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Child Care Under the Family Support Act

Plus:

Deceptive Practices of Proprietary Schools

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Network News

"Network News," a new column on the use of HandsNet in legal advocacy, focuses on how advocates, administrators, managers, and others have successfully used HandsNet in their poverty law practices. The column will appear in the Review on a recurring basis.

State Advocacy: A Virtual Community on the Information Highway

By Erron Bloodworth

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There has been much talk going on from the White House and other organizations about the development of the information highway and virtual communities coming together. HandsNet offers one such community to people in the legal profession. At one time or another, we all need a support group. Our everyday tasks overwhelm our busy schedules and chip away at the time we need for research. The state support folder on HandsNet provides help for just those times.

I signed onto the Texas folder in HandsNet in December 1991 as a folder manager. I have since seen it grow and succeed in its mission to reach advocates across the state. Texas, in particular, has many legal services offices on-line. And, in late 1992, an increasing number of special service organizations, such as the Women's Advocacy Project (WAP) HN2264 of Austin, came on-line. They provide additional information and services, such as statewide hotlines for answering callers' questions about their legal rights and options. WAP's representative, Jeana Lungwitz, has consistently helped legal services advocates not only in Texas but throughout the nation with the information that she provides.

We all need information, help, and advice in today's fast-moving world HandsNet has made locating that information much easier and quicker by providing an area for advocates to post their experiences, comments, and questions. If you cannot find the information or service that your client needs, you can use this state advocacy area to request assistance. Advocates also post current job opportunities with their organizations in this area. In addition, information about computers and utilities is available. Read a review about current and coming software releases or about the bugs of a program before you buy it. A major function of HandsNet, however, is the posting of pleadings and briefs. We offer the actual and generic briefs of cases that can help other advocates across the state. Advocates do not have to reinvent constantly all aspects of their work when so much is offered on-line. Two other areas of support offered in Texas are our current brief bank and an area indicating documents recently posted and currently being down-loaded

from the folder. Navigating a graphical user interface software like HandsNet can be foreign to many. It is made a little easier, however, by information located in support areas of the folder.

Each folder has a manager acting as a “traffic cop” on this information highway to help guide, maintain, and serve the needs of advocates. Asking for help is easy. You may simply write electronic mail (e-mail) questions to these managers. Below is a list of the current folder managers in HandsNet’s state advocacy folders and their E-mail addresses:

California—John Huerta (HN1388), Western Center on Law & Poverty

Florida—Cindy Cook (HN2000), Florida Legal Services

Massachusetts—Mary Connelly (HN0240), Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

New York—Deb Tshappat (HN0555), Greater Upstate Law Project

Pennsylvania—Susan Lucas (HN0712), Keystone Legal Services

Texas—Erron Bloodworth (HN1185), Texas Legal Services Center

Washington—Aaron Delwiche (HN3140), Evergreen Legal Services (pending)