

## **40. Instructions for Reflection Paper #1: “Picking a Problem”**

*Length: 500 words maximum*

*Due: Thursday, October 7, 2004*

By now you should be settling into your internship placement. You’ve had some first impressions, met some of the people with whom you’ll be working, and you probably have an idea about what sorts of work you’ll be doing over the course of the semester.

The reflection papers from here on out are going to be based on a problem that you choose based on your internship. Try to pick a problem that relates the questions of the course (broad questions about the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system) to your specific internship. Your problem can be as broad or as specific as you like. But here are some of the things (further down the line) you’ll be asked to reflect on in relationship to your problem:

- Who cares about this problem besides you? What different perspectives, or interests, do people have in relationship to this problem?
- How has this problem been addressed in the past?
- What do different actors (in your placement or outside your placement) have to say about the problem?

Since you will be thinking about this problem in relationship to your internship for the rest of the semester, you might want to avoid picking a problem that is too specific or might only relate to a narrow piece of the work you’re being asked to do. Some examples of potential problems:

- No one seems to care about young people at the Training School.
- Some kids grow up in really abusive family environments, but the state doesn’t seem to make

a great parent either.

- The staff at the organization at which I'm working doesn't seem to understand the clients.

In this paper, choose a problem, and reflect on how your internship will help you reflect on this problem in more depth. Remember to combine the **hands, heart, and head**. Why is this problem important? What has happened so far in your placement (specific experiences) that makes this problem evident? Why is this problem important enough to you that you will be able to spend a semester thinking about it?