

❖ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing and putting together an edited volume can be a complicated business. From conceptualizing and developing the prospectus, to the call for abstracts and requests to potential contributors, to the review of the original and revised chapters, and finally, to the submission of the manuscript to the publishers is a lengthy journey. It is gratifying to complete these tasks and to know that others, especially students, will add to the development of their knowledge by using this text. One of the most pleasant aspects of the process is being able to acknowledge and thank those people who contributed to this effort and those who helped to sustain and encourage us along this journey.

Both of us began our careers in social work in child welfare: Gary as a child welfare worker in St. Dominic's Home, working on the front line with children, youth, and families in Blauvelt, New York, and Peg as a social work intern at the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, an agency providing intensive family-centered, home-based placement prevention services. Much of Peg's work subsequently continued to focus on placement prevention services, as well as on the critical importance of visiting in the lives of children in care and their families, particularly as it relates to family reunification. Gary's work has emphasized the importance of developing a lesbian and gay affirming perspective to working with children, youth, and families. We have both been blessed with good colleagues and friends along the way, as well as inspiring teachers; fine supervisors; and many, many children, youth, and families who have taught us much more than we ever could have imagined when we began our careers.

More recently, Gary's work at the Hunter College School of Social Work in New York, where he is the executive director of the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and

Permanency Planning, has brought him in touch with federal, state, and tribal leaders in child welfare throughout the country. These valuable associations and dialogues have provided a stimulating context for the planning, coordination, and completion of this text. The ideas, discussions, and principles presented in this text are those of the authors of each chapter and do not represent the official position of the Children's Bureau or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nor were any funds from any grant used in developing this text.

While working on this text, Peg has been directing a multiphase review of case files of foster children in Fulton and DeKalb counties, Georgia, for Children's Rights, Inc. The findings of this review have served as reminders of the troubling gap between what is currently known about good child welfare practice and what many children and their families actually experience. Peg has also been consulting with several states concerning policies and practices related to family visiting of children in care. In contrast, these experiences have exemplified the creativity and dedication of many professionals laboring tirelessly on behalf of children and youth in the child welfare system.

Both of us recognize how much we have learned from our ongoing contacts with countless direct line staff, supervisors, out-of-home caregivers, and administrators in the child welfare agencies across the country and with child and family advocates as we have consulted, provided training, and studied a wide array of child welfare issues. We also acknowledge the profound lessons that we have learned from the countless children, youth, and families who have touched our lives with their courage and resilience in the least desirable of circumstances.

Our debt to our colleagues who contributed to this volume is inestimable. Both of us on many occasions have noted how fortunate we have been to have such knowledgeable and devoted child welfare professionals writing for this text. Each author has provided a rich and thoughtful contribution; as a group, the authors

have had extraordinary patience as they waited to see their work in print. The depth of their knowledge and their willingness to share it with the students who will use this text is quite remarkable. Our contributors met their deadlines, were amiable about making edits quickly, and were delightful to work with. We are extremely grateful for their exceptional contributions to the field through their chapters in this volume.

About four years ago, Gary proposed working on this text with Peg; we met over coffee at a bagel store on Broadway near Columbia University in New York, where we both had worked as faculty and had come to know each other as colleagues and friends. Although there have been some coordinating challenges along the way, our collaboration as co-editors has been rich, rewarding, and satisfying from start to finish.

It is a particularly important to us to acknowledge the consistent strong support and encouragement provided by one of the finest people in academic publishing, our senior editor at Columbia University Press, the late John Michel. In the work on this volume as in our earlier publications with the press, John, in his own gentle and always humorous way, gave us wise counsel at every step in the process. We are deeply saddened by the recent loss of our colleague and friend and regret that John will not be able to see the published text he jokingly called "the mammoth volume."

We also gratefully acknowledge senior executive editor Shelley Reinhardt's attentive and very skillful guidance of the manuscript's movement through final reviews and editing to publication, as well as the remarkably efficient and competent editing provided by Cyd Westmoreland and her colleagues at Princeton Editorial Associates.

Our final thanks are extended to our partners Mike and Howard, to our children, and to our families (kin and fictive), who support, nurture, and sustain us in personal ways that in turn permit us to spend time away from them, immersed in professional endeavors that sustain us in different ways.

**CHILD WELFARE FOR THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**



