



ATHENS AREA CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL

Summer 2004 - Annual Report

AACAPC Accomplishments 2003-2004

The Board of Directors and the staff of the Athens Area Child Abuse Prevention Council are pleased to report upon a productive year, both in the number of people served by our proven programs, and in the careful management of our fiscal resources.

Community Education

- * "Raising Your Voice Won't Raise Your Child's Grades", a pamphlet suggesting ways to improve family communication around report card time, was distributed to all elementary schools in Clarke, Madison, Oconee, and Oglethorpe counties (over 12,000 students).
- * Packets were sent to more than 80 representatives of the faith community, with information about child abuse prevention, and what churches/synagogues can do to become involved in this important issue.
- * 1,194 children's pinwheels were displayed in front of the Athens-Clarke County courthouse to mark Child Abuse Prevention Month (April). Each pinwheel represents one report of child abuse or neglect made to Clarke County DFCS in 2003.
- * Speeches to community groups and information distributed at health fairs reached 1,863 individuals; 34 people were served through our Parent Helpline.

Healthy Families

- * 147 families at risk for abuse and neglect received intensive parenting education and support services during home visits. An additional 80 families received a thorough assessment including identification of needs and appropriate referrals.
- * 34% of families remained in the program for 1 year or longer.
- * 98% of the children were fully immunized, and 98% were linked to a medical provider.
- * 8 graduates completed the 4-year Healthy Families Program.
- * Only one teen of 77 served had a repeat pregnancy.

First Steps

- * 549 families of newborns received parenting information, community referrals, and in most cases follow-up phone support from the First Steps volunteers.
- * The number of families served increased 46% from the previous year.
- * Community volunteers contributed 650 hours of service.

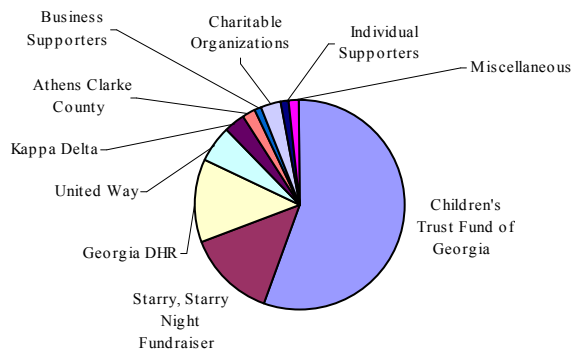
Parent Support

- * 306 people participated in parenting classes.
- * Classes ranged from one-session programs to 12-week Nurturing Parenting series, and were held at community centers and churches.

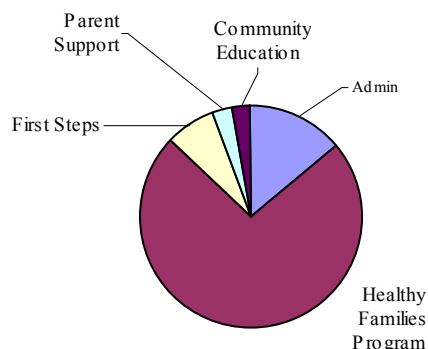
Fiscal/Administrative

- * We ended Fiscal year 2004 at 98.6% of projected income, and 94.7% of projected expenses.
- * Starry, Starry Night, our major fund raiser, netted over \$50,000, thanks to terrific efforts from the Board of Directors and community supporters.
- * Only 14% of income was spent on administrative and fundraising costs.
- * In addition to our continuing major funders (see back page), important sources of new funds this year were the March of Dimes, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, and the Newland Family Foundation.
- * All our accomplishments are made possible by the generosity of our donors. Please see the Annual Report insert for a list of these donors.

Total Revenues \$500,939.32



Total Expenditures \$500,910.97



Staff:

Paula Shilton, *Executive Director*

Mary Hood, *Program Manager*

Grace Arthur, *First Steps Pgrm. Coordinator*

Jodi Carlton, *Parenting Educator*

Tina Laseter, *Clinical Supervisor*

Linda Kelly, *Family Assessment Worker*

LaTroyce Turner, *Senior Family Support Worker*

Heather Weekley, *Assessment/Support Worker*

Irma Cadle, *Family Support Worker*

Shelia Hill, *Family Support Worker*

Sabrina Robinson, *Family Support Worker*

Tiara Smith, *Family Support Worker*

Wanda Whitehead, *Family Support Worker*

Cheryl Aaron, *Bookkeeper/Admin. Asst.*

Board of Directors:

Sarita Reddy, Ph.D. *President*

Denise Horton *President-Elect*

Cheryl K. Legette *Secretary*

Grant Tribble *Treasurer*

Guillermo Alzuru

Pam Berven

Philip E. Bettendorf, Jr.

Lynn Brown

Brenda Burton, M.Div.

Richard T. Chamberlin, Jr.

Kerri Budd Evans

Evelyn Hanes

Rebecca Hartman

Kim Holt

Eric J. Keese

Michelle Kimbler

Erika H. Lane

C. Rhodes McLanahan II

Molly O'Steen

Carol D. Rymer

Lewis L. Scruggs, Jr.

Patrick Simmons

G. Danny Stevens

Linda Todd

Healthy Families Graduation Ceremony

Eight graduates of AACAPC's Healthy Families program were recognized at a graduation ceremony and spaghetti supper held at Green Acres Baptist Church on June 26. These families participated in our intensive home-visiting program from the time their baby was born until that child was 4 years old.

Along the way, the graduates have learned a variety of parenting skills, and been linked with a range of community resources that have helped them be better parents (job training, education programs, child care, medical care, etc.) Other program participants received certificates recognizing their participation in Healthy Families for 1, 2, and 3 years.

Our thanks to Green Acres Baptist Church for donating space for the event, to our graduation speaker Cherean Williams

(Director of Jack R. Wells Boys and Girls Club, and WXAG radio personality), and to Healthy Families staff and the "Parents' Huddle" (parent advisory group) for their hard work in planning this successful program.

AACAPC Board Member Honored

Evelyn Hanes, a member of the AACAPC Board of Directors since 2000, received a "Power of Prevention" award at the July 11 Prevent Child Abuse Georgia Symposium. Evelyn was nominated by AACAPC for her many contributions to our Council while participating on the Executive, Public Awareness, Starry, Starry Night, and Nominating Committees, and for her service as Secretary. Congratulations, Evelyn!

Meet Our New Board Members

Guillermo Alzuru is a web designer/developer for the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. He has volunteer experience with Relay for Life, and the Foundation for Excellence in public education (Clarke County), as well as in coaching and religious education.

Pam Berven is Vice President for Professional Services (including Social Work services) at St. Mary's Hospital. She has also been a Board member for Project Safe, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), and the American Heart Association.

Lynn Brown is the Church Administrator for Ebenezer Baptist Church, West. She was Office Manager for many years for the medical practice of her husband, Dr. James L. Brown, Jr. Her volunteer experience includes Meals on Wheels and St. Mary's Hospice.

Kerri Budd Evans is a registered nurse at Athens Regional Medical Center's Special Care Nursery.

Rebecca L. Hartman is the Administrative Services Coordinator for the Athens Housing Authority. She has volunteered for the past 10 years at Athens Regional Medical Center.

Kim E. Holt is an attorney at Fortson, Bentley & Griffin, and is involved in many civic activities.

Molly O'Steen is an attorney at Blasingame, Burch, Garrard, Bryant, & Ashley. She has participated in the Junior League, Cancer Auxiliary, and LEAD Athens.

Carol D. Rymer was the Administrative Director of Mercy Health Center, Athens, and has also served on their Board and chaired the Festival of Feasts. She is also active in the Athens First United Methodist Church, chairing two Great Days of Service.

Patrick Simmons works for the Department of Juvenile Justice as the director of a group home.

G. Danny Stevens is Regional Adoption Coordinator / Program Director for the Office of Adoptions, Georgia Department of Human Resources. He is also an adjunct professor at UGA, and a former AACAPC Board member.

Teaching Effective Parenting - One Way to Reduce Child Abuse



Jodi Carlton, Parenting Educator for the Athens Area Child Abuse Prevention Council, has a goal: to educate the community about effective parenting, and to improve the relationship between parents and children in order to prevent child abuse. "Parents who attend our classes realize that they are not alone; they can hear other parents talk about the frustrations of child-rearing," says Carlton. Parents learn how to meet their own needs, so they are better able to meet the needs of their children. They also learn about developmental milestones, effective and age-appropriate discipline strategies, helpful community resources, and how their parenting style affects their child (see box).

As part of our Parent Support Program, Carlton conducts parenting classes throughout our 4-county service area. A range of parents attends - - some required by DFCS and some for self-improvement. She also conducts staff training for various community agencies, to help workers learn to handle difficult children and to spot potential abuse.

Carlton is particularly excited about an upcoming one-day program for parents of teenagers, which will include programming for teens themselves. Parents will learn about the challenging transition from being completely in charge of children to allowing those children to spread their wings. According to Carlton, "parents have a responsibility to gradually back off, so that kids can learn to function in the world on their own." The teen group will learn about improving their communication with their parents, making difficult choices, and general issues of interest to teens. "Parents and Teens" will be held on Saturday, August 21 from 10:00 – 4:00 (location to be announced). The workshop is free of charge; call 316-2017 for more information or to register.

Challenges in Child Abuse Reporting

Dr. Randell Alexander, MD, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine, spoke in Athens on July 2 about challenging issues in child abuse reporting. The program was sponsored by the Clarke County School District Programs for Young Children (Early Head Start program), and AACAPC collaborated in the planning of the program. Dr. Alexander spoke at length about various forms of neglect, the role of drugs (illegal and legal) in child abuse, special issues involving teens, and the most effective ways to report child abuse. Points made during his presentation included:

- * 68% of confirmed child abuse reports are for **neglect** (as opposed to physical and sexual abuse)
- * the overall amount of abuse is probably the same as it was 70-

- * 80 years ago, but now people are paying more attention
- * the actual amount of sexual abuse appears to be decreasing
- * 60% of child abuse also involves substance abuse
- * while we focus on the physical harm that results from abuse, the greatest harm is usually to the emotional development of a child
- * 4% of children (of various ages) in pediatric wards test positive for cocaine, meaning it has entered their bodies through smoke in their environment
- * parents of asthmatic children who continue to smoke in the child's presence (resulting in repeated hospitalization) should be reported for child abuse.

What Is Your Parenting "Style"?

We parents have our good days and our bad days, but we tend to "parent" in one of three general styles. These styles can have a significant effect on our children's development.

Autocratic – "My way or the highway" Characterized by the parent trying to over-control the child by holding the reins very tightly. This style gives children *limits without freedom*. The child may "behave" fairly well, but they behave because of their fear of the parent, rather than learning the reasons why certain behavior is ok or not ok. These children don't develop an internalized understanding of appropriate behavior, leading to difficulties in social interaction and other behavior problems.

Permissive – "Whatever you want" Characterized by the parent trying to over-please the child. Such parents are unwilling to say "no" and often pamper their children. This style gives children *freedom without limits*. Without experiencing any structure or boundaries in life, how can a child develop an understanding of appropriate social boundaries?

Authoritative - "Would you like to wear the red socks or the blue socks?" Characterized by both freedom and limits. Such parents recognize the child's need to make decisions on his/her own within the limits that are appropriate for his/her age and level of responsibility. This style gives children *freedom within limits*. These parents constantly teach children what is expected in a variety of situations, thus equipping the child with the ability to act acceptably.

Adapted from "Active Parenting" Curriculum



**ATHENS AREA CHILD ABUSE
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*A CHARTERED COUNCIL OF
PREVENT CHILD ABUSE GEORGIA*

**MISSION: TO PREVENT
CHILD ABUSE AND
NEGLECT IN ALL ITS FORMS**

MAJOR FUNDERS

Children's Trust Fund of Georgia

Georgia Department of Human Resources (Promoting Safe and Stable Families)

United Way of NE Georgia

March of Dimes

Athens-Clarke County Human and Economic Development

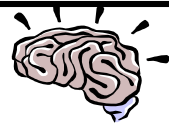
Kappa Delta Sorority

Emmanuel Episcopal Church

Newland Family Foundation

Target Stores

Childhood abuse hurts the brain



Recent research indicates that *abuse during childhood can actually change the structure and function of a brain*, thereby increasing the risk of everything from anxiety to suicide.

According to Martin Teicher, associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, "these changes are not limited to physical and sexual abuse; there's growing evidence that even verbal assault can alter the way a developing brain is wired."

Researchers compared brain scans from child patients at a psychiatric hospital with those of healthy children. The cable of nerve cells connecting the right and left sides of the brain (the corpus callosum) was significantly smaller than normal in abused children. Teicher believes that this hampers the integration of the two halves of the brain, leading to problems with mood and personality. Brain scans of the abused children also showed less activity in the parts of the brain concerned with emotion and attention.

How does abuse cause these changes in the brain? It seems that any type of abuse can trigger the production of stress hormones, which influences the signals that brain cells send and receive. "We know that (lab) animals exposed to stress early in life develop a brain that is wired to experience fear, anxiety, and intense fight-or-flee reactions," says Teicher. "We think the same is true of people."

From "Harvard University Gazette" May 22, 2003. Complete text at: <http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2003/05.22/01-brain.html>