



AAICAMA

Building Bridges Across State Lines

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

AAICAMA professionals know how important support services, such as Medicaid, are to adoptive families. Through their every-day work they know that permanency allows children to thrive and become valuable citizens of their states. They also know that many of the families who adopt children from foster care need help in order to obtain the professional services that will help these youngsters grow.

Today, families and states are facing difficult choices as a result of the economic crisis that headlines the news every day. Everybody is tightening their belt, making sacrifices.

AAICAMA is responding by putting a premium on effectiveness and efficiency. We have invested in our web site to allow state professionals to quickly access the information they need to process an ICAMA case; we have cut our secretariat staff to the minimum by putting several projects on hold; and we have decided not to hold our annual in-person meeting but are actively exploring lower cost alternatives to maintain the effective network of ICAMA administrators.

AAICAMA belongs to the states. Its successes, numbered in the thousands of children whose permanency remains secure despite placement or re-location in new states, belong to the states. The value of the association becomes clear when viewed through the lenses of the resources and support available to each member. Our goal is to help states be sure that no interstate move puts the permanency of an adoptive child at risk.

In 2009 states can continue to expect the same high quality work AAICAMA has always provided.

- ★ Timely notification of changes in federal legislation and policy
- ★ Training and technical resources to ensure seamless processing of ICAMA cases
- ★ Active representation of AAICAMA's interests to groups whose work affects children with adoption assistance agreements

I am pleased to provide the following summary of the many things AAICAMA accomplished in 2008. I am proud of each effort and each product of the association. But the most important thing that has been accomplished is not what's listed in these pages. It's what happens in state offices each day as a result of AAICAMA's work—children are able to grow permanent family roots—no matter how many interstate moves these children and their families make. This happens smoothly and almost invisibly because of the vigorous network of dedicated state professionals whose work is supported by AAICAMA.

Sharen Ford
President, AAICAMA



AAICAMA...
*It's all about
the kids!*

Partnerships to Remove Barriers

To improve the timeliness of adoption and to help states ensure the uninterrupted delivery of services when a child moves to a new state AAICAMA expanded its partnerships across child and family serving systems, with national adoption organizations, and the Children's Bureau.

- ★ A working relationship between AAICAMA and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) was developed. Three Medicaid-related *Bridges* articles and *Frequently Asked Questions* on Medicaid were products of this collaboration. CMS will continue to work with AAICAMA on Medicaid issues during 2009.
- ★ The Program Manager presented a summary on the work done under AAICAMA's federal grant and independent association work to the NAPCWA Executive Committee. The committee offered its support for the establishment of nationwide reciprocity of the COBRA option.
- ★ AAICAMA invited child welfare directors from states that do not offer COBRA-reciprocity to a luncheon to discuss the benefits of this program for eligible children and the states they live in. As a result three more states now offer this benefit.
- ★ AAICAMA invited several Child Welfare and Medicaid Directors to present at its 2008 meeting. The Child Welfare Directors focused on the permanency and well-being elements of their CFRs. The Medicaid Directors provided information the delivery of Medicaid services under COBRA-reciprocity.
- ★ AAICAMA worked closely with the National Educational Workgroup to identify the impact of the education provisions in the Fostering Connections Act on children eligible for adoption assistance.

Research & Publications

Complete and accurate information on interstate practices and state staff are critical to the efficient administration of the Compact. To streamline Compact administration AAICAMA dedicated its research capabilities to updating existing products and developing new products requested by the members.

- ★ States were surveyed to collect and update AAICAMA's database. This instrument was designed specifically to inform interstate practice by capturing state-specific information on timeframes to issuance of a Medicaid card, availability of emergency Medicaid cards and key ICAMA state contacts.
- ★ Child Welfare Directors verified the information presented in the State Law Differences charts in Spring, 2008. The charts present state-specific information on home studies, finalizations, Title IV-E and state-funded adoption assistance programs. The charts are posted on the AAICAMA website to inform state professionals and adoptive families of differences in state laws minimizing barriers to the receipt of medical services to children with special needs who are adopted.
- ★ The chart indicating election of the COBRA option and the ways in which COBRA-reciprocity has been implemented by the States was updated to provide current and accurate information for each state.
- ★ AAICAMA identified data elements required for tracking the interstate movement of children receiving adoption assistance. These were provided to the states so that they can be included in state SACWIS systems. The elements were provided to NAPCWA and The Center for State Foster Care and Adoption Data at Chapin Hall,



Joinder

Joinder is the most important and the most successful initiative of the association. It is with pleasure we announce that the ICAMA is state law in 49 states and the District of Columbia.



AAICAMA's success in achieving almost 100% joinder was praised by the Children's Bureau.

The funds that had been designated for ICAMA joinder will now be used by the Children's Bureau for other initiatives.

Training & Education

AAICAMA believes a working understanding of the processes and forms used to administer the ICAMA, seamlessly enrolling children in Medicaid, good customer service and solutions-based thinking are critical to improving outcomes for children protected by the Compact.

- ★ AAICAMA staff created an interactive CD on "Meeting the Medical Need of Adoption Assistance Eligible Children" which was distributed to interstate professionals.
- ★ A new AAICAMA website was launched in spring 2008 to provide interstate professionals with easily accessible information about the Compact, its procedures, and other educational materials needed to facilitate seamless provision of Medicaid and other post-adoption services.
- ★ To educate adoption workers about the ICAMA process in an interstate adoptive placement, AAICAMA developed and formatted a simple Checklist for Local Workers laying out all ICAMA procedures and distributed this at the 2008 annual meeting.
- ★ Using Technical Assistance questions submitted by states, staff developed Frequently Asked Questions on Title XIX Medicaid.
- ★ AAICAMA convened its 2008 Annual Meeting which was attended by more than 30 states. The meeting included New Compact Administrator training, sessions on Customer Service; State Medicaid and Health Initiatives for Children; and new projects of AdoptUsKids and the NRC on Adoption.
- ★ AAICAMA published and disseminated Spring/Summer and Winter Issues 2008 of *Bridges* to 600 ICAMA and ICPC Compact and Deputy Compact Administrators, child welfare staff, adoption professionals, and adoptive parents.



Advocacy for COBRA-reciprocity

Advocacy for implementation of nation-wide COBRA-reciprocity is a priority for AAICAMA. Children eligible for state-funded adoption assistance

Research has proven that Medicaid benefits vastly improve the chances of a successful adoption of a child with special needs. This is true whether the child is receiving adoption assistance through the federal adoption assistance program or the state adoption assistance program.

AAICAMA believes that it is to every state's advantage to provide Medicaid benefits to any adoption assistance eligible child living in their state. If the adoption disrupts, it will be the state of residence that bears the financial burden of the child's return to foster care, not the adoption assistance state. Further, states will also be assured, that when children receiving adoption assistance from their state move to another state, they will receive the necessary medical assistance.

- ★ New York and Nebraska instituted a policy of COBRA-reciprocity during 2008. 44 states and jurisdictions now offer this benefit.

Executive Committee

President:

Sharen Ford, Colorado

Vice President:

Miguel Fernandez, New Jersey

Treasurer:

Sharon Knight, D.C.

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Sharon McCartney, JD
Consultant

Warren Lewis
Consultant

Robyn Bockweg
Consultant

Legislative Analysis

★ The association issued a memo to Child Welfare Directors and ICAMA administrators clarifying the directives on the use of Tamper Resistant Prescription Pads. The revised implementation date was also discussed in the memo.

★ The NAPCWA Weekly updates with the most recent federal child welfare policy information are sent to those who administer the compact.

★ AAICAMA staff began their analysis of relevant provisions of the Fostering Connections Act to determine the implications for children with kinship guardianship and adoption assistance agreements.

AAICAMA Financial Statement

2008 Income

Member state dues	
\$4,000.00 per year	
42 (of 50) members	\$164,000.
Adoption Opportunities	
Grant 90-CO-0999 (Year V)	\$149,250.
Total Income	\$313,250.

2008 Expenditures

Salary & Fringe	\$xxx,xxx
Indirect Costs	\$ xx,xxx
Other Expenses	\$ xx,xxx
Total Expenses	\$xxx,xxx

Major funding provided by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, through the Adoption Opportunities Grant Number 90-CO-0999

