

# Child Welfare Policy

## Session 4

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## Policy and Programming Issues in the Delivery of Family and Children's Services

- **Well-Being Issues**
- **Services Designed to Enhance Family Functioning**
- **Family Support Services**
- **Community-Based Services**
- **Kinship and Sibling Connections**
  
- ***Film - A Brooklyn Family Tale***

# Well-Being Issues

Well-being issues in child welfare include: mental health problems, developmental delays, educational challenges, physical health concerns, instability due to frequent foster care placements, lack of secure attachments, trauma from abuse or neglect, and difficulties adjusting to new family situations, all stemming from the experiences of being separated from their biological family and placed in the child welfare system

# Key Aspects of Child Welfare Well-Being Issues

## **Mental health concerns:**

Depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), behavioral problems, and difficulty regulating emotions can be prevalent among children in the child welfare system due to traumatic experiences.

## **Developmental delays:**

Children in unstable environments may experience delays in cognitive, social, and emotional development due to inconsistent caregiving and lack of stimulation.

## **Educational challenges:**

Frequent school changes, difficulty concentrating due to stress, and limited access to educational support can impact a child's academic performance.

# Key Aspects of Child Welfare Well-Being Issues

## **Physical health issues:**

Poor nutrition, lack of access to healthcare, and exposure to unhealthy environments can lead to physical health problems.

## **Attachment issues:**

Difficulty forming secure attachments with caregivers due to repeated placements in foster homes can lead to challenges in relationships later in life.

## **Trauma from abuse or neglect:**

Children who have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse may suffer from long-term psychological impact.

## **Disproportionality in the system:**

Certain racial and ethnic groups are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system, leading to systemic inequities in access to services and outcomes.

# Factors Contributing to These Well-being Issues:

## **Parental substance abuse:**

When parents struggle with addiction, it can negatively impact their ability to provide adequate care for their children.

## **Domestic violence:**

Children exposed to domestic violence are at increased risk for behavioral and emotional problems.

## **Poverty:**

Socioeconomic disadvantages can lead to increased risk factors for child neglect and abuse.

## **Lack of Mental Health systems:**

Limited access to community resources and mental health networks can further exacerbate challenges for families.

# Policies to Address Well-being Issues:

## **Early intervention programs:**

Providing early support to families at risk can help prevent child maltreatment and improve child outcomes.

## **Trauma-informed care:**

Implementing practices that understand and address the impact of trauma on children in the child welfare system.

## **Stable placements:**

Minimizing the number of foster care placements a child experiences to promote secure attachments.

## **Mental health services:**

Providing readily accessible mental health treatment for children in the child welfare system

## **Addressing systemic inequities:**

Recognizing and actively working to reduce disparities in the child welfare system based on race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status

## ***Film - A Brooklyn Family Tale***

**This powerful documentary follows two generations of the Santiago family of Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Around the same time that Cisco and Stingray Santiago became leaders of the notorious Assassinator's gang, Sister Mary Paul and Sister Geraldine started a unique social service agency called The Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.**

**Please review the following:**

**<https://www.therealwordministriesinc.org/a-brooklyn-family-tale/>**



## Next Session 5

Is tomorrow, on line watch anytime between 3/6/2025 and March 12, 2025 and send answers to questions to [gmallon@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:gmallon@hunter.cuny.edu)