On behalf of the Institute, I want to wish you all a Happy New Year!

We are looking forward to a productive year and are hoping that everyone is off to a great start. The Institute is engaged in some very exciting projects. We are committed to working with our child welfare partners on building evidence around our Kinship Navigator Programs in preparation of the Family First Prevention Services Act. In addition, we are continuing our support of the 5-year child welfare workforce study and look forward to expanding that work in the coming years.

This month, we will be hosting a webinar which will focus on Multi-level Intervention for Human Trafficking of Florida Youth.

Florida’s Legislative Session begins on January 14th, and the Institute will be present and available to provide research-informed recommendations to child welfare policy makers. Updates on pertinent changes to social policy relating to children and families will be shared with each of you.

I am excited to announce our Annual Spring Symposium! More details on this year’s theme and speakers will be announced at a later date. Please mark your calendars for May 19-20, 2020 to attend the Symposium in Tallahassee. Our previous Symposia have always been a truly meaningful time spent together with colleagues and partners from around the state. We are looking forward to seeing you all in May.

Save the Date

Florida Institute for Child Welfare
Annual Spring Symposium
May 19-20, 2020
Tallahassee, FL
WHAT’S NEW

A new journal article summary is available this month.

**Human Trafficking and the Child Welfare Population in Florida**

A new brief is also available from the Florida Study of Professionals for Safe Families.

**Frontline Child Welfare Workers’ Descriptions of Client-Perpetrated Violence**

SPECIAL TOPIC

**JANUARY IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH**

U.S. law defines human trafficking as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person into commercial sex acts, labor, or services against their will. The one exception involves minors and commercial sex—inducing a minor into commercial sex is always considered human trafficking regardless of the presence of force, fraud, or coercion.

Children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, especially children connected to the child welfare system. In the U.S., 60 percent of domestic child trafficking victims come from foster care and group homes. Florida ranks third in the U.S. for human trafficking prevalence.

The Institute is collaborating with its affiliates, the Florida Department of Children and Families, and other stakeholders to help better identify and work with survivors. If you suspect a child is a victim, please call the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE.

Learn more in our Human Trafficking Awareness infographic and follow our Facebook page for more resources posted throughout the month.

FACTS & FIGURES

- **Florida ranks 3rd** in the U.S. for human trafficking prevalence.1

- Between 2011 and 2015, there were **4,413 trafficking allegations** investigated in Florida, which were coded as:
  - **Sex (58.3%), labor (15.7%), and unspecified trafficking (36.0%).**
  - **Over 1/3 of allegations were for children in out-of-home care** (2,220 and, of those, over 1/3 were missing from care 771).2

- The Florida Abuse Hotline received **2,198 initial or subsequent reports of human trafficking allegations** in SYF 2018-2019, approximately 1/4 of which were deemed verified as trafficking.2

- Compared to other types of maltreatment investigations, Florida youth with human trafficking investigations are **more likely to have previous child welfare involvement.**3

- A recent review documented the consequences of youth sex trafficking, which include **significant adverse physical and mental health impacts** (e.g., injuries from violence, sexually transmitted infections, major depression, suicidality).3

To better meet the needs of these vulnerable youth, the Florida Legislature enacted the **Safe Harbor Act of 2012** (FLA. STAT. § 409.1675), which encourages Departmental fraud to better address the needs of sexually exploited youth, including expansion efforts for short-term safe housing availability and care.1

CALLS FOR RESEARCH

- **The Network for Social Work Management Conference**
  - Deadline: January 22, 2020

- **National Organization of Forensic Social Work Conference**
  - Deadline: February 1, 2020

- **Foster Care Conference**
  - Deadline: February 1, 2020

- **National Association of Council for Children Child Welfare Law Conference**
  - Deadline: February 2, 2020

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

- **American Association of Behavioral & Social Sciences Conference**
  - February 24-25, 2020  Las Vegas, NV

- **21st Annual Families & Fathers National Conference**
  - February 24-27, 2020  Los Angeles, CA

- **Zero Abuse Project Summit**
  - February 27-28, 2020  Orlando, FL

- **16th Annual Childhood Grief & Traumatic Loss Conference**
  - March 19, 2020  Los Angeles, CA

- **33rd Annual Research and Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, & Young Adult Behavioral Health**
  - March 15-18, 2020  Tampa, FL

- **Child Welfare League of America 100th Anniversary Conference**
  - March 25-29, 2020  Washington, DC

- **38th Annual Protecting Our Children National American Indian Conference on Child Abuse & Neglect**
  - March 29-April 1, 2020  Denver, CO

- **17th Hawai`i International Summit on Preventing, Assessing & Treating Trauma Across the Lifespan**
  - April 14-17, 2020  Honolulu, HI

- **American Adoption Congress 41st International Conference**
  - April 15-18, 2020  San Diego, CA

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

In partnership with the Office of Early Learning, the Institute will be offering two-day Racial Equity Learning Exchanges on February 10-11 (Broward County - invitation only) as well as February 13-14 (Tallahassee - registration required and capacity is limited). To register for the Tallahassee Learning Exchange, click here.

RECENT CONFERENCE

Mariani Tutwiler, Program Director, has served on the Workshop Selection Committee for the DCF Child Protection Summit for the past four years. She attended this year’s Summit to meet with fellow colleagues and Institute affiliates and to connect with new stakeholders in the field.

Originally known as the Dependency Court Improvement Summit, the annual training conference is the largest child welfare event in Florida and has continued to emphasize the importance of bringing together child welfare professionals and related partners to share and exchange best practices while enhancing collaborations across professions.