




Spring Edition: May 21, 2009

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Feature

Fostering Knowledge for Foster Care

Nearly half a million children in the United States are in foster care because their families are in crisis. Child welfare experts are predicting this number will rise as a result of the economic downturn. To reignite the national dialogue on foster care during Foster Care Month (May), Casey Family Services and their partners held an invitation-only Journalist Roundtable to discuss the recently passed federal legislation, [The Fostering Connections to Success & Increasing Adoptions Act](#). The bill supports educational stability and provides assistance for kinship care; enabling foster youth to remain connected to their families, schools and communities. The Roundtable created a venue to share expert advice, provide real-life testimony to the need for support, and to give an update on how states are teaming up with child welfare providers, schools, health organizations and other partners to facilitate and implement this landmark legislation.



Prior to the Roundtable, we were able to place a [feature in the New Haven Register that discussed the need for educational stability and family permanency, especially for aging out youth](#). We also secured a

spot on [51%: A Women's Perspective](#), on Hudson Valley's NPR station that featured a Casey policy expert who discussed the new legislation and two grandmothers who shared their experiences and hardships in not having access to the services now available through this new act.

While the focus on these grassroots briefings are largely aimed at policy makers and child welfare professionals, not including the media can be huge a missed opportunity in moving your agenda forward. A few hours of time dedicated to seeking out interested reporters, creating an invitation and press release, and facilitating interviews can reap huge benefits.

To learn more about how to engage the media during foster care month visit:

<http://www.fostercaremonth.org/GetInvolved/Toolkit/WorkingWithMedia/Pages/default.aspx>

To learn more about the Fostering Connections Act visit: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-6893>

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Notes from the Field:

Douglas Gould and Company Establishes PublicVoice, an Operating Foundation to Advance Progressive Causes

Douglas Gould and Company recently established [PublicVoice](#), an operating foundation that serves as a communications resource to help nonprofit organizations advance progressive causes in education, health, the environment and other key sectors.



[PublicVoice](#) commissions opinion and media research on social, health, educational, economic and environmental issues; develops communications strategies and messages for public education purposes; provides training and technical assistance to not-for-profit organizations to improve their organizational effectiveness; and creates and implements educational communications campaigns on these issues.

The Joyce Foundation recently provided a \$538,200 grant to PublicVoice to develop advocacy communications for Shifting Gears, a state policy initiative that promotes regional economic growth in the Midwest by improving postsecondary education and workforce training in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

[PublicVoice](#) also received a \$20,000. The grant will fund a conference for the newly established National Center for Business Champions, which seeks to stimulate new thinking, strengthen political will and

advance policies that increase the number and quality of college graduates.

[View a list of board members](#) and learn more at our Web site.

Branding PolicyLab

PolicyLab, a Center of Emphasis at [The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia](#) ensures optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy change through interdisciplinary research. We worked with a multidisciplinary group of researchers and policy experts to create a fitting name for the newly established group: PolicyLab, the Center to Bridge Research, Practice and Policy. In addition, our team designed a logo and graphic identity and created key messages. We are currently working with PolicyLab on a formal program announcement and new Web site.



Making the Case for California Community Colleges



To support community college advocacy in California, we've published a primer that offers [messages to advance the unique value of community colleges, especially in a time of unprecedented economic strife and consequent budget cuts](#). Doug Gould recently spoke at the League for California Community Colleges Trustees Retreat and presented the primer.

State-wide Marketing Campaign for Pennsylvania WIC

Today's families want to know how healthy food and useful information can help them nourish their children. That's why we're working with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to create a marketing campaign for the state's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. The DG+Co team is at work creating a vibrant graphic identity, strategic messages and a marketing plan. Our work will ensure that Pennsylvanian women and children, who are at-risk for future health and nutrition complications, are aware of the new WIC food package and its benefits. By the fall of 2009, the PA WIC program will also be using several new collateral pieces designed and produced by DG+C that will include a new brochure, posters, radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs), and statewide billboards. Stay tuned for updates about our work with WIC.

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On my Radar

Child Advocacy 360: Message Development Project

Public opinion research suggests that Americans believe it is individual caregivers rather than policies that determine the well-being of children -- they think that families are primarily responsible; ignoring the role of government intervention. But we need to reframe the debate and mobilize voters to seek systemic, sustainable policies that we know can improve conditions for generations of American children, particularly those living in poverty.

[Child Advocacy 360](#), which works in partnership with [Connect for Kids](#) and the [Forum for Youth Investment](#), commissioned a message development project to arm advocates with effective communications to better mobilize public support for policies aimed at helping children and families. Our focus is on economic security and child health issues. We have consulted with a number of advocacy groups to confirm the urgency of this work, especially in face of state budget battles and the worsening economy.

We have a winning track record of developing and testing messages and prepping advocates to use communications strategies that educate stakeholders and mobilize support. We have worked on similar initiatives focused on poverty, low wage work and education reform, as well as many other issues. Success requires national and local organization involvement, a great research team and spokespeople who can inform the process and ultimately use the new messages and frames to gain attention.

The goal of this [message development project](#) is to increase the number of engaged constituents working on behalf of the neediest and most vulnerable children. To achieve this, project outcomes will include a clear definition of target audiences that are likely to be receptive to messages and compelled to act. Advocates and the public will be provided with messages and communications tools to inform and help train child-services personnel, to initiate a dialogue that will call for local, state and national policy changes to better address the needs of vulnerable children and youth.

To learn more or participate in the project, please visit our [online dialogue](#).

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Beyond the Click:

Communications for Change Joins the Blogosphere

Last month, DG+C launched our [Communications for Change blog](#). We will keep track of the issues facing

nonprofits and foundations, provide links to research resources and events in order to further progressive issues advocacy and foster community engagement.

Recent posts reflect thoughts on the media's coverage of foster care, arts learning and education reform resources and ideas about community colleges and workforce development. [Subscribe to stay tuned!](#)

On Air for Arts in Education

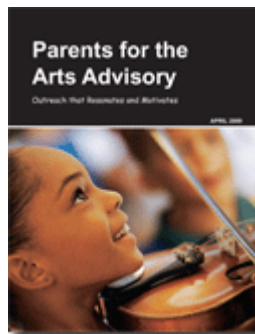
"Even in tough economic times, schools must sustain arts in education if children are going to get the skills they need for a successful future." [WAMC's 51%: The Women's Perspective](#) interviewed [Jennifer Hahn](#) to learn more about the [importance of ensuring the arts doesn't disappear from public school curricula](#) -- even in the current economic climate.

Lights! Camera! Career Change!

Community colleges open doors. In some cases, those doors lead to second careers. While adult students gain the skills they need, local communities gain well-trained employees who contribute to a skilled workforce and strong local economy. View the third in our [Profiles of Opportunity video series](#) and learn about [one man's career change into the film industry and how his community college helped to make it happen](#). Access [all videos in the Profiles of Opportunity series to see other stories of community colleges creating opportunity](#).

Resources, Staff News and New Clients

New Research: Parents for the Arts



Our [Empowering Parents for the Arts Webinar](#) revealed new research for education and arts learning advocates from around the country. Participants learned some of the characteristics and demographics of Parents for the Arts from speaker Ann Duffett of The FDR Group and our own Doug Gould provided background on the research, and offered [messages and strategies to use when engaging Parents for the Arts](#). Check back at www.keepartsinschools.org for upcoming events, new research and tips and tools to power your messaging on arts education.

Welcome Ron!

We welcomed [Ron Bigler](#) to our team last month. Before joining Douglas Gould and Company,



Ron spent five years planning online advocacy strategies at [Human Rights First](#). Taking on the issue of torture committed by the United States, Ron and his colleagues at Human Rights First used the power of the Internet to organize a public constituency against these abuses and in support of the rule of law and basic human rights. Ron, as a Senior Web Strategist, will contribute by helping our clients embrace new technologies and deploy creative and effective online communications strategies.

Welcome Interns:

We are happy to welcome Greg Star, a senior from Rye Neck High School, who will be working with us for a few weeks. DG+C has been partnering with Rye Neck High School for over six years, providing graduating seniors with workforce experience opportunities.

[Posse Foundation](#) scholar Christina Torres will also be joining us this summer. Christina comes to us as a new graduate from Dickinson College where she majored in American Studies with a focus on Advertising and Marketing.

Our New Clients:

- Arcus Foundation
- California Leadership Alliance for Student Success
- Child Advocacy 360
- Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
- International Fellowship Program
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System
- National Center for Business Champions
- National Parks of New York Harbor Conservancy
- Pennsylvania Department of Health's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program
- The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- The Guidance Center
- The Joyce Foundation - Shifting Gears Initiative

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