

MARCH 2021

FAMILY ROUTES

A Monthly Newsletter by International Social Service, USA



CHILDREN DESERVE DURABLE SOLUTIONS

The true crisis at the border is that we have repeatedly failed to act in the best interest of children, at our border, and in their countries of origin. There has been little systemic improvement in how we care for children and families at the border or in the conditions that have caused families to flee. Although the politicians involved have changed, the issues have not. We have not developed long term solutions that are child centered. Ask not only whether a child/family should seek to pursue immigration relief, but what is in the best interest of that child? A social work oriented case manager should be assigned to everyone that enters the U.S.

Case management has existed for decades, linking families and children to needed services. Case managers are advocates for those they serve and empower them to advocate for themselves. Case management looks at all possible outcomes and helps the child and family plan for all possibilities including returning to country of origin. But if a child or family returns, case managers don't just worry about the child who was here in the U.S., but how to help the entire family with the most pressing needs. Case managers become the missing link in the supply chain particularly in areas where people have been systematically excluded. Therefore, to understand how to address the root causes of migration, we must first learn how to address the needs of each family when they return. The assumption is if we can address those needs, we can begin to create a system of support that will better protect families so they don't feel forced to flee. It is time to include in the conversation a focus on child centered durable solutions, so that ideally we can prevent future crises at our borders.

- Julie Rosicky, Executive Director of International Social Service, USA (ISS-USA) at [HDPI's forum series](#) as a global thought leader.

Watch the full presentation [here](#).



Contact Us!

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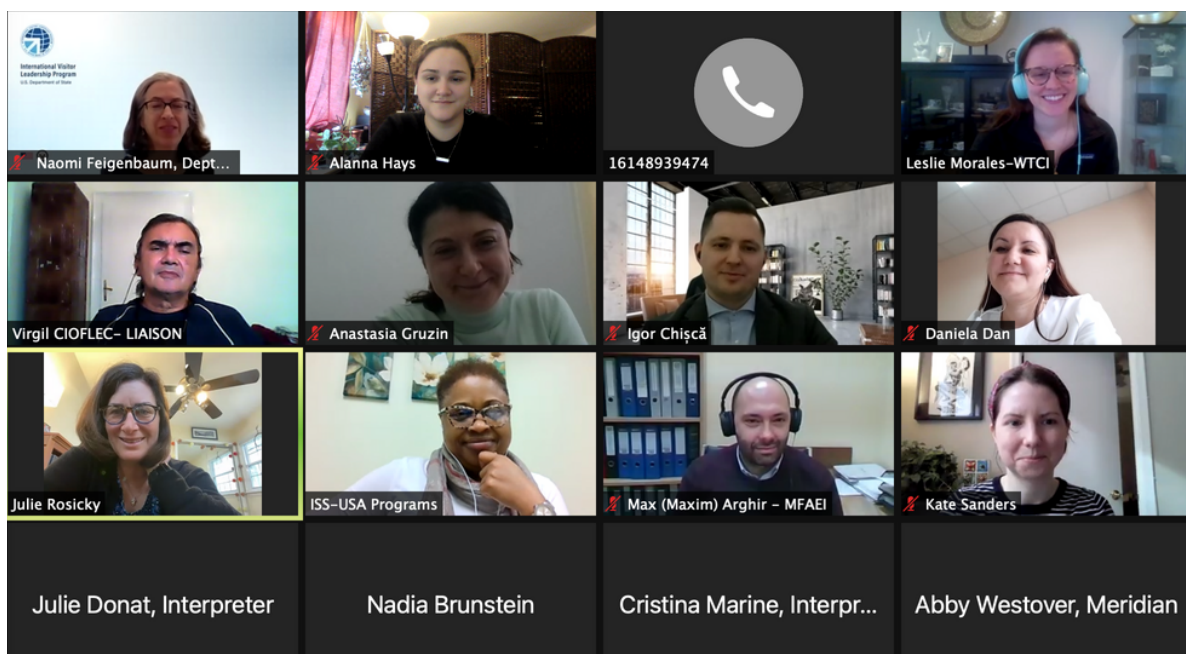
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CONNECTING ACROSS BORDERS VIRTUALLY: ISS-USA HOSTS A DELEGATION FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

On Friday, March 19, 2021, members of the ISS-USA team virtually visited with a Delegation from the Republic of Moldova to discuss challenges in cross border family separation and child abduction. ISS-USA provided an overview of its services including 1) Collaboration and communication with the Central Authority/State Department and the Office of Children's Issues; 2) Return and Reintegration programs for separated U.S. and non U.S. children; 3) The training and research work of the Arthur C. Helton Institute; 4) Cross border social work case management and; 5) Advocacy and communication efforts and how essential communications are to promoting the direct services and projects of the organization. Each team member provided context for their respective work within the organization and how it drives the mission of ISS-USA.

Senior officials from the Republic of Moldova's key government offices that handle international child abduction: Ministries of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Health Labour and Social Protection, and Justice presented their respective roles and work. Many excellent questions were asked by our colleagues from the Republic of Moldova and a good discussion ensued. Everyone agreed that working with families in conflict is extremely challenging, and helping parents to re-focus their energy on protecting their children, most challenging of all.

The ISS-USA team was delighted to meet with the Moldovan delegation and we look forward to continuing to find durable solutions for children separated from families by borders using a child-centered, best interests' approach.



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SEE YOU AT THE LAUNCH!

International Social Service, USA (ISS-USA), with generous support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation has spent the last year working with partners in the field to develop guidelines for conducting virtual assessments that promote child safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Join ISS-USA at **1 p.m. ET on Wednesday, April 14** for the launch of our free training *Promoting Permanency during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Use of Remote Assessments in Permanency Planning*. The 90-minute training will cover emerging best practices in creating policies that protect the health and safety of staff and clients, engaging with families in virtual work and technical tips for reporting. The presentation will also cover legal and ethical considerations in remote assessment work and implications for future work. Any agency or individual involved in planning for or carrying out child-welfare related assessments is encouraged to attend.

Register today!

Please RSVP by April 12, 2021

Live Webinar

Remote Assessments in Permanency Planning

Wednesday April 14
1 p.m. ET

RSVP
by April 12

iss-usa.org

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SOCIAL WORKERS ARE ESSENTIAL

"Social work is all about leaning into the discomfort of ambiguity and uncertainty, and holding open an empathic space so people can find their own way. In a word—messy."

- Brené Brown, Ph.D, LMSW

The Future of Social Work

Congratulations to our Intercounty Case Manager Interns
graduating with a MSW!



Kaci Lassiter (above)



Sheila Winters (above)



Ericka Thompson (above)

Looking for a unique, fulfilling internship?
Learn more about internship opportunities at
ISS-USA [here](#).

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STEPHEN PETERS LENDS HIS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE TO SERVING OTHERS WITH ISS-USA

This month I had the pleasure of talking to one of our many talented Social Workers, Stephen Peters. Mr. Peters is a native of Scranton, PA and has worked with ISS-USA for 6 years. He received his master's in social work in 1972 and left the profession to re-enter in 2010. Stephen relies on his practical experience (outside of the field of social work) to help him in his social work practice.

Although he works on a couple cases per year, Stephen enjoys working with ISS-USA because it provides professional variety. While he consistently applies his formal education, he enjoys exercising other characteristics by interacting with the community. Stephen says his work with ISS-USA "allows him to inject himself into people's lives at an extremely critical point." Additionally, this work "Gives the parents an opportunity to make important decisions regarding their children." Stephen tries to be open-minded and non-judgmental, recognizing that everyone's story is unique to them. He is passionate about seeing the humanity in everyone he works with.

Stephen urges others to get involved with ISS-USA because he believes that the work is extremely important. He suggests that people work with ISS-USA because the organization gets involved in the lives of families at their most critical time of need. Whether joining as a contract social worker, volunteer or donor, ISS-USA directly impacts the lives of families separated by borders. Stephen concluded the conversation stating that ISS colleagues are referred to as "partners." He believes this unifies the collective mentality of ISS, and reflects an amazing culture of an organization that he is proud to be a part of.

- Tera Proby, ISS-USA Communications and Development Volunteer



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THANK YOU MONTHLY READERS!

This is our final monthly newsletter. Moving forward ISS-USA will only be publishing quarterly. We are putting efforts into communicating with you across all of our platforms more consistently. Even though you will no longer receive a monthly newsletter directly to your inbox; You can keep up with us daily on our social media platforms: [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). We also just joined Medium! Read our [first publication](#).

Contact us by email with communication inquiries at communications@iss-usa.org.

Join Our Team!



Help Unite International Families!

ISS-USA is seeking licensed social workers to work on a contractual, fee-for-service basis, providing home studies for international kinship and adoption placements.

[Join the ISS-USA family today!](#)

Rewarding Internship Opportunity Available!

ISS-USA is seeking a student in business or international affairs interested in assisting cross-border families in need through communications, marketing and development/fundraising projects.

[apply here!](#)

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