

BRIDGING THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN

POLICY AND PRACTICE IN CHILD WELFARE

THE QUESTION OF POLICY TO PRACTICE IS A TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION ISSUE.

IT REQUIRES LEGISLATORS, COURTS OR BUREAUCRATS TO EXPLAIN HOW TO IMPLEMENT IT. OFTEN, SOCIAL WORKERS ARE LEFT OUT OF THIS ENDLESS LOOP.

EXAMPLES OF THE INTEGRATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE FROM THE STANDARDS THAT SOCIAL WORKERS ARE GUIDED BY INCLUDE:



POLICY VS PRACTICE

When administrative policies and practices conflict with what's best for the child, social workers are directed to the NASW Code of Ethics

STAY UPDATED

Child welfare social workers are expected to “stay up to date on current practice models and new laws and regulations”



CONTINUED EDUCATION

Social workers are expected to “continuously build their knowledge and skills” thus learn independently.

ADVOCATE & CREATE

"Social workers in child welfare shall seek to advocate for resources and systems reforms that will improve services for children, youths, and families." In this manner, social workers are creating and developing policies themselves.



HOLISTIC WELL-BEING

"Social workers in child welfare shall ensure that the child's emotional, medical, dental, developmental, emotional, cultural, spiritual, social, recreational and mental health needs are met." There is continuous policy development in all these areas.

MENTORSHIP

Supervisors must also possess knowledge of the political and economic factors that affect service delivery in their community and be able to mentor staff in learning to negotiate those systems.

