

2008 Contemporary Social Issues Seminar Series
Sponsored by the Universities at Shady Grove and the Rockville Institute

**Subsidized Guardianship Demonstrations: What We Have Learned and How
Those Lessons are Guiding Policy and Practice**

Thursday, March 20, 2008

The Issue

How do we keep kids with their kin? Can subsidies be the answer?

What We Know

Numerous initiatives have been undertaken in the past to find safe, stable, and permanent homes for children in foster care. To speed up the adoption of foster children, a subsidy was created to allow more low-income families to become adoptive parents. Unfortunately, when many relatives who did not want to adopt their kin children but were willing to become their guardians, the Government provided no funds at all.

In the late 1990s, the Federal Government instituted IV-E Waiver Subsidized Guardianship Demonstrations in six states to test the feasibility of a new option to achieve permanency. These experiments offered subsidies to relative caregivers who were willing to assume guardianships to provide long-term permanency for foster children.

Goals for the Presentation

The presenters will focus on the following:

- Findings and policy implications of the IV-E Subsidized Guardianship Demonstrations in several states.
- Findings that highlight the advantages of foster children who are reared by relatives.

Presenters

- **Mark Testa, PhD, Professor of Social Work, University of Illinois.** Dr. Testa is also director of the Children and Family Research Center in the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He formerly served as the research director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
- **Robert B. Hill, PhD, Senior Researcher, Westat.** Dr. Hill has been involved in evaluations of the subsidized guardianship demonstrations in several states. He is also project director of Westat's Race Matters Consortium.

Dr. Hill previously served as the director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University where he conducted studies on welfare reform issues for the

Governor's Welfare Reform Commission and the Maryland Department of Human Resources.

Dr. Hill is also a former director of research for the National Urban League under the leadership of Executive Director Vernon E. Jordan. He provided research support to Urban League affiliates throughout the nation and conducted many research studies on major policy issues affecting the black community.