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Alvin Sallee

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Editorial

Family Preservation Issues

Over the past 25 years plus of Family Preservation programs, several issues have emerged, sometimes over and over. In fact, whether or not a family focus will exist continues to be discussed in some quarters.

This Journal through numerous articles has explored these critical controversies. This Journal issue provides an overview of these issues and by doing so provides insight into the ongoing support and need for Family Preservation principles, programs, and values.

What is Family Preservation, what does the research show is effective practice, is there funding, and what policies should there be, are some of the questions addressed in this issue. Through reviews and responses to reviews, we are able to gain a better understanding of this still, developing multi-service, interdisciplinary methods of working in partnership with families.

Jacquelyn McCroskey addresses the first questions directly in her article, “What is Family Preservation and Why Does It Matter?” by reviewing more than 100 years of family services and philosophy. The questions raised by evaluations and research is the topic of the article, “Family Preservation Research: Where we have been and where we should be going,” by Jane Yoo and William Meezan.

A major practice issue—safety—is explored in-depth by Gwendolyn Perry-Burney in her article, “Safety of Intensive In-home Family Workers.” A survey of workers not only identified concerns, but also suggests for a training curriculum.

At the program and policy level, the implementation of Family Preservation in the nation’s second largest state (and home of current President Bush) is reported in “Family Preservation to At Risk Families: A Macro Case Study,” by Charles Sallee and Alvin Sallee. Funding streams, including titles IV A&B, XX, and TANF, are explained as well.

An expanded review of “Supporting Families through Short Term Foster Care,” by Anthony Maluccio sheds light on this important approach in child welfare. LeRoy Pelton responds to William Epstein’s reply regarding Epstein’s book, *Children Who Could Have Been: The Legacy of Child Welfare in Wealthy America*.

It is hoped that this sharing of information and discussion will contribute to the improvement of the lives of children and families. While some may question, as we should, the effectiveness of Family Preservation it continues to be practiced from a family centered value base that is adopted more and more by individual practitioners, agencies and policy makers. And finally the real judge—families.

Alvin L. Sallee