



Update from the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance

## Social Service Workers Promote Inherent Strengths of Families, Increase Self-Reliance

As we celebrate **Child and Youth Care Worker Week May 3-9** and **International Day of Families on May 15**, we recognize the important role of the social service workforce in the lives of children and families around the world every day. The

Alliance has for many years highlighted the unique and important role of child and youth care workers, and the role of all social service workers in supporting families, and continues to do so.



Zeni Thumbadoo of the National Association of Child Care Workers shared in a prior blog how social service workers are [Supporting Families and Building a Better Tomorrow for Children](#). "All social service workers come together to put families at the center of integrated service delivery. Together this united yet diverse social service workforce contributes to promoting the inherent strengths of families and their capacity for self-reliance. We recognize that families are diverse in their forms and functions...We celebrate in our work the diverse family forms – some of these stretching the traditionally known paradigms and creating space for innovative engagement from social service workers. Social service workers promote the inherent strengths in families through services that are child centered, family focused and community

based."

Child and Youth Care practitioners work in the life space, designing and implementing programs and planned environments with individuals and families. Their work is developmental, relational, strengths-based and trauma-informed. CYCW Week is an opportunity to recognize them and their important role.

In a previous discussion hosted by the Alliance, panelists shared how '[Social Service Workers Promote Integrated Service Strategies by Linking Institutions, Communities and Families](#).'

Another presentation highlighted the [community-based workforce of social service para professionals](#) who carry out critical work to strengthen families, challenges they face and global contributions toward strengthening this workforce.

The [United Nations states](#) that "As the world struggles to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, there is a real opportunity to rethink and transform the way our economies and societies function to foster greater equality for all." Social service workers must remain at the forefront of adapting and innovating how they deliver services to ensure they are accessible and equitable for all individuals and families.

CYC Net encourages child and youth care workers to share how they are celebrating the week by sharing the poster and sharing on Twitter using the hashtag [#CYCWeek2021](#).

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## Alliance Secretariat News

### Alliance Steering Committee Chairperson

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance is very pleased to announce that [Kathryn Conley Wehrmann, Ph.D.](#) has been appointed as the Alliance's Steering Committee Chair. She will begin her term this month.

Dr. Wehrmann is an emeritus associate professor of social work at Illinois State University, USA, where she had served as the BSW Program Director. Her professional background also includes work in Illinois' public child welfare system and serving as a consultant on a variety of child welfare projects and programs. She has developed child protection training programs for several cohorts of Romanian officials and has been a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the University of Bucharest and had subsequent grants to carry out special projects. Her research interests include program evaluation of child welfare and adolescent mental health programs. Dr. Wehrmann has served as the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Board President (2017-2020). In this role she also had the privilege of serving as a member of International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) Executive Committee. At present, Dr. Wehrmann is serving as adjunct faculty at Fordham University in NYC where she is teaching social policy online. She is also serving as an adjunct faculty for Marist College's Social Work Department. She has served on the Alliance's Steering Committee for two years.

Dr. Wehrmann reports that she is honored to be assuming this leadership role and looks forward to working with the Alliance team and membership to achieve its vision of a world that values

and supports a social service workforce that builds well-being and resilience among those it engages. Dr. Wehrmann succeeds Dr. Rebecca Davis, PhD, MSW, Associate Professor for Professional Practice and Director of the Center for Global Social Work, School of Social Work, Rutgers University, United States. We are thankful to Dr. Davis for her leadership, guidance and support as Committee Chairperson for the past three years.

## Steering Committee Member - Fundraising and Philanthropy

To support continued growth, the Alliance is seeking one or two individuals to join the Steering Committee to share experiences, skills and contacts to enable long-term fundraising and development of strategic partnerships. Applications are encouraged from individuals anywhere in the world who: share the Alliance's commitment to promote and advocate for the often overlooked and poorly supported and recognized social service workforce, worldwide; can help identify and access new sources of funding, in particular long-term strategic funding of the Alliance's staff, platforms and core activities; and/or can help open doors to, and develop, new long-term strategic partnerships, that will help strengthen our impact and reach. Please review the [full description and criteria for Steering Committee members](#) and share the call for applications.



## Opportunities - Communications and Advocacy Manager

The Communications and Advocacy Manager is responsible for supporting the Alliance in developing and deploying strategies to communicate with Alliance members and external audiences and engage them in efforts to jointly build knowledge and advocate for the social service workforce. This is an exempt, full-time position with excellent benefits. Position is fully remote-based, though applicants must be based within the United States. [Review the job description and application process.](#)

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## New Blogs

### [Barefoot Social Workers Reach Remote Areas of China with Child Protection Services](#)

Wei Wenhui is the first barefoot social worker for Save the Children's child protection project in China. The story of Wenhui and Save the Children began in 2014. The project started as a pilot project in a neighboring township in partnership with the local village committee and the township government. On the recommendation of the village committee, Wenhui became the first child protection barefoot social worker in Cangyuan County.



As social work is a relatively new but increasingly recognized profession within China, there is a growing need for community-level workers. In this blog, the Save the Children China Country team shares how Wenhui is using song to reach children and families with child protection messages and how this program is continuing to



grow. [Read more.](#)

### [How We Can Integrate the Health and Social Service Sectors to Achieve Health for All](#)

In honor of World Social Work Day, in the International Year of the Health and Care Workers, HRH2030 convened an expert panel to showcase work being done through both global initiatives and country programs, highlighting how the health and social service sectors can better collaborate to achieve success together in improving community health. The Alliance was pleased to present opening remarks for this panel. A summary blog of the webinar with recording is [now available on HRH2030's website.](#)

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## Online Learning

### International Review of Parent Advocacy in Child Welfare

On May 12th at 9:00am ET, the International Parent Advocacy Network will discuss the literature review [International Review of Parent Advocacy in Child Welfare: Strengthening Children's Care and Protection Through Parent Participation](#). This review of the literature and program documentation presents evidence on the role of parent advocacy in achieving better outcomes for children and their families in child welfare. It was written to encourage parents and their allies to work together to transform child welfare systems. This change can be achieved through parents with lived child welfare experience having an increased role and influence in the development of better child welfare systems. [Register now.](#)

### Recording: It's Time for Care

The series launched on March 24 with a webinar hosted by UNICEF and Better Care Network to review the recent publication [It's time for care: Prioritizing quality care for children during the COVID-19 pandemic - Challenges, opportunities and an agenda for action](#). This new discussion paper elaborates on the extraordinary challenges facing children and families across the globe, and makes the case that supporting and understanding parents, family members and other caregivers is crucial in order to mitigate the immediate, medium-, and long-term impacts of the pandemic and ensure holistic response and recovery. It proposes a five-point agenda for care that offers a comprehensive, multi-sectoral roadmap to guide the immediate response to ensure quality care for children as well as the long-term investments across sectors, essential for care reform. [Watch the recording of the presentation and panel discussion.](#)



### Webinar Recording: Guidance on Public Expenditure

The second in a series for the Transforming Children's Care Global Collaborative Platform, this webinar reviewed new guidance on Public Expenditure and Children's Care produced by Changing the Way We Care. The guidance is designed to strengthen the capacity of government agencies in low resource settings to prepare a sound budgetary framework for policies, programs and services that aim to keep children in safe and nurturing family environments. It

further outlines a methodology for making the investment case for a family-focused continuum of care to the broader government, development partners and external donors. The webinar also included presentations of country examples. [View the recording in English or Spanish and download the Guidance.](#)

## Resources

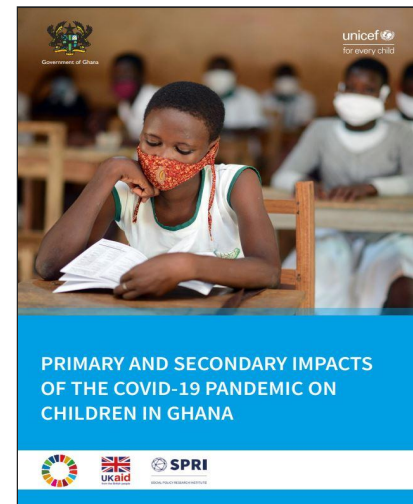
### Resource Database

Visit our website for [COVID-19 resources and tools](#) on topics relevant to the roles of the social service workforce, including mental health and psychosocial support, child protection, case management, alternative care and separated children, gender-based violence, working with communities, communications/key messages and webinars. If you have a new resource to share, [please contact us](#).

### [Primary and Secondary Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Ghana](#)

UNICEF Ghana, 2021

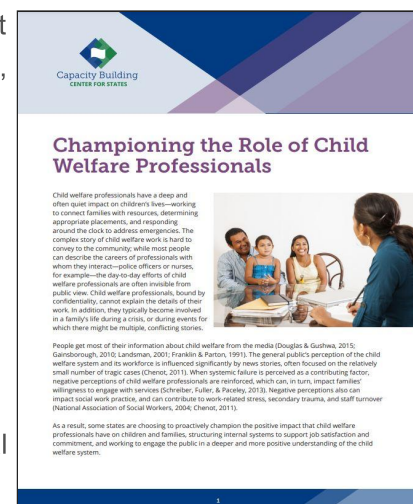
The paper outlines the primary and secondary impacts of COVID-19 on children in Ghana. The paper finds that wide-reaching secondary effects of the virus and consequent mitigation and preventive measures should be addressed in multidimensional ways, across sectors. In addition to emergency relief, strengthening social protection systems and prioritizing child-sensitive spending on human capital development, particularly on children's learning through school reopening, are forward-looking strategies to protect children from this and future crises.



### [Championing the Role of Child Welfare Professionals](#)

Capacity Building Center for States, 2020

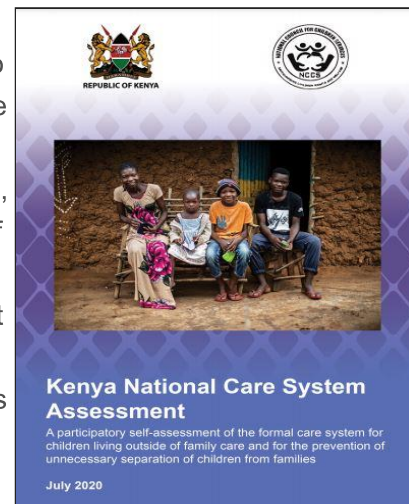
Child welfare professionals have a deep and often quiet impact on children's lives—working to connect families with resources, determining appropriate placements, and responding around the clock to address emergencies. The complex story of child welfare work is hard to convey to the community; while most people can describe the careers of professionals with whom they interact—police officers or nurses, for example—the day-to-day efforts of child welfare professionals are often invisible from public view. As a result, some states are choosing to proactively champion the positive impact that child welfare professionals have on children and families, structuring internal systems to support job satisfaction and commitment, and working to engage the public in a deeper and more positive understanding of the child welfare system.



### [Kenya National Care System Assessment](#)

National Council for Children's Services, 2020

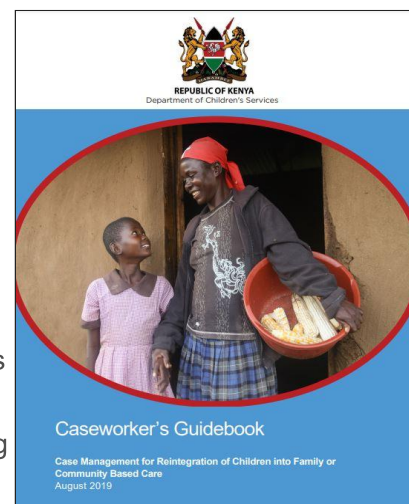
The government of Kenya is committed to moving away from institutional care towards family and community-based care. To support the oversight and implementation of the contents of the Children's Act, Kenya has established the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS) as the policy-making, coordination, regulatory, advocacy and advisory body and the Department of Children's Services (DCS) the mandated government body to implement children's services, including care. This assessment reviewed 13 priority areas within the Guidelines for Alternative Family Care for Children in Kenya (2014) and presents findings and recommendations that have validated by a Care Reform Core Team. The intention is for NCCS to use the finding to develop the Kenya National Care Reform Strategy and also for NCCS partners to identify high priority actions in care reform agenda in Kenya.



### [Caseworker's Guidebook: Case Management for Reintegration of Children into Family or Community Based Care](#)

Department of Children's Services, 2019

This Guidebook is intended to help in determining the course of action, streamline the process, and standardize the way state and non-state service providers promote family- and community-based care and protection for children outside of parental care. The intention in developing this package is to provide a general framework of agreed principles, considerations, steps, and procedures, along with a vital road map for effective case management that leads to successful reintegration of children back into families or communities. This Guide is a part of a package of resources and tools: Caseworker Toolkit, Facilitator Guide, and Caseworker Training Presentation. The package should be read together with the Guidelines on Child Protection Case Management and Referral and Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children in Kenya for a standardized and harmonized approach to ensure the wellbeing of all children in Kenya. The package is also intended to offer a valuable tool for policy makers, program designers, and practitioners to help them acquire solid guidance for safe and effective reintegration of children.



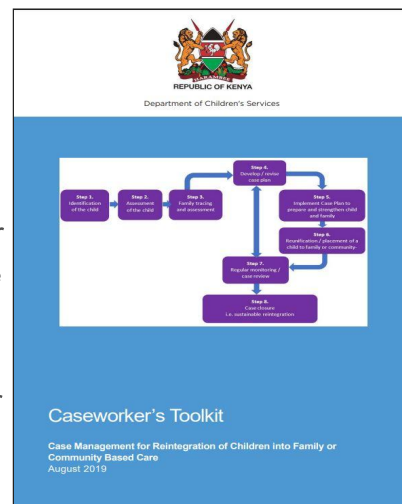
### [Caseworker's Toolkit: Case Management for Reintegration of Children into Family or Community Based Care](#)

Department of Children's Services, 2019

This toolkit is intended as a job aid for case worker's and includes sample forms for assessment,



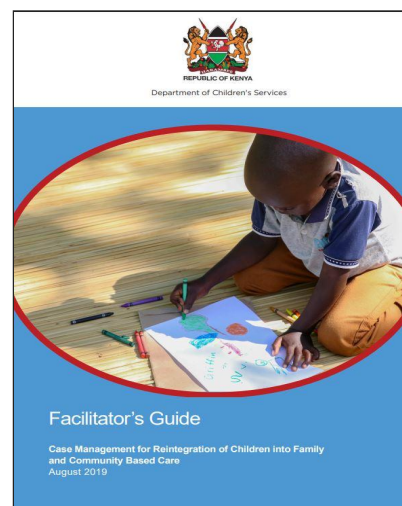
consent, placement and monitoring. The development of this Guidebook has been largely informed by the National Child Protection Case Management and Referral Pathway Guidelines in Kenya, the Guidelines for the Alternative Family Care of Children in Kenya, the case management model developed by 4Children [Coordinating Comprehensive Care for Children] Uganda's Keeping Children in Healthy and Protective Families project and the MWENDO [Making Well-Informed Efforts to Nurture Disadvantaged Orphans & Vulnerable Children] case management standard operating procedures for orphans and vulnerable children in Kenya. It should be used in supplement to the Caseworker's Guidebook and the Facilitator's Guide.



### [Facilitator's Guide: Case Management for Reintegration of Children into Family and Community Based Care](#)

Department of Children's Services, 2019

This Facilitator's Guide is for use by the varied workshop facilitators, including national and county trainer of trainers from the Department of Children's Services, and trained staff from other care reform partners. This guide is to be used together with the training agenda, PowerPoint slides, the Caseworker's Guidebook and the Caseworker's Toolkit for reintegration toolkit and the small group activity handouts. This simple guide helps the facilitator plan for each day and session. The sections on each session provide information about the time required, materials and additional resources or handouts needed, and additional guidance about the session, including small group activity descriptions. The Facilitator's Guide offers general guidance on how to roll out the training.



### [Review of National Social Protection Strategies](#)

K4D Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development

This helpdesk report reviews 10 national social protection strategies (published between 2011- 2019) in order to map their content, scope, development processes and measures of success. Each strategy was strongly shaped by its local context (e.g. how social development was defined, development priorities and existing capacity and resources) but there were also many observed similarities (e.g. shared values, visions for social protection). A number of good practices were identified from the strategies and wider literature.



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