

**A MANAGEMENT REVIEW
OF THE
ALBERTA CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

II. BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL SUMMARY

- A. What does a good child welfare system look like?
- B. The development and organization of Children's Services

III. STAFFING AND TRAINING OF CASEWORKERS

- A. Best practice in caseloads
- B. Alberta's caseloads
- C. Best practice in training
- D. Alberta's training

IV. RESOURCES

- A. What do children removed from home require?
- B. What do families experiencing child removal need?
- C. What resources should caseworkers have to get the job done?
- D. Alberta's resources

V. LEADERSHIP

- A. Administration
- B. Supervision
- C. Quality assurance & data reporting
- D. Financing
- E. Today in Alberta

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Appendix A. *Curriculum Vitae* for Cathy R. Crabtree

INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of a review of data and information concerning the child welfare system in Alberta, Canada. The review was conducted for Robert P. Lee, Esquire, on behalf of clients he represents in Alberta. The report assesses the functioning of the Alberta child welfare system and the ability of that organization to meet reasonable child welfare standards for the protection of children in its foster care custody. The report finds that the Alberta agency fails to meet the most basic safety, permanency and well-being needs of children in foster care.

The report includes six sections beginning with this introduction to the report, Section I. Section II contains an overview of what a good child welfare system should include and an overview of the development and organization of the child welfare agency in Alberta. Also included in Section II are tenets of a functional child welfare system. In Section III the importance of the staffing and training of caseworkers is the focus. Section IV addresses resources for children and families as well as the caseworkers who deliver services to families. Included in Section V on Leadership are components of a healthy child welfare system such as effective administration, appropriate levels of financing, and a functioning quality assurance system for case practice. The report ends with conclusions that can be drawn from the information reviewed.

Many sources were used to assess the organization and operation of the Ministry of Children's Services as the agency charged with the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. Materials reviewed for this report included:

- Publications on Alberta child welfare by various authors
- The Ministry of Children's Services website
- Publications of the Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being
- Publications of the Child Welfare League of Canada
- Materials and publications of the Child Welfare League of America

- Materials and publications from the Council on Accreditation, United States
- Publications of Children’s Rights, Inc.

The author also reviewed applicable policies and procedures governing child welfare in Alberta, information made available by the law firm of Robert P. Lee, and news accounts concerning child welfare in Alberta. This information was reviewed in the light of professionally accepted standards, including standards articulated in applicable laws and policies, and professional experience and expertise.

The author of this report, Cathy R. Crabtree, has more than thirty years of experience in working with children and families. She served for eight years as the Assistant Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services in the United States. Her background includes extensive experience in social services, public agency management and administration, compliance with minimal practice standards, and children’s mental health. She is currently a Senior Consultant with the Auburn Montgomery Center for Government in Montgomery, Alabama. Mrs. Crabtree provides independent expert consultation for the fields of child welfare and juvenile justice. A copy of her *curriculum vitae* is attached to this report as Appendix A.

BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY

A. What does a good child welfare system look like?

Child safety, permanency, and well-being are the primary acknowledged responsibilities of government child welfare agencies. The business of caring for children who have been abused and neglected is a serious one. It is incumbent upon government to take all possible steps to prevent children in care from suffering further maltreatment, to see that their needs are met, and to find permanent homes for them in a timely fashion. From research we know that 1)

children do best with the least disruption to their lives and 2) government is not the ideal parent for a child.

In 2000 the United States, through the federal Department of Health and Human Services instituted a process known as the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) as a way to measure accountability by states in regard to safety, permanency and well-being.¹ Also measured are systemic factors that look at organizational capacity of the state agencies. States are required to implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) on factors not meeting standards set by the government with the possibility of financial sanctions for those not making progress.

A child welfare system must meet at least four criteria to function effectively on behalf of the children and families it serves.

- Stable leadership must be in place to provide the support necessary for employees, to set official policy, monitor services provided, ensure accountability, and maximize available resources for the agency and the families served.
- There must be a sufficient number of workers.
- The workers must have sufficient training and qualifications to do the work of the agency.
- The agency must provide the necessary resources to meet the needs of children.

If even one of the above criteria is not met, an agency can experience serious problems ranging from minor disruption in services to a complete failure of the agency to care for children. A good child welfare system functions much like a window in a home. When all the panes of glass are in place and the window is solidly in the framework all is well. If even one pane is broken, the entire window becomes dysfunctional and fails to work as designed. The same can be said of the child welfare system.

B. The development and organization of Children's Services

In Canada, provinces and territories manage child welfare activities under a Constitutional Act of 1982.² The Act provides a mechanism for setting legislation, operating systems, and allows a legal methodology for removing children from parents when necessary for protection.³ In 1999, Alberta government reorganized itself and child welfare services were a part of that reorganization.⁴ The resulting agency, known as the Ministry of Children's Services, was formed and was tasked with providing services to children and families in the province.

The Ministry of Children's Services is a decentralized system of child welfare. This means that the Ministry sets policy, guides and monitors practice, provides legal oversight, and manages the budget for the agency. The actual decision-making on a day to day basis in child welfare case practice is managed through a system of ten Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSA's).⁵ Each CFSA contracts for services for the children and families in its regional area. The Minister of Children's Services oversees the entire agency. Each CFSA has a Chief Executive Officer who reports to the local CFSA Board. Regional managers in areas such as finance and administration, programs, and contract management report to the CEO. The Boards operate independently of each other and answer only to the Ministry in matters of oversight as noted above.⁶

STAFFING AND TRAINING OF CASEWORKERS

A. Best practice in establishing caseloads

Caseworkers in child welfare cannot be effective in working with children and families if there are too many cases to manage at any given time. To establish an appropriate and manageable caseload size for caseworkers, agencies it is necessary to conduct a workload study to assess what types of work tasks are done as a part of case practice and the amount of

time needed to complete these. Caseload is the number of cases an individual worker is responsible for at a given time. Workload encompasses the amount of time required for completion of tasks associated with each case. There are several methods for conducting workload studies such as the commonly used random moment sampling technique. The method of conducting the study is not as important as the undertaking of the study itself and the use of the information to formulate caseload sizes for a particular agency. A common mistake in child welfare agencies is using the agency vacancy rate and number of allocated positions as a way to determine caseload size. That information might be useful in addition to the workload study, but should not stand alone as the only measure.

Highly respected organizations such as the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and the Council on Accreditation (COA), both in the United States, have researched and established case load guidelines for child welfare practice. The guidelines for common areas of child welfare practice as published by these two organizations can be seen in the chart below.

TYPE OF CASE OR FUNCTION	CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA	COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION
Child Protective Services	12 ⁷	15 ⁸
Foster Care	12 – 15 ⁹	18 ¹⁰
Adoption	10 – 12 ¹¹	12 - 25 ¹²
Ongoing in-home (prevention or protective supervision)	17 ¹³	12 – 18 ¹⁴
Mixed caseloads of investigation & ongoing cases	4 investigation & 10 ongoing ¹⁵	
Supervisory ratio	1:5 supervisors to social workers ¹⁶	1:8 supervisors to social workers ¹⁷

B. Alberta's caseloads

From 1992 through 2000 caseloads in Children's Services grew an astonishing 82%.¹⁸ However, the total number of children served (a much greater number than those actually on caseloads) grew 60% in just a five year period between November 1994 and December 1999.¹⁹

In 2000, even with workload standards in place, caseloads were described as inadequate (i.e. caseworkers were carrying too many cases). The workload standard being used at the time was described as not an adequate representation of the actual work required of individual caseworkers.²⁰

Today, it is difficult to ascertain exactly what standard is being used, if any.

C. Best practice in training

It is imperative in child welfare practice that caseworkers have the skills needed to work effectively with children and families. Child welfare work is stressful, crisis-ridden, and at times dangerous. Workers must be prepared both in their general educational background as well as in a practical sense. Child welfare agencies generally have wide ranging educational requirements for educational qualifications. However, most require at a minimum a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher learning. Research has shown and best practice would indicate that a Bachelor's degree in the field of Social Work is the most effective education in preparation for child welfare work.

At the most basic level, caseworkers want to know "How do I do my job?" It is the responsibility of the child welfare agency to see that caseworkers have the skills necessary for the job function that is to be performed. An agency's training can be accomplished in a number

of effective ways. Some child welfare agencies provide their own internal training curriculum delivered by an agency's training staff either locally or through various types of agency training institutes. Others contract training out to private training providers. Still others make use of one or more colleges and/or universities Schools of Social Work to meet the training needs of the staff. There is not one delivery method that is better than another. There are, however, key components to good child welfare training that should be in place. There are:

- a standardized curriculum consistent with the practice model used by the agency;
- an evaluation component for both the trainees and the trainers;
- resource materials for reference;
- an on-the-job training period;
- ongoing, formal continuing education or in-service training;
- a performance feedback mechanism for measuring the quality of the training; and
- a process that facilitates the regular review, update, and revision of the training to stay abreast of changes in laws, policies, and practice.

D. Alberta's training

Children's Services initiated a Child Welfare Training Program in 1995 to give a child welfare specific focus to new staff coming into child welfare with little or no background in social work.²¹ The training evolved from 1995 to 2000 into what is described as a program lauded by staff for the inclusion of job specific information and helpfulness in preparing new social workers with the skills necessary to do their jobs. According to information available at the time, new employees with a Bachelor's in Social Work would need three to four months to complete the course while those from other disciplines would typically need the full six months available for the training.²²

A week spot in the training regimen is the delivery of Child Protective Services training which is only a four week curriculum. Feedback from staff documented a belief that the curriculum was too focused on the investigative aspects of CPS. A need for greater information on linkage of services for families to prevent child custody was identified.²³

A second weakness in training has to do with the inconsistency of continuing education for social workers. From information available, it appears that Children's Services leaves each Region to its own devices in regard to having or not having ongoing continuing education for the staff.²⁴ There was also no evidence of any quality control on this aspect of training. It is incumbent on Children's Services to provide in the overall training schema a method for keeping social workers up-to-date on new practices in child welfare and to provide them with ongoing opportunities to increase skill levels.

As for supervisor training, this reviewer was unable to access any information having to do with new supervisor preparation.

RESOURCES

A. What do children removed from home require?

Removing a child from parents is a highly traumatic event. Even children who have experienced abuse can be reluctant to be separated from their parents. The first place caseworkers typically look for children who run away while in foster care is their parents' home. The child welfare agency becomes the parent for a time while the child is in care. As the acting parent, the agency takes on the responsibility of keeping the child safe, meeting the child's needs, and seeking a more appropriate permanent home for the child. In order to meet that responsibility the agency must see that several things happen.

First, a thorough assessment should be done to determine a baseline “state of the child.” The assessment should include screenings for health and mental health status and needs as well as educational level if appropriate. Once the child’s needs have been established, the agency must then go about securing whatever resources are needed to provide a safe, stable, and nurturing environment for the child – just as any healthy parent would. The assessment of the child is a part of the roadmap of overall permanency planning for the family.

B. What do parents experiencing child removal need?

As with the child, the parent(s) require a thorough assessment to establish 1) the extent of the problem(s) contributing to the child being removed from their care and 2) what is necessary to change the situation for them so the child can be returned. This is best accomplished through the permanency planning process of which the assessment is a part.

Parents needs can be many and varied. Everything from counselling, mentoring, and training in basic living skills to health care, housing, and employment assistance may have contributed to a situation causing a child to be neglected or abused. An appropriate timeframe must be established to assist a parent in putting a family back together. In the United States, the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) set out required timeframes for parents to work within to alleviate the removal situation and reunite the family.²⁵ ASFA requires termination of parental rights to proceed, barring unusual circumstances, if a parent has not made progress in 15 of the previous 22 months.²⁶ ASFA demonstrates the importance of stability and permanency for children and that children are not allowed to languish in foster care for long periods of time.

C. What resources should caseworkers have to get the job done?

In today’s world, it is essential that caseworkers have the “tools of the trade” to

accomplish their work. Up-to-date computer technology is common place in functioning child welfare systems. The work of case planning, service provision and tracking, data entry and reporting, and information gathering are all done with the assistance of information technology. The ability to link the computer system to hand-held computer/mobile phone devices provides even greater communication capability for the caseworker. This also adds to the personal safety of caseworkers who at times find themselves in risky situations with families.

Training was mentioned earlier in this report and so will not be delved into again. However, it should be noted that good child welfare practice does not happen without a well-trained workforce. Ongoing training through required continuing education keeps caseworkers in tune with improvements in practice. And finally, best practice would dictate that caseworkers should not be carrying caseloads prior to completing the agency's established course of training. To put untrained people in the community working with families in crisis is risky at best.

Of great importance in child welfare work is the ability to access in a timely fashion the necessary placements and services for children. In addition, services to parents to aid in the reunification process must be of sufficient availability and accessibility so as to make reunification a realistic possibility for the family. Mental health and substance abuse services for children and parents, health care services, appropriate special educational services and specialized services such as programs for domestic violence and mentoring programs are necessities if child welfare work is to be effective.

Child placement resources take many forms and are necessary when a child must be removed from parental care. A well-functioning child welfare system will have an array of placement possibilities available to meet the needs of the child. Reasonable professional practice would dictate that children should always be in the least restrictive and most home-like setting

possible. A method to assess children's readiness to move to less restrictive placement should be in the caseworker's practice toolkit. In addition, a hierarchy of placement should be in place which looks at relatives as the resource of first choice.

Foster parents are invaluable resources in child welfare. Indeed, in the United States, some states place such importance on this role that foster parent "Bill of Rights" legislation is in place.²⁷ A functional child welfare agency will have in place an ongoing recruitment, training, and retention plan that acknowledges the important role foster parents play in stabilizing the lives of children who have been removed from home.

D. Alberta's resources

Of more than 6500 children in care in 2000, 60% (3,920 children) were in permanent status in Alberta's care. Most of those children were placed in out of home care, the rights of their parents were terminated, and they were, for the most part growing up without permanent families in group homes, foster homes, or residential settings.²⁸

In the United States, the government began offering financial adoption incentives years ago to the states to increase the number of children in permanent adoptive homes and consequently decrease the number of children languishing in foster care and growing up with the government as the parent. The results have been dramatic in the rise of children placed in what are coming to be called "forever homes." In Alberta, a mindset in case practice that adoption is not a viable option for many children hinders the ability of children to grow up with a healthy family of their own.²⁹ Kinjerski and Herbert comment in their wide-ranging report of 2000 on entitled "Child Welfare Caseload Growth in Alberta" an array of reasoning interfering with the success of adoption work. Included are a value system that does not support adoption, the

inadequacy of adoptive parent resources in Alberta, and a lower priority for adoption work within the organization.³⁰

A shortage of available treatment resources for families and children in Alberta has been documented in the past.³¹ With the decentralization of Children's Services into Regions, each Region became responsible for service provision to the families and children served by their agencies. There was no evidence available for this review that would allow an appraisal of how well the Regions are doing in regard to service provision to families. Nor was information available as to the process for individual providers' contract monitoring, if any. Without this information, it is impossible for the public to know the status of the agency's providers and whether or not children are getting their needs met.

One of the more contentious issues of the past decade seems to have revolved around incredible inconsistency in permanency planning. Permanency planning is the foremost essential document that is used to ensure that children's needs are met, families have the organization's support for making progress to reunite with their children, and service provisions are obtained by the caseworker to aid the family. In Alberta, report after report has cited this over the years as a problem – to no avail.³² If permanency planning fails at the beginning of the case, it is nearly an impossibility to avoid a child languishing in care sometimes for years.

LEADERSHIP

A. Administration

The administrators of a child welfare agency have ultimate responsibility for the children in the agency's care. The agency leadership charts the course for the organization of the work of caring for children and employees throughout the organization take their lead from the

top leadership in child welfare. Stability in leadership is essential in child welfare. Without the consistency and professionalism of strong leaders, the child welfare agency can flounder. With unclear direction or poor leadership, morale suffers, work is delayed and children are put at risk. Child welfare leadership is one area of government responsibility requiring careful consideration by those with appointing authority. Leaders with the appropriate professional experience and educational background are necessary if an agency is to exhibit best practice.

There are many different ways of organizing the work of child welfare. How an agency is organized is less important than the fact that the work is accomplished effectively on behalf of the children and families served. For example, the agency should have specific criteria for how permanency plans are managed. There is not necessarily one method that is better than another in terms of the paper that is processed and the “look” of the plan. What is important is that the plan be a living document accurately reflecting the strengths and needs of the child and the family, the roadmap to permanency, and include the input of those supportive of the family. Removal of children is a legal process and, as such, the court plays a prominent role with the agency in how child removal and return is handled. Various countries manage permanency planning in different ways. In the United States, court approval of permanency plans is integral to proceeding in any way with a child and family. In fact, reimbursement by the government for the costs associated with foster care is tied to regular review by the courts of permanency plans.³³

B. Supervision

Responsible supervision throughout a child welfare agency results in a high level of accountability in child welfare practice. Competent supervisors ensure that decision-making is timely and consistent. As previously seen, CWLA guidelines recommend that supervisors be responsible for no more than five caseworkers at any one time,³⁴ and COA standards recommend no more than 8.³⁵ Caseworkers need supervisors to be accessible on a regular basis. In return, regularly scheduled supervision sessions for review of cases as well as supervisor availability during crisis situations are the mark of a good supervisor. In a functional child welfare agency, supervisors are not just “promoted up” from the ranks of the caseworkers with little or no preparation for the role and the responsibility. Instead, a supervisory course of training prepares a supervisor with skills specific to the new job function prior to moving into the position. In addition, the requirement of a higher educational level (e.g. Master’s degree in Social Work) indicates the agency recognizes the serious nature of the level of work.

C. Quality assurance and data reporting

Child welfare agencies must have the ability to monitor both overall system performance and local case practice to avoid the entrenchment of problems within an agency. This monitoring allows the agency to correct course organizationally as well as locally. The ability to collect and aggregate data over time provides a method for educating the staff about systemic problems and also gives agency leadership a yardstick for measuring progress on selected outcomes. Professional quality assurance includes a feedback loop of expected outcomes, actual performance, corrective action plans, and the monitoring of compliance with corrective action plans. The latter provides a basis from which to remedy problems identified by the agency. The aforementioned CFSR process in the United States is an excellent example on a large scale of a

quality assurance process. The government agency involved in the development and implementation of that process has revisited some of the original standards to remedy problems identified in the first round of reviews with the states.³⁶

Reasonable child welfare professional standards would also include an internal case review system as a part of the quality assurance program. Data generated from randomly selected cases is used to provide a baseline, and later, performance outcomes to be used as a work improvement tool. In data collection and reporting it is important for the child welfare agency to be able to answer the following questions related to the organization

- Is there an information technology system exclusive to child welfare?
- What child welfare data is captured by the system?
- What reports are available from the system and to whom are these made available?
- What does the child welfare agency do with reports and data? In other words, what are the expectations of usage within and across the agency?
- How does the information reporting system tie into the quality assurance system?

D. Financing

To some degree, child welfare agencies are dependent on allocations from the government in order to finance the cost of the protection and well-being of children. However, most governments operate under a set of budgetary submission processes that include the expectation that the governmental agencies will make a case for an amount necessary to effectively operate their agencies. For this to happen, child welfare agencies must make their case for funding at a level that is realistic, shows the reasoning behind the numbers, and indicates a performance that merits the amount requested. Governments expect the agencies they are funding to demonstrate good stewardship of tax payer dollars, and they are increasingly

interested in results shown for the dollars spent. It has become standard practice across government agencies to implement performance outcomes and performance based budgeting in order to address this issue.³⁷

In the financing of child welfare, reasonable professional practice would find the agency with a standardized rate-setting structure for providers based on the services being delivered. Contract monitoring, licensing, and conducting of service needs assessments on a regular basis are all components of good financial management within a child welfare agency.

E. Today in Alberta

Today, in Alberta, there seem to be attempts at a more open and inclusive process for Children's Services in the province. For example, the agency's website has a wealth of information available to the public in regard to the budget, policy and legal information, and various reports on the agency and its operation.³⁸ According to the website, there are approximately 9000 children in care in Alberta. 4600 of those children are in foster care in a total of 2300 foster homes. Of the 9000 children, 6500 are in permanent care (parent rights have been terminated) and another 2500 are in temporary care.³⁹

Unfortunately there is little information about the breakout of those children, giving rise to many questions. How long have they been in care on average? How many are separated from siblings? What is the goal for them (adoption, independence)? Information such as this would add considerably to support from the public if available.

On budget information, the public has access to a fairly thorough description of the operating budget of the agency and the amounts designated for each program. Foster parent reimbursement rates are available as well.⁴⁰ What is not easily accessible is a closer examination

of the Regional budgets and how the money coming to each Region finds its way to providers and families for service delivery.

In terms of policy information, the extensive Enhancement Act Policy Manual of 800+ pages is available to the public. On close examination, it appears the last revision was three years ago in 2005. The sheer size and complexity of the policy manual is likely to be a deterrent to some social workers who might otherwise seek employment with the agency. In addition, the manual is quite detailed in some areas while lacking in specifics in areas where caseworkers might need more guidance (e.g. foster parent visiting).⁴¹ Children's Services seems to be trying to improve practice through the 2006 introduction of a "New Casework Model," but the only information available is vague in regard to what a caseworker can actually expect in terms of policy and training changes.⁴²

From information available to the public, it appears that the Ministry attempts to review the functioning of the regions through a group known as the Social Care Facilities Review Committee.⁴³ While it is admirable for the agency to send committee members out for feedback on how things are going in various child caring placements, it is not a standardized quality assurance process that does intensive case file reviews of children's records, parent progress, or implementation of service plans. It was unclear from the information whether or not the facilities and homes no in advance they are to be visited. Such information would obviously make a difference in what committee members see and hear.

CONCLUSION

In returning to the beginning of this report and the analogy of good child welfare to a functioning window, one would have to conclude that Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services has some distance to go to reach a functional condition in child welfare. Continuing difficulties

with caseload size, availability and easy access to services, a complex policy manual with and unclear practice model and uncertainty in budgetary matters all contribute to ongoing difficulties. Until those issues are resolved, Alberta Children's Services will continue to experience problems.

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- ¹ 45 CFR Parts 1355,1356, 1357, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (2000).
- ² Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B of the Canada Act, 1982 (U.K.), 1982.
- ³ Gough, P. (2006). "Alberta's Child Welfare System." CECW Information Sheet #46E, p.1. Toronto, ON, Canada: University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work.
- ⁴ "The Welfare of Canadian Children: It's Our Business," p. 30, Child Welfare League of Canada, 2007.
- ⁵ Children's Services website (www.child.gov.ab.ca), Alberta Government, 2007.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Services for Abused or Neglected Children and Their Families (1999): 137.
- ⁸ COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-CPS 14.05.
- ⁹ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Foster Care Services (1995): 113.
- ¹⁰ COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-FC 19.06.
- ¹¹ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Adoption Services (2000): 101.
- ¹² COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-AS 13.
- ¹³ CWLA, Standards for In-Home Aide Services for Children and Their Families (1990): 46.
- ¹⁴ COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-FPS 11.07.
- ¹⁵ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Services for Abused or Neglected Children and Their Families (1999): 138.
- ¹⁶ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Foster Care Services (1995): 114
- ¹⁷ COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-TS 3.02.
- ¹⁸ Child Welfare Caseload Growth in Alberta, Kinjerski and Herbert (2000), p. 1.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p.86.
- ²¹ Child Welfare Caseload Growth in Alberta, Kinjerski and Herbert (2000), p. 64.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Ibid. p. 65
- ²⁴ Ibid. p. 65-66.
- ²⁵ U.S. Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.
- ²⁶ U.S. Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Section 103.
- ²⁷ "Foster Parent Rights Act," State of Tennessee, TCA Title 37, Chapter 2, Section 4; "Foster Parents' Bill of Rights," Code of Alabama, Title 38, Section 12A-1 and 2.
- ²⁸ Child Welfare Caseload Growth in Alberta, Kinjerski and Herbert (2000), p. 80
- ²⁹ Ibid., p. 81.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Child Welfare Caseload Growth in Alberta, Kinjerski and Herbert (2000), p. 85.
- ³³ U.S. Social Security Act, Title IV-E, Public Law 96-272.
- ³⁴ CWLA, Standards of Excellence for Foster Care Services (1995): 114
- ³⁵ COA, Public Standards (2006): PA-TS 3.02.
- ³⁶ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, "Updated National Standards for the Child and Family Service Reviews and Guidance for Program Improvement Plans," (2007).
- ³⁷ AL Smart Budget site
- ³⁸ Alberta Children's Services website at www.child.alberta.ca.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Enhancement Act Policy Manual (rev. 2005), 10.2 Foster Care Program Requirements.
- ⁴² Alberta Children's Services website at www.child.alberta.ca.
- ⁴³ Ibid.

APPENDIX A

Curriculum Vitae for Cathy R. Crabtree
