

## NILA News Update

Issue I, February 2007

### Focus On...

#### Fewer Foster Children Eligible for Federal Support

Thousands of foster children and the states responsible for them are losing critical federal support because of an obscure provision in a now defunct federal program, a new report finds. The report [\*Time for Reform: Fix the Foster Care 'Lookback'\*](#), (16 pages, PDF), found that the number of children eligible for federal support has decreased by 35,000 since 1998, leaving less than half of children in foster care eligible for subsidized care and resulting in an estimated \$1.9 billion loss in federal foster care support to the states between 1998 and 2004. That number is expected to fall by an additional 5,000 kids a year, the study found..... [More»](#)

#### Minimum Wage Passes Senate, Still Faces Hurdles

On February 1, the Senate passed their version of a bill to increase the minimum wage, which also included \$8.3 billion in tax cuts for small business. The bill was sent back to the House for negotiations between the two different bills. House Democrats want a "clean" bill, one that simply raises the minimum wage without any tax cuts for businesses. The House could block consideration of the bill or strip the tax cuts and send it back to the Senate for another vote. Republican Senators, however, insist they will not pass a minimum wage bill without the tax cuts.

[More Information](#)

#### Fellowships for Social Entrepreneurs

The [Draper Richards Foundation](#) provides social entrepreneurs with funding to start new nonprofit organizations with national or global reach through the Draper Richards Fellowships program. The organizations selected must demonstrate innovative ways to solve existing social problems. By delivering support at the critical start-up phase, the Fellowships help outstanding people create wide-reaching social change. The application process is highly selective; only six Fellows are selected annually. Proposals are accepted throughout the year from experienced, dedicated social entrepreneurs with a developed idea for a U.S.-based nonprofit organization. Visit the website listed above for detailed information on the selection criteria and application process for the Fellowships.

#### New CRS report: *Child Welfare: Social Security and Supplemental Security Income Benefits for Children in Foster Care*

An estimated 30,000 children receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other Social Security benefits while in foster care. SSI benefits are available under Title XVI of the Social Security Act for certain children with disabilities if their families have low incomes and minimal assets. Social Security benefits may be paid under Title II of the act to the children of workers who have retired, become disabled, or died. [Click here for the complete report.](#)

### A Practice Guide Aimed at Helping Caseworkers Working with African American Families in the Child Welfare System

Through its Children of Color Outreach program, the Minnesota Department of Human Services has published a tool entitled, [A Practice Guide for Working with African American Families in the Child Protection System](#). The publication is meant to help social workers address the systemic overrepresentation of African American children and families involved in child protective services.

The *Practice Guide* brings together the knowledge presented in research literature about working with African American families, and synthesizes it into a reference guide that will help child protective services caseworkers identify strengths in African American families and build upon them.

### Orphan Foundation of America / Casey Family Scholars Program

Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) in conjunction with Casey Family Programs and other generous sponsors offers approximately 100 new scholarships annually for young people out of foster care. These scholarships range in award amount from \$2500 to \$6000 and are renewable with continued eligibility for up to six years or until a student attains their Bachelor's Degree or technical certificate/diploma, whichever comes first. Applications will be accepted on line at [www.orphan.org](http://www.orphan.org) (click the yellow scholarship box on the home page) between now and March 31, 2007.