



## View From The Congressional Hill: CYC Legislative Update

### **Family Stability and Kinship Care Act**

By Summer J. Pfeiffer,  
Vice President, Governmental Relations,  
Children's Home Society of Florida

As discussed on FCC's Legislative Call, CHS belongs to a national organization CHSA (Children's Home Society of America) and has been working with United States' Sen. Wyden and Sen. Hatch's staff from the Senate Finance Committee.

As we have been told, Sen. Wyden's bill called the Family Stability and Kinship Care Act will be rolled up into a larger child welfare piece of legislation from the

committee. Sen. Wyden's staff is interested in hearing from providers that may have outcome data or cost analysis on any of the below services that are part of their bill. This is a great opportunity for FCC Members and others, to provide needed information on the federal bill.

Services covered include:

- 1) Parenting and family skills training and parent education, including parent advocates, peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents, primary caregivers, and potential kinship caregivers.
- 2) Individual, group, and family counseling, mentoring, and therapy, including intensive family preservation or reunification programs and trauma-informed care.
- 3) Services or assistance to address barriers to family preservation and reunification, including mental health needs, domestic violence, substance abuse, and inadequate housing.
- 4) Crisis assistance or services to stabilize families in times of crisis or facilitate kinship placement, such as transportation, clothing, household goods, assistance with housing and utility payments, child care, respite care, and assistance connecting families with other community-based services.

If the provider would like to participate, they may provide their organization name, location and a contact person, along with their information, no later than Friday, November 6, 2015 and send to Sen. Wyden's staff, Laura Berntsen (Senate Finance Committee). They can email Laura at: [Laura\\_Berntsen@finance.senate.gov](mailto:Laura_Berntsen@finance.senate.gov) or call her at (202) 224-4515.

## **Responding to the CYC Legislative Changes**

By ACYCP Pres. Andy Schneider-Munoz, Ph. D.

ACYCP Colleagues,

The AACRC (American Association for Children's Residential Centers) has continued to follow new legislation in Washington, D.C. Once passed, the new regulations and funding criteria may significantly change the youth populations you will be able to serve in your program, plus which youth and families receive funding for services. In anticipation of such changes, many counties across the country have begun to eliminate funding for some youth programs and start new ones. Ideally we should have one or more Board members who team together and follow what's going on with the government. Let me know-it's easy!

The first step would be to read all the materials that we get and begin to make a short summary of what's happening, so we all know what is going on. I would be glad to help you. At one point AACRC was recommending that the government require programs to be accredited, but our certification was not yet on the list. We may or may not want to take the same positions as AACRC. It's such a great opportunity nonetheless.

For example, this might be a good time to encourage Congress to require (and provide funding for) all youth workers to be certified. Who would like to work on this? If you are a little too busy to work on this, perhaps your agency/program has a superstar youth worker in your organization, who has a social conscience and is politically active, so pass their name along too!

In the past Keith Kozerski, past president of the Wisconsin Association of Child and Youth Care Professionals (WACYCP) and Mark Krueger, past president of ACYCP, were both very active in bringing youth work issues to President and Mrs. Clinton, in almost weekly phone calls. Most recently, former ACYCP Board Member, Quinn Wilder (UW-Milwaukee, Youth York Learning Center) led our advocacy work.