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## Editorial

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After 20 years of development, research and practice, it is time to begin a journal for family preservation and support. There are many exciting opportunities and issues for consumers and practitioners, as well! Last year most states became deeply invested in new collaboration activities across agency lines and with consumers. This is the "high" in which this journal was conceptualized. The need for a family preservation journal has also been made clear by the new Congress which wants to provide orphanages, or the Administration which has proposed residential group homes as the ultimate punishment for children who's parents fail to get off of welfare in two years. These challenges make us more determined to redouble the efforts on behalf of all families and serve as a reminder that we need quality research, dedicated staff and political savvy to help families by employing family preservation values, knowledge and skills.

Ironically, perhaps, we should thank those who play on the fears and myths about the family unit for political gain because they are raising the debate to a national level in a way its proponents have been unable to achieve. We have seen numerous letters to editors in newspapers and magazines supporting family preservation and debunking the current political rhetoric. It is our sincere hope this journal will be a credible and objective voice to the debate on family preservation and, ultimately, help improve services to our families.

As a result of definitional exercises over the past several years, including input from many national experts, we define family preservation as an approach to practice and a philosophy guided by values which uphold the uniqueness, dignity, and essential role which families play in the health and well being of their members. In keeping with this philosophy, programs, policies, and organizations are family focused. As an approach, family preservation provides services ranging from prevention and support to intensive in-home services based upon the family's strengths and needs.

The purpose of this journal is to provide a forum in which practitioners, administrators, researchers, and educators in family preservation may present and critically review their findings, issues, and concerns. In the process, the family preservation culture and approach will be refined and invigorated.

This publication would not have become a reality without the efforts of a number of dedicated and committed people. Among the key contributors are: Dr. Eileen Lally, Donna Kelly, Laura Risenhoover, Roberta Yarbrough, our departmental colleagues, editorial board members, and Tom LaMarre, of Eddie Bowers Publishing, Inc. We also want to thank the authors of the articles in this first issue for the faith they placed in us by writing and submitting their work for a journal which was in the developmental phase. The same is also very true for all of you who have subscribed to the journal.

Each issue will include articles on research, practice, theory development and review of books and training materials including videos, computer programs or any other type of media. We welcome the opportunity to provide this vehicle for advancing the work of so many practitioners and most of all, the families we serve.

John Ronnau, Alvin L. Sallee



*Opinions expressed in this journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Family Preservation Institute or New Mexico State University.*