, International Social Services of the United States, Maryland; and Maria Vidal de Haymes, Loyola University School of Social Work, Illinois*

Location: El Castelle Room

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## **noon - 1 p.m.**

## **Lunch on Your Own**

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A list of local restaurants is included in the conference packet.

**The remaining conference activities will be held in the Southwest room in the Durango Building on the University of Texas at San Antonio campus.**

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## **noon - 5 p.m.**

## **Registration Open**

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## **1 - 1:15 p.m.**

## **Conference Welcome**

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*Joyce James, assistant commissioner, Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*

## **1:15 - 1:45 p.m.**

## **Opening Remarks: A Collaborative Effort That Advances the Issues Identified at the Intersection of Migration and Child Welfare, and the Road Ahead**

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The unique regional focus of this roundtable will lead to a collective examination of practical and local issues that child welfare agencies confront when serving large numbers of immigrant families and children living in border communities who share a number of characteristics. The conference will look at how each side of the border defines child and family well-being, how these interpretations translate into transnational opportunities for collaboration and how, on the other hand, they might have resulted in barriers to policy, practice, research and system support.

**Presenter:** *Sonia Velazquez, American Humane Association, Colorado*

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## **1:45 - 2 p.m.**

## **Break**

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**2 - 3:15 p.m.                      Keynote: Interaction of Judicial, Practice, Policy  
and Advocacy to Support Immigrant Children and Families**

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*Presenters: Christopher Nugent, Holland & Knight, Washington, D.C.; District Court Judge Peter Sakai, Texas; Ken Borelli, consultant, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, California; and Amy Thompson, policy consultant, Texas*

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**3:15 - 3:30 p.m.                      Break**

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**3:30 - 5 p.m.                      Lived Experience of Immigrant Youth and Family:  
An Interactive Panel**

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This workshop will focus on the importance of providing culturally and linguistically appropriate child welfare services for immigrant families in border communities, drawing on the expertise of former and current consumers of child welfare services. The panel includes a former immigrant foster youth, state child welfare workers and staff from the Casey Family Programs San Antonio field office, and is facilitated by Casey's community programs supervisor.

*Facilitator: Gary Urdiales, Casey Family Programs, Texas*

*Presenters: Yolanda Ayala, former foster youth; Josie Martinez, Casey Family Programs, Texas; Cynthia Vollmer, Casey Family Programs, Texas; and Jermeka Morrison, Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas*

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**Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2009**

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**8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.                      Registration Open and Resource Fair**

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**8:30 - 9 a.m.                      Continental Breakfast**

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**9 - 9:15 a.m.                      Welcome**

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**9:15 - 10:30 a.m.                      Child Well-Being in the United States**

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This session will focus on the state of immigrant children and families in the child welfare system and how their well-being ties into Casey Family Program's 2020 vision. Participants will understand how addressing the needs of migrant children and families is a key component of system change efforts to improve permanency outcomes and mitigate disproportionality for youth of color in the child welfare system. Participants will have increased knowledge of the unique issues and needs faced by migrant children and families who come in contact with the child welfare system. Participants will have increased knowledge of the challenges involved and promising practices to address the judicial, permanency, education and mental health needs of migrant children and families.

*Facilitators: Jorge Cabrera, Casey Family Programs, California; and Alan Dettlaff, Jane Addams College of Social Work, Illinois*

*Presenters: Luis E. Flores, Serving Children and Adolescents in Need, Inc., Texas; Judge Oscar G. Gabaldón, Jr., Judicial District Child Protection Court, Texas; Sandra Rodriguez, Child Protective Services, Texas; and Deborah Escobedo, Youth Law Center, California*

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**10:30 - 10:45 a.m.                      Break**

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**10:45 a.m. - noon                      Child Well-Being in Mexico, Central and Latin America**

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This panel presentation brings together child welfare and immigration professionals from Mexico and Central and South America to discuss current trends in the intersection of immigration and child welfare south of the U.S. border. The presenters will discuss the challenges to child well-being in Mexico, Central America and South America and how they have created a network of professionals to address these issues. They will also discuss ways to increase collaboration between U.S. child welfare agencies and the Mexican public child welfare agency (DIF) and other nonprofit organizations working with immigrant children and families.

*Facilitator: Marcela Ronquillo de Hinojosa, SIIMMON Program, Mexico*

*Presenters: Ana Patricia Elías Ingram, DIF, Mexico; Patricia Fragoso Sánchez, National Institution of Migration, Mexico; Aracely García Granados, Mexicans and Americans Thinking Together, Texas; Raúl Rodríguez Barocio, North American Center Studies at Arizona State University, Arizona.*

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**noon - 1 p.m.                      Lunch on Your Own**

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A list of local restaurants is included in the conference packet.

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## **1 - 3:15 p.m.                      Social Work Practice with Immigrant Children and Families in the United States Border Regions**

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This extended panel presentation will focus on local child welfare practice with immigrant children and their families in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California. Panelists will present local tools and resources frequently used in their day-to-day practice, and unique practice models and collaborations used in their agencies. Panelists will describe their agencies' client population and how they are able to provide services to mixed status families. They will also describe their agencies' relationship with Mexico and other countries and with border patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement and provide time for question and answer.

*Facilitator: Rowena Fong, University of Texas at Austin, Texas*

*Presenters: Jared Rounsville, Children, Youth, and Families Department, New Mexico; Cheryl Russell, Department of Economic Security, Arizona; Mo Goldman, attorney, Arizona; Ernest (Skip) Skinner, attorney, Arizona; Deyanira Quintana, Mexican Consulate, Arizona; Laura Stockert, KARE Center, Arizona; Janet Barragan, San Diego Health and Human Services, California; and Mauro Valdez, Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas*

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## **3:15 - 3:30 p.m.                      Break**

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## **3:30 - 5 p.m.                      Brainstorming the Issues and Solutions That Work**

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Using a "round-robin" process, participants will work in groups to address questions pertaining to the challenges at the intersection of immigration and child welfare within border communities. Groups will use their expertise to develop local solutions that address specific issues faced by immigrant children and their families.

*Facilitator: Yali Lincroft, Annie E. Casey Foundation, California*

# **Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009**

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## **8:30 - 9 a.m.                      Continental Breakfast**

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Location: Southwest Room, University of Texas at San Antonio

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## **9 - 9:15 a.m.                      Welcome**

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## **9:15 - 10:15 a.m.                      Child-Centered Programs in the Office of Refugee Resettlement**

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Besides providing federal assistance to intact refugee families and adults, the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is also responsible for providing assistance to three populations of unaccompanied immigrant children. This presentation will provide an overview of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, which serves refugee children and those who have received a final grant of asylum, met criteria as Cuban or Haitian entrants or have been determined to be victims of trafficking; the Division of Unaccompanied Children Services, which provides a safe and appropriate environment for unaccompanied alien children from the time they are placed into ORR custody until reunification with family or sponsors in the U.S., or until the Department of Homeland Security removes them to their home country; and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Program, which issues eligibility letters to minors who have been identified as trafficking victims, providing the same access to benefits and services as refugees receive, including the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program.

*Presenters: Elaine Kelley, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Washington, D.C.; Jose Gonzalez, Division of Unaccompanied Children's Services, Texas; and Caitriona Lyons, Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, Texas*

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## **10:15 - 10:30 a.m.                      Break**

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## **10:30 a.m. - noon                      Ways to Utilize What We've Learned**

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Using World Café, a conversational process based on a set of integrated design principles, we will discuss how to take the forum's information back to our communities.

*Facilitators: Sonia Velazquez, American Humane, Colorado; Jorge Cabrera, Casey Family Programs, California*

*A conference hosted by the Migration and Child Welfare National Network*

**Monday, Jan. 26, 2009**

8 a.m. ....	Registration Opens and Breakfast
8:15 - 8:30 a.m. ....	Welcome
	Location: Salon de Gala (Salon A)
8:30 - 9 a.m. ....	Barriers to and Receipt of TANF and Implications for Well-Being Among “Not-Qualified” Latino Immigrant Families in a Rural California County
9 - 9:30 a.m. ....	Texas Immigration and Child Welfare Learning Laboratory: Preliminary Findings
	Location: Salon de Gala (Salon A)
9:30 - 9:45 a.m. ....	Break
9:45 a.m. - noon .....	Preconference Issue Sessions of the Migration and Child Welfare National Network Subcommittees
noon - 1 p.m. ....	Lunch on Your Own

noon - 5 p.m.....	Registration Open
1- 1:15 p.m.....	Conference Welcome
1:15 - 1:45 p.m.....	Opening Remarks: A Collaborative Effort That Advances the Issues Identified at the Intersection of Migration and Child Welfare and the Road Ahead
1:45 - 2 p.m.....	Break
2 - 3:15 p.m.....	Keynote: Interaction of Judicial, Practice, Policy and Advocacy to Support Immigrant Children and Families
3:15 - 3:30 p.m.....	Break
3:30 - 5 p.m.....	Lived Experience of Immigrant Youth and Family

**Location: Southwest Room, University of Texas at San Antonio**

8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.....Registration Open and Resource Fair  
8:30 - 9 a.m. ....Continental Breakfast  
9 - 9:15 a.m. ....Welcome  
9:15 - 10:30 a.m. ....Child Well-Being in the United States  
10:30 - 10:45 a.m. ....Break  
10:45 a.m. - noon ....Child Well-Being in Mexico, Central and Latin America  
noon - 1 p.m. ....Lunch on Your Own  
1 - 3:15 p.m. ....Social Work Practice with Immigrant Children and Families in the United States Border Regions  
3:15 - 3:30 p.m. ....Break  
3:30 - 5 p.m. ....Brainstorming the Issues and Solutions That Work

**Location: Southwest Room, University of Texas at San Antonio**

8:30 - 9 a.m. ....Continental Breakfast  
9 - 9:15 a.m. ....Welcome  
9:15 - 10:15 a.m. ....Child-Centered Programs in the Office of Refugee Resettlement  
10:15 - 10:30 a.m. ....Break  
10:30 a.m. - noon ....Ways to Utilize What We've Learned