



The following summarizes the current work regarding disability in the state of Minnesota by MSW faculty Dr. Nancy Fitzsimons, PhD, MSW, LISW, Professor.

**Crimes Against People with Disabilities AND Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan**

In December of 2011, the Department of Human Services agreed to develop a Minnesota Olmstead Plan as part of a class action lawsuit settlement agreement for the inhumane treatment and abuses perpetrated against residents of the Minnesota Extended Treatment Options (METO) facility. The term *Olmstead* comes from a 1999 U. S. Supreme Court decision establishing the integration mandate under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Olmstead Plan lays out the steps that Minnesota will take to achieve the vision of people with disabilities living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated settings. To achieve this vision, Minnesota is striving to ensure people with disabilities across the lifespan have opportunity and freedom for meaningful choice, self-determination, and increased quality of life.

Being a crime victim, or what is commonly referred to in disability world as ‘abuse and neglect’, detrimentally impacts quality of life. This is why the Olmstead Subcabinet, overseeing the Olmstead Plan, added a goal to develop and implement a comprehensive ‘abuse and neglect’ prevention plan. An Olmstead Specialty Committee, formed in June of 2017, made up of people with disabilities, family members, researchers, disability and crime victim advocates, and other professionals, is charged with developing the plan. Nancy Fitzsimons, professor of Social Work at Minnesota State University Mankato, and Daron Korte, Associate Commissioner at the Minnesota Department of Education, are co-chairing the Committee. The Committee is examining the problem and looking for solutions to prevent ‘abuse and neglect’ before it happens AND to better support and empower children and adults with disabilities.

The Committee aims to help Minnesota move to a new ways of thinking about ‘disability’, ‘vulnerability’ to ‘abuse and neglect’, and ‘comprehensive’ prevention. Our plan will move away from thinking about ‘disability’ from the medical model to the social model that sees the disadvantages of ‘disability’ not so much as differences in how the brain or body works. Rather, in societal barriers, whether physical, programs, policy, or attitudes, that have the biggest negative impact on people with disabilities. Our plan is using the Ecological Model of Risk (see image) to understand that the reasons children and adults with disabilities are more ‘vulnerable’ goes well beyond individual impairment. Finally, for prevention to truly be comprehensive it must include:

- 1) efforts in primary prevention to ‘prevent’ ‘abuse and neglect before it occurs;
- 2) risk reduction to help people be their own first line of defense;
- 3) effective early recognition, intervention and response with both victims and offenders;
- and 4) effective long-term response to promoting healing, prevent reoffending, and change harmful and disempowering practices and cultures.

To learn more about Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan and the work of the Olmstead Specialty Committee go to the Olmstead Plan website at: [www.mn.gov/olmstead](http://www.mn.gov/olmstead)

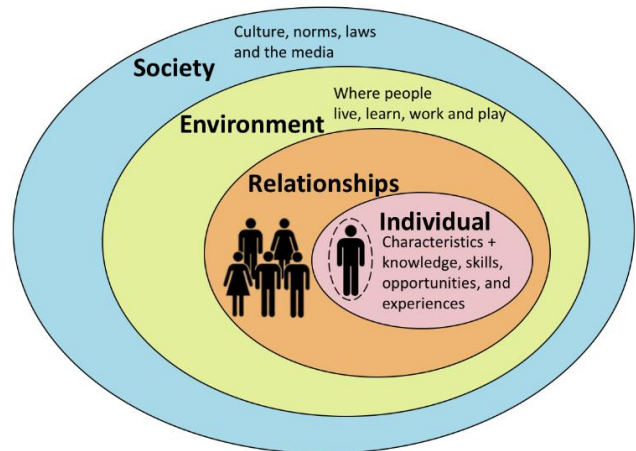


Image adapted from: Hollomotz, A. (2009). Beyond ‘vulnerability’: An ecological model approach to conceptualizing risk of sexual violence against people with learning difficulties. *British Journal of Social Work*, 39(1), 99-112.

For more information about children with disabilities in the Minnesota please see the following resources:

LaLiberte, T., Crudo, T., & Ombisa Skallet, H. (Eds.). (2013). *The intersection of child welfare and disability: Focus on children* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved October 3, 2017, from Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare website: [https://www.cascw.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Spring2013\\_360\\_web-FINAL.pdf](https://www.cascw.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Spring2013_360_web-FINAL.pdf)

This site leads to a comprehensive article about child welfare and disability and the way it should be focused on for children. It is forty-four pages long, but there is a table of contents to find what you are looking for in a more efficient way.

Smith, N., & Harrell, S. (2013, March). *Sexual abuse of children with disabilities: A national snapshot* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved October 3, 2017, from VERA Institute of Justice website: <https://www.vera.org/publications/sexual-abuse-of-children-with-disabilities-a-national-snapshot>

This twelve page article focuses on sexual abuse of children with disabilities.

**A special thank you to Dr. Fitzsimons, PhD, MSW, LISW for contributing to this newsletter and providing us with information about working with this population.**

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **\*\*Counties in southern Minnesota are seeking qualified social workers\*\***

The need for qualified social workers is more in demand now than ever before, especially in the areas of child protection and children and adult mental health in southwest/south central Minnesota counties.

### **CREATE AN ONLINE ACCOUNT IN NEO GOV:**

1. Go to this link: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/Applications/Index/mnmeritsystem>
2. Click on “**Create an account**” in the upper right hand corner
3. Enter in your professional information

**MN DHS is looking to fill County Agency Social Worker positions for a variety of counties.** Both Bachelors and Masters level employees are needed. Follow the link for more information.

<http://agency.governmentjobs.com/mnmeritsystem/default.cfm?action=jobs&sortBy=&sortByASC=ASC&bHid-eSearchBox=1&PROMOTIONALJOBS=0&TRANSFER=0&SEARCHAPPLIED=0>

**Carver County** is hiring in their Family Services program, follow the link for more details:

<https://www.co.carver.mn.us/departments/employee-relations/job-opportunities/job-descriptions>

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

Minnesota Adopt has many workshops coming up this fall for information and to see the complete list with details for all please visit: <https://www.mnadopt.org/education/mn-adopt-trainings/>

**October 10: KIDS COUNT Data Book Release 10:00am-11:30am: Location:** Cookie Cart 119 West Broadway Avenue Community Room Minneapolis, MN 55411. Book release and launch the KIDS COUNT Coffee Tour at Cookie Cart in Minneapolis. We invite you to join us for [this event!](#) Attendees will learn about this year's *Data Book* that focuses on trends in key indicators of child and family well-being and highlights public policy that has improved or could improve outcomes for our youngest citizens and the entire state of Minnesota. This year's *Data Book* pays special attention to the state's shifting demographics in the growing number of older Minnesotans and rapidly increasing populations

of color across the state. Also, watch for coffee tours near you by visiting this site: <http://www.cdf-mn.org/take-action/#events>

**October 11: Know Your Rights: Responding to Racist Speech & Behavior 12:00pm-2:00pm, Lincoln Community Center.** Mankato Area Cross Cultural Connections (MACCC) hosts its next community event "Know Your Rights: Responding to Racist Speech & Behavior". Free and open to all community members. United Way is part of the leadership committee convening this conversation. For more information, go to MACCC's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Mankato-Area-Cross-Cultural-Connections-181147205623388/>

**October 11-12: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Conference, Worthington, MN.** For more information and to register please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/commercial-sexual-exploitation-of-children-csec-conference-worthington-tickets-36553077238>

**October 17: Poverty Simulation- 9:30 AM to 12 PM Mankato Public Safety Center.** The Poverty Simulation is designed to help participants begin to understand what it might be like to live in a typical low-income family trying to survive from month to month. This educational event aligns with United Way's mission of convening the community around important issues facing our region. If you have a group of 25 or more that would like to participate, contact the United Way office at 507-345-4551. **Registration required.** [Click here for more info and to register.](#)

**October 25, 2017- 9:00am-12:00pm- \$75- Healing From Within: Trauma-Informed Mind-Body Practices for Health & Well-Being**

Using existing knowledge of trauma, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and mental health diagnoses, participants will experience and explore the power of mind-body interventions for self-regulation, focus, community connection and overall well-being. Through lecture, hands-on learning, reflection and discussion, participants will practice the new Move Mindfully® Card Deck exercises which include releasing and calming breathing techniques, simple yoga-based movements and social/emotional skill development activities for use in schools, homes and therapeutic settings. Attendees will walk away with strategies for themselves and their clients.- Maple Grove Community Center 12951 Weaver Lake Road Maple Grove, MN 55369. Register here: <http://www.macmh.org/event-page/workshops-trainings/fall-2017-training-series/fall-2017-training-series-registration/>

**November 16-17, 2017: 2-Day: Trauma Conference: The Body Keeps Score-Trauma Healing with Bessel van der Kolk, MD in Edina MN.** For more information visit: <https://healthcare.pesi.com/events/detail/54952/2-day-trauma-conference-the-body-keeps-score-trauma>

**November 18: United Way Reading Festival 9 AM to 12 PM.** Mankato Family YMCA - Blue Gym: A fun, FREE event for kids and families! It's a party! Celebrate our Books for Kids program's 20th birthday at this year's Reading Festival as we highlight the power of books and literacy. The festival includes: Free books from Capstone, Activities for toddlers through third-graders (all children welcome!), Booths hosted by local organizations, Literacy-related information for parents, Free healthy snacks

## DIVERSITY

The Child Welfare Program would like to encourage students, faculty, and alumni to engage in diverse events throughout the year. This falls' events on campus include:

- **Latino Night-** October 21, 2017, 5:00-11:00pm CSU Ballroom on MSU Campus
- **American Indian Night-** November 13, 2017, 6:00-8:00pm CSU Ballroom on MSU Campus
- **Hmong Culture Day-** November 18, 2017, 5:00-8:00pm CSU Ballroom on MSU Campus

If you are interested in attending any of these events please contact the program GA at [emily.camacho@mnsu.edu](mailto:emily.camacho@mnsu.edu), no later than 1 week before the event, and the child welfare program will do its best to fund the learning opportunity.

## RESOURCES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

- **November is National Adoption Month!** Advocate and promote awareness around adoption by adding these widgets or email signatures to your correspondence during this month.  
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/spread-the-word/outreach-tools/email-signatures/>
- For some information on adoption, these fact sheets from MN DHS are great resources.  
Adoption and Permanency Planning: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4923-ENG>  
Finding Families for Waiting Children: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4746-ENG>  
Concurrent Permanency Planning: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-4926-ENG>
- Information on Intimate Partner Violence in Child Welfare:  
[https://www.cascw.org/portfolio\\_tags/practice-notes/](https://www.cascw.org/portfolio_tags/practice-notes/)
- Training modules from the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare:  
[https://www.cascw.org/portfolio\\_category/online-modules/](https://www.cascw.org/portfolio_category/online-modules/)
- Social Justice Solutions: The link below is an article specifically based on Child Welfare. Subscribe for more social justice solutions.  
<http://www.socialjusticesolutions.org/2016/11/09/notes-wicked-problems-big-data-trauma-solution-based-casework/>
- One place to find every states Federal Child & Family Services Plans (2015-2019) arranged by Federal Region:  
<https://sites.google.com/site/2017titleiveroundtable/resources/2015-19-child-family-service-plans>
- Fantastic video about working in the Child Welfare Profession in Minnesota! It is very honest and realistic about the field!  
<https://www.cascw.org/portfolio-items/minnesota-realistic-job-preview>
- The DHS Data Dashboard for Child Welfare is full of exciting and interesting information to keep you up-to-date on child welfare knowledge-  
[http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET\\_DYNAMIC\\_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16\\_148137](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_148137)

## ALUMNA, FACULTY, & STAFF UPDATES

The BSSW program is very proud to announce the graduation of the following students:

Ezequiel Nava

Additionally, the MSW program is proud to announce the graduation of the following students:

Renee Gasner

Rhonda Haugstad

Shelby Marx

Brittany Roulette

Paula Skala

Hannah Twedt

*Congratulations graduates! Best of luck as you work to actively enhance child welfare!*

**We want to welcome new department faculty**  
**Laura Benesch, BSSW (06) MSW (09), LICSW, BSSW Field Director**  
**Tina Kilaberia, Ph. D. (2017), UofM School of Social Work, Assistant Professor!**

**The Child Welfare Program is entering its 13<sup>th</sup> year and has graduated 99 BSSW students and 29 MSW students**

**Words of Wisdom from a graduate:**

*Caitlin Chandler is a 2013 graduate of the BSSW and Child Welfare programs. Caitlin has remained in child welfare since her graduation, totaling 4 years of helping children and families through the roles of intake worker, on-going case management, and many other aspects of the job. She is currently working for Chisago County as a child investigator. Caitlin believes the child welfare program at MNSU prepared her with a realistic view of what child welfare was going to be. She states she left the program with a clear objective and a clear mind about what she would be doing in child welfare and it helped her to understand the work and be a productive member of the team. She also thinks being a team member and having a good support system at work helps to make the job more doable.*

*Caitlin practices warding off burnout through a mixture of having a good sense of humor and being able to separate work from the rest of her life. She reminds us that it is also helpful to remember that the small differences that you make every day are vital to help you keep going. You may not be able to fix everyone and everything, but you have to be proud of all the small things you do every day, says Caitlin.*

*Caitlin would absolutely recommend the Child Welfare Program to others. She reflects that the preparation that The Child Welfare Program gives you far outweighs the amount of time you owe back. She confidently speaks that the child welfare field displays every aspect of social work from the minimum duties to the maximum duties as a social worker and it will prepare you for just about anything else you want to do.*

**Thank you Caitlin for sharing your words of advice and for contributing to better the lives of children and families across Minnesota!**

*Let us know what you are doing and we will share in the next CWSP E-News.  
Send info to [ChildWelfareSOWK@mnsu.edu](mailto:ChildWelfareSOWK@mnsu.edu)*

**Debra Gohagan, MSW, Ph.D.**  
BSSW Child Welfare Stipend Program  
Coordinator [d.gohagan@mnsu.edu](mailto:d.gohagan@mnsu.edu); 507-389-1699

**Kimberly Zammitt, PhD, LICSW**  
MSW Child Welfare Stipend Program  
Coordinator  
[Kimberly.zammitt@mnsu.edu](mailto:Kimberly.zammitt@mnsu.edu) ; 507-389-1219

Minnesota State University, Mankato  
Department of Social Work  
358 Trafton Science Center N  
Mankato MN 56001  
(Dept. office) 507-389-6504; (fax) 507-389-6769  
[ChildWelfareSOWK@mnsu.edu](mailto:ChildWelfareSOWK@mnsu.edu);

*CWP E-News Bulletin 2017 #1. October 2017*

*Editors: Emily Camacho, CWP Graduate Assistant, Debra Gohagan & Kim Zammitt, CWP Coordinators.*