

Network News



A newsletter for members and friends of Prevent Child Abuse New York



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Safe Children and Healthy Families: Our Shared Responsibility

Safe children and healthy families are a shared responsibility. That's the theme of this year's National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. As parents, neighbors, family members, and friends, we are all charged with the duty of ensuring the safety and well being of the children we know.

But what does that mean for you? What can one person do to prevent child abuse? Plenty. Anything you do to support parents and children can reduce the stress that often leads to child abuse and neglect. If a parent you know seems to be struggling, offer to baby-sit, run errands, or just lend a friendly ear. Talk to your neighbors about looking out for one another's children. Encourage a supportive spirit among parents in your apartment building or on your block. Families with strong interpersonal and community connections have an easier time handling the demands of parenting.

There are other ways you can prevent child abuse. While most people understand that child abuse is

a problem, few understand that it is a preventable problem. Raise the issue of *prevention*. The resource room of our Web site (www.preventchildabuseny.org/resource.shtml) has prevention fact sheets and parent tips that you can print, photocopy, and post in your workplace, library, laundromat, supermarket, or school.

Call and write your elected officials and ask them to support funding for parent support and child abuse prevention programs. The Legislative Action Center of Prevent Child Abuse New York's Web site (www.preventchildabuseny.org/advtips.shtml) has information about how to reach your elected representatives and what they need to know.

Finally, don't forget to wear a blue ribbon and tell everyone that it stands for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

We all hold the answers to child abuse. This year's Child Abuse Prevention Month focuses on the responsibility we all share, not only in April, but throughout the year.

Price Chopper Supermarkets April Fund-raiser to Benefit Prevention Programs of Prevent Child Abuse New York and Connecticut

>> Throughout Child Abuse Prevention Month, Golub Corporation's Price Chopper Supermarkets will hold an April fund-raising pin-up campaign. Shoppers will be able to purchase a \$1 pin-up at New York and Connecticut Price Choppers to support child abuse prevention in their states. Blue ribbon bookmarks, which offer shoppers ideas about what they can do to help prevent child abuse, will be available at customer service desks. All proceeds from the pin-up campaign will benefit the statewide prevention programs of Prevent Child Abuse New York and Prevent Child Abuse Connecticut.



Photograph by Paul Deyss, Deyss Photography

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Advocates from Healthy Families New York Legislative Advocacy Day.



Around the State

Network Notebook

Special Announcements from Our Member Network

- The Columbia University School of Social Work, Healthy Families Staten Island, and Best Beginnings are collaborating on a research study entitled, "Building Social Support to Enhance Home Visitation." A three-year grant of \$833,000 was awarded to Columbia University from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct the study. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the efficacy of a social network enhancement component to home visitation services. The component is designed to enhance families' participation in home visitation services and substantially augment their preventive services.
- The Buffalo-based Citizen's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect (CTF-CAN) received a \$5,000 check from the supermarket corporation Penn Traffic for participation in child abuse prevention activities as part of the Caring for Children Campaign. Penn Traffic's Quality Market hosted CTF-CAN's prevention and family-friendly activities for three weekends and raised the largest amount of money for a single site in Penn Traffic's three-state marketing area. The CTF-CAN will use the funds to sponsor child abuse prevention and young parenting courses through local community groups, as well as through larger conferences for service providers, health, workers.
- The Child Abuse Prevention Center in Dutchess County has launched the Connections Supervised Visitation Program, which will provide services on nights and weekends at various locations in the area. Locations are specific to customer requests – malls, children's museum, etc., – as well as on site in a child-friendly room at the CAP Center. Call 845-454-0595 for more information.

New Resource

PCANY Launches New Web Site

>> Since the last edition of Network News, Prevent Child Abuse New York has overhauled its Web site. We're still at www.preventchildabuseny.org, but what you'll find there is a much improved, more user-friendly site. New features include:

- On-line donations. Donate, become a member, or renew your membership on-line through our secure server.
- E-mail news alerts. Subscribe to our on-line newsletter and receive the latest in child abuse prevention news, events, and professional resources.
- The resource room. Access and print fact sheets, tip sheets, reports, and other prevention materials for parents, kids, professionals and advocates, as well as links to other Web sites and a list of toll-free helplines.
- The legislative action center. Learn about legislative and policy issues important to New York's children and families and contact your elected representatives and media outlets about them.

Help Wanted

PCANY Looking for Volunteers to Organize Local Walks

Are you concerned about children and families? Do you like to be active in your community? Are you looking for a project for your class or your children's school? If so, Prevent Child Abuse New York has the project for you: Walk for Children, New York.

We are looking for Walk for Children, New York local organizers – people like you who understand the importance of bringing communities together to stop child abuse before it starts. As a local organizer, you can raise awareness of child abuse prevention in your community by organizing a Walk for Children, New York! in your town.

The concept is familiar – a group of people raise money through sponsors and raise awareness by gathering and walking. Local organizers choose a time and place to have a walk and serve as the contact person for the walkers. They collect walker registrations and donations, encourage walkers to solicit sponsorships, distribute T-shirts to walkers and prevention materials at the walk, and enjoy the satisfaction of helping make New York a better place for children and families.

For more information or for a local organizer's packet with detailed information about how to organize a Walk for Children, New York, call 1-800-CHILDREN.

Save the Date!

- April 11-13, 2005. 10th Annual New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference, "Children Need Everyday Heroes." Prevent Child Abuse New York, co-sponsored by the New York State Children and Family Trust Fund. Albany, NY. Call 518-445-1273.
- April 14, 2005. 20th Annual Spring Luncheon. Child Abuse Prevention Services (CAPS). Mineola, NY. Call 516-621-0552.
- April 28, 2005. Annual Luncheon Honoring 13 People Who Work in 13 Different Service Areas. The Westchester Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. Call 914-345-3993 ext. 209.
- April 30, 2005, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 4th Annual 5K "Take a Walk for Kids." Saratoga Center for the Family. Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY. Call 518-587-8008 x301.
- April 30, 2005, 6 p.m.-9p.m. Child Advocate of the Year Celebration. Saratoga Center for the Family. Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs, NY. Call 518-587-8008 x301.
- May 1-2, 2005. Annual Conference, "Raising Our Voices for Children: Family-Centered Best Practices and Approaches." Families Together in New York State. Albany, NY. Call 518-432-0333.
- May 5, 2005, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. "Using Principles of Neurodevelopment to Help Traumatized and Maltreated Children," a lecture given by Dr. Bruce Perry, Senior Fellow of the Child Trauma Organization. Presented by the Vincent J. Fontana Center for Child Protection. 27 Christopher Street, New York, NY 10014. Call Dr. Mel Schneiderman, 212-206-4155.
- June 9-10, 2005. Children's Mental Health Symposium. New York State Office of Mental Health. New York, NY. Call 518-474-1704.
- June 15-18, 2005. 13th Annual Colloquium, "Colleagues Connecting for Kids." American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. New Orleans, LA. Visit www.apsac.org.
- June 20-22, 2005. First National Conference, "Forging Alliances. Building Leadership." The National Center for Victims of Crime. Washington, DC. Visit www.ncvc.org.
- July 10-13, 2005. 9th International Family Violence Research Conference. Crimes Against Children Research Center. Portsmouth, NH. Visit www.unh.edu/fri/conferences.
- August 8, 2005. 7th Annual Charity Golf Outing. Child Abuse Prevention Services (CAPS). Brookville, NY. Call 516-621-0552.
- September 18-21, 2005. 10th International Conference on Family Violence, "Working Together to End Abuse." Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute. San Diego, CA. Visit www.fvsai.org.
- November 2-5, 2005. 24th Annual Research and Treatment Conference, "Batling Sexual Abuse with Prevention and Treatment." Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. New Orleans, LA. Visit www.atsa.com.

Times Union Fundraiser to Benefit PCANY

The Albany Times Union has partnered with Prevent Child Abuse New York to offer you a special rate while helping prevent child abuse. New subscribers* can choose any of these three offers, and the Times Union will make a donation to Prevent Child Abuse New York:

7 days a week for 16 weeks, \$20, the Times Union will donate \$20 to Prevent Child Abuse New York;

Sunday only for 10 weeks, \$10, the Times Union will donate \$10 to Prevent Child Abuse New York;

5 days a week (Mon-Fri) for 20 weeks, \$24, the Times Union will donate \$20.

*You must not have been a Times Union subscriber in the past 30 days to be eligible. To sign up call Tom Nolte, circulation marketing manager, at 518-454-5610 or send him an email tnolte@timesunion.com



Advocates Fight for Healthy Families New York

Legislative Budget Proposal Does Not Restore \$1.6 Million

Prevent Child Abuse New York has focused many of its recent legislative advocacy efforts on the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Home Visiting Program. Healthy Families New York is recognized by advocates, service providers, and community leaders as an effective way to reach high-risk families and stop abuse and neglect before it happens.

The successes of HFNY are well documented. The program includes oversight and evaluation by the Rockefeller Institute at SUNY Albany. First-year results of a random-assignment evaluation of the program include big improvements in parenting, child health and development, and parent life and health.

More specifically, participation in HFNY: reduced self-reports of child neglect, physical aggression, and severe physical abuse; reduced low birth weight deliveries by 50 percent – each low-weight birth costs the government \$25,000 at birth, \$65,000 by age 15, and \$435,000 by age 65; increased immunizations, breast feeding, and lead blood screenings; increased parents' knowledge of child development, home safety, proper baby care, effective discipline, and involvement in family, religious, and social groups; reduced parental depression, alcohol, cigarette, and drug use.

Yet, Governor Pataki's budget proposal included \$16 million for Healthy Families New York – a cut of \$1.6 million from 2003-04. The key battles in fighting for Healthy Families New York this year involved defending the \$16 million the governor put in

the budget from further cuts that were being considered and increasing the allocation by at least \$1.6 million to restore funding to prior levels.

Program participants, staff, and other advocates for children delivered these messages to legislators early in February at the HFNY Legislative Advocacy Day, sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse New York.

Soon after that, Prevent Child Abuse New York's Executive Director Christine Deyss gave testimony about the benefits of HFNY at the joint legislative hearing on the human services budget. Throughout the legislative hearings, PCANY successfully mobilized several advocates of behalf of Healthy Families New York, urging them to call and fax legislators.

While these efforts kept the \$1.6 million on the negotiating table longer than it otherwise would have been there, they did not secure a complete victory. At this writing, the legislative budget proposal continues with just \$16 million for Healthy Families New York.

We have lost one battle, but won another. In this difficult budget year, \$16 million is no small victory. We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who joined us in this fight.

Healthy Families New York's goal is to serve every at-risk infant and family in this state, to stop child abuse before it begins. Despite this setback, we will continue to look to the leadership of New York's governor and legislature to provide the funds needed to move New York toward accomplishing this important goal.

Children and Family Trust Fund

>> We are deeply dismayed that the state's FY 2005-06 budget has no funding for the New York State Children and Family Trust Fund.

Prevent Child Abuse New York is continuing to work with the NYS Children and Family Trust Fund Strategic Planning Group, members of the Trust Fund Advisory Board, and other advocates to establish a dedicated funding source, secure adequate funding, and market the Trust Fund to raise awareness both with legislators and the general public. Only through a collaborative effort can we hope to keep prevention of all forms of family violence and reaffirm the state's commitment to the Trust Fund.

PCANY Supports Legislation for Dual Track Child Protective Demonstration Project

>> A00313 (Paulin, Lavelle, McEneny, John) / S1774 (Rath, Saland, Marchi, Spano)

Enacts the "Dual Track Response Demonstration Project," designed to minimize the adversarial relationship that results from the initiation of a child protective investigation and substitute a service-based approach in less serious cases of child abuse or maltreatment. Serious cases of child abuse and neglect would still be subject to a full-fledged CPS investigation. The bill provides that seven social services districts be selected to participate in the demonstration project, and delineates the procedure to be followed by the social services district when implementing the provisions of the project.



PCANY Expresses Qualified Support of Bills Relating to Child Abuse Reporting and Clergy

>> S477 (Saland, Skelos, Alesi, Balboni, Bonacic, Flanagan, Fuschillo, Hannon, Johnson, Little, Marcellino, Maziarz, Meier, Rath, Spano, Trunzo, Volker, Wright). This bill would enact provisions relating to the reporting of child abuse; requires members of the clergy to report suspected allegations of child abuse or maltreatment to an appropriate law enforcement agency; requires members of the clergy to review past institutional records and report suspected allegations of child abuse by clergy to the district attorney.

A912 (McEneny, Koon, Galef, Eddington, Green, Weisenberg, MS: Abbate, Acampora, Christensen, Clark, A. Cohen, Conte, Cook, Cymbrowitz, DelMonte, R. Diaz, Dinowitz, Englebright, Farrell, Ferrara, Gianaris). This bill would enact provisions relating to the reporting of child abuse; delineates what persons are required to report cases of suspected child abuse to law enforcement agencies; imposes penalties for failure to make such report; and provides immunity for certain persons who in good faith failed to make such reports.

Prevent Child Abuse New York supports these bills with qualifications. Rather than the 20-year review of records described in them, PCANY supports a five-year review of institutional records of child abuse by the district attorney, with precautions made for victim privacy.



Healthy Families New York Advocacy Day. From left to right: Mike Kink, PCANY, Roxanne Wilson, Safe Space, Shawn Chin-Chance, Assemblyman Scarborough's office, Danielle Maldonado, Special Beginnings, , Judy Russell, Early Advantages, Tiffany Douglas, Newburgh Healthy Families, Andrew Barnes, Assemblyman Scarborough's office, and Maritza Rodriguez, Special Beginnings

PCANY Adopts New Legislative Item

Existing Law Limits Child Fatality Review Teams

The death of a child is one of the most difficult experiences a family can endure, and affects the community as a whole, as well as those who loved him or her.

Multidisciplinary, multi-agency Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs) are established to better understand how and why children die, facilitate investigations and aid in the prevention of future child deaths. Ideally, CFRTs gather and review information on fatalities to determine what response(s) might have prevented the fatality, develop strategies to address the problems, and educate the community about prevention strategies.

In New York State, the role of Child Fatality Review Teams is severely restricted by current law, which limits them to reviewing child fatalities that were reported to the child abuse hotline, or of children who were in the care and custody of the Department of Social Services. Thus, New York's Child Fatality Review Teams are unable to function to their greatest potential. They are not able to detect those cases of abuse and neglect that should have been reported. Nor are they able to develop a better understanding of how and why all children die so that we can find ways to prevent deaths.

During a May 2004 professional forum on Child Fatality Review, "It was agreed that 'intake' needs to be inclusive (not just of Child Protective Services cases or for a severely restricted range of ages) for competent review...Participants stressed prevention as the ultimate common goal for their programs. Models of programs which have been developed as outcomes from child fatality reviews and analysis of child deaths through the process included: Alabama's abandoned newborn prevention program, which has a national presence; and house fire injury prevention with smoke detectors and home fire safety." (ISPCAD VID on Child Fatality Review Summary, Michael Durfee MD and Randell Alexander MD PhD.)

Prevent Child Abuse New York supports amending our state's Child Fatality Review Team law to provide that "A Child Fatality Review Team will be established at a local, regional or state level to review any and all fatality or near fatality cases of children under the age of 18."

Lauren Perrotto, Coordinator of the Rensselaer County Child Fatality Review Team, contributed to this article.

Thank You

We extend our sincere thanks to the Freddie Mac Foundation and the J.M. McDonald Foundation

>> The Freddie Mac Foundation has awarded a \$75,000 grant to Prevent Child Abuse New York to support our work to build the capacity of New York State Prevention Programs. The Foundation's generosity makes possible much of our work in the areas of public education, policy development, coalition building, and advocacy for the Healthy Families New York Home Visiting and other child abuse prevention programs.

The J.M. McDonald Foundation has provided Prevent Child Abuse New York with a grant of \$24,000 to replace our aged communications systems, computer and telephone equipment. Because one of our most important products is information that will move people to action to prevent child abuse, quality telephone and computer systems and internet access are critical to PCANY's work.



With Gratitude

PCANY Contributors, Fiscal Year 2004-2005

The important work of Prevent Child Abuse New York would not be possible without the generosity of our members, donors, and corporate and foundation contributors. We thank them all.

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