



## Prevention Progress

# Alabama Department of Child Abuse Prevention

## Alabama Pediatrician Given National Award

**Inside this issue:**

- Responsible Fatherhood Grant Award **2**
- Shaken Baby Simulator Doll Won at National Meeting **3**
- Mothers Program Presents at Red Bay **3**
- PCA Response to Article in Pediatrics **4**
- Check Presentations **4**
- National Movement for America's Children **5**
- Board Member Hi-Light **5**
- Beauty and the Beach **6**
- Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect **7**
- Halloween Safety Tips **9**

The National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds and the American Academy of Pediatrics are pleased to announce that the 2011 Dr. Ray E. Helfer Award has been given to Dr. Marsha Raulerson, M.D., FAAP, of Brewton, Alabama. The award honors the late Ray Helfer, considered the "father" of children's trust and prevention funds, because of his belief that special funds could be used to ensure that our nation's children grow up nurtured, safe and free from harm. Dr. Helfer's lifelong dedication to children serves as a model for all citizens, and the distinguished award is given annually to a pediatrician who has made a demonstrated contribution to preventing child abuse before it occurs and is involved with activities related to the work of Children's Trust Funds (CTF). The award was given at the annual meeting of the Alliance in Chicago on October 6, at the Club Quarters Hotel at 111 W. Adams St.

Kelley Parris-Barnes, the director of the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and the leader of the state's Children's Trust Fund, said in her nomination letter, "The foundation of Dr. Marsha Raulerson's private practice and the reason for her recognition throughout the state and nationally has been her steadfast dedication to the health, safety and well-being of every child in the State of Alabama."

Teresa Rafael, executive director of the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, cited the work Dr. Raulerson as "another example of the outstanding work pediatricians from all over our nation do in helping families cope with the unavoidable pressures of raising their children in safe and nurturing environments. The work of Dr. Raulerson goes well beyond providing health care for her young patients. She has been making critical and lasting contributions to prevent child maltreatment in her community, in her state and throughout the country for more than 30 years and is more than deserving of this honor."



Marian Loftin, former director of the Alabama Children's Trust Fund, said Dr. Raulerson's work "in preventing all forms of child maltreatment is unparalleled...Her steadfast willingness to work to strengthen families is paramount. She knows that to meet the needs of a child, the family has to be nurtured and educated. Her commitment to making services available to families even in the most rural settings has never wavered...She has worked tirelessly toward that end throughout her 30-plus years as a child and family advocate."

Congratulations to Dr. Raulerson!

Kelley Parris Barnes Presents Ray Helfer Award to Dr. Marsha Raulerson

## DCAP Receives \$2.5 Million Grant Award

The Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention has received notification of a \$2.5 million grant award from the Department of Health and Human Services for Responsible Fatherhood. The following agencies will be partnering with us to implement this grant:

Alfred Saliba Family Services Center (Dothan)  
Autauga County Family Support Center (Prattville)  
Baldwin County Fatherhood Initiative (Robertsdale)  
Calhoun Community College (Morgan)  
Community Action Agency of Northwest Alabama, Inc. (Florence)  
The Family Center (Mobile)  
Family Guidance Center of Alabama (Montgomery)  
Gadsden State Community College (Gadsden)  
Impact Family Counseling Center, Inc. (Birmingham)  
National Children's Advocacy Center (Huntsville)  
Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement (Sylacauga)  
Tuscaloosa's One Place, A Family Resource Center (Tuscaloosa)  
University of Alabama at Birmingham TASC (Birmingham)  
Pickens County Family Resource Center (Carrollton)

We are excited about expanding our fatherhood programs through these agencies and assisting noncustodial parents to strengthen marriage and co-parent relationships, improve relationships between parent and child and improve the economic status of fathers.

HHS' Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance (OFA) announced \$119,393,729 in grant awards to 120 grantees to promote healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood. Authorized by the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 (CRA), the grant awards will help fathers and families build strong relationships to support the well-being of their children. "A strong and stable family is the greatest advantage any child can have," said George Sheldon, HHS acting assistant secretary for children and families. "These grants support programs that promote responsible parenting, encourage healthy relationships and marriage, and help families move toward self-sufficiency and economic stability."

The Healthy Marriage program awarded a total of \$59,997,077 in grants, which include 60 *Community-Centered Healthy Marriage* grants and a *National Resource Center for Strategies to Promote Healthy Marriage* grant. The Responsible Fatherhood program awarded a total of \$59,396,652 in grants, which include 55 *Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood* grants and four *Community-Centered Responsible Fatherhood Ex-Prisoner Reentry Pilot Project* grants.

These grants, administered by OFA, must have procedures in place to address issues of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect, and they must ensure that program participation is voluntary. HHS encouraged applicants to develop programs that emphasized providing comprehensive services to participants, including attention to the importance of employment and economic stability.

The marriage and fatherhood grants were awarded through a competitive process and aim to test promising strategies for supporting healthy relationships and marriages and for helping fathers meet their parenting and financial obligations to their children. Organizations receiving healthy marriage grants may provide a range of services including marriage education, divorce reduction, and marriage and relationship skills programs that may include parenting skills, financial management, conflict resolution, and job and career advancement. Fatherhood program funding must be used to promote responsible fatherhood through activities that promote or sustain marriage and responsible parenting, and that foster economic stability.

The \$119 million in grants are part of a \$150-million fund established by Congress to promote healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood. The remaining funds are allocated for research, a responsible fatherhood clearinghouse and Tribal TANF - Child Welfare grants (as authorized by the legislation), training and technical assistance for all grantees and administrative costs.



Nancy Free from Prevent Child Abuse South Dakota won the Shaken Baby Simulator Doll from Realityworks at the Annual Meeting of the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds in October in Chicago, IL. Congratulations Nancy!!

## Prevention in Action



Sheila Weaver (Mothers Program at Community Action Agency of Northwest Alabama) went to Red Bay High School this month and did a presentation on Abusive Head Trauma to over 200 students.

If you have events or presentations you would like to share with us, please email them to [leslie.gettys@ctf.alabama.gov](mailto:leslie.gettys@ctf.alabama.gov).

## INVESTMENT IN CHILD-FOCUSED SERVICES MUST CONTINUE Press Release from Prevent Child Abuse America

CHICAGO, Ill., September 21, 2011 -In response to a study published in Pediatrics Monday, which revealed an increase in child abuse since the start of the economic recession in the U.S. in 2007, Jim Hmurovich, President of Prevent Child Abuse America, released the following statement: "During these continuing difficult economic times, it would be easy to forget that investments in innovative programming focused on services such as home visiting and Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention must continue, despite financial constraints. It's also easy during tough times to minimize the importance of such services, which places additional stress on parents, teachers and other members of the community who play a role in child development. "However, this study demonstrates that continued investment in prevention services is absolutely necessary. Parents, teachers and community members depend on the support of these services and that's why Prevent Child Abuse America helped found the National Movement for America's Children. We're working to create a National Strategy for America's Children, to ensure that policies and programs are put in place and maintained to provide every child in America with an equal opportunity for a healthy childhood and development. "Spending vs. cutting is a debate we've held in our country many times. Yet, absent from the discussion is the question of how we, as a nation and a society, ensure our economic stability, while also recognizing the critical economic importance of healthy child.

### Check Presentations



Community Action Agency of NW Alabama



Etowah County Grantees



Elmore County Grantees



Prevent Child Abuse America has sent out a call for action to get 100,000 signatures on the pledge for the National Movement for Children. The Movement is a fast-growing grassroots initiative of organizations and people from coast to coast, who are collaborating to develop a comprehensive national strategy to ensure that all of our children are given an opportunity to develop - socially, emotionally and cognitively - in healthy, nurturing homes, schools, neighborhoods and communities. Please take a few moments out of your day to follow the link below and sign the pledge.

<http://www.movementforchildren.org/>

## Board Member Hi-Light Sally Edwards, Member-At-Large

Ms. Edwards was born and raised in Sylacauga, Alabama, and received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Alabama. Her career has focused on improving the lives of children and families, primarily through teaching at the college level, directing child development laboratory programs and directing externally funded programs. Since 1993 Ms. Edwards has served as Director of Child Development Resources in the College of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of Alabama. Child Development Resources provides support and education to parents and child care providers in a 12-county area in west Alabama. CDR provides training opportunities for child care providers and provides child care resource and referral for parents. CDR coordinates and implements the Baby TALK program in a five county region around Tuscaloosa, and is home to PAL, Alabama's Parenting Assistance Line. Ms. Edwards provides administrative oversight to the NAEYC accredited UA Children's Program and enjoys teaching Sr. Seminar to seniors in Human Development and Family studies. She has served on the Girl Scout Board, Alabama Emmaus Community Board, Council on Community Based Partnerships, Leadership Tuscaloosa, and the Board of the Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention.



## Realtors Conference in Fairhope, September 2011



The Alabama Realtors Association raised over \$14,000 for the Children's Trust Fund through their Beauty and Beach Contest.

## Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

Series: Factsheets

Author(s): Child Welfare Information Gateway

Year Published: 2008

The statistics can feel overwhelming. In 2006, an estimated 905,000 children in the United States were found to be victims of child abuse and neglect. However, child abuse and neglect can be prevented. State and local governments, community organizations, and private citizens take action every day to protect children. You can help. Research has shown that parents and caregivers who have support—from family, friends, neighbors, and their communities—are more likely to provide safe and healthy homes for their children. When parents lack this support or feel isolated, on the other hand, they may be more likely to make poor decisions that can lead to neglect or abuse. Increasingly, concerned citizens and organizations are realizing that the best way to prevent child abuse is to help parents develop the skills and identify the resources they need to understand and meet their children's emotional, physical, and developmental needs and protect their children from harm.

### *Prevention Programs*

Prevention activities are conducted by many State, local, and Tribal governments, as well as community and faith-based organizations. The services they provide vary widely. Some prevention services are intended for everyone, such as public service announcements (PSAs) aimed at raising awareness about child abuse within the general population. Others are specifically targeted for individuals and families who may be at greater risk of child abuse or neglect. An example of this might be a parenting class for single teen mothers. Some services are developed specifically for families where abuse or neglect has already occurred, to reduce the negative effects of the abuse and prevent it from happening again. Common activities of prevention programs include:

- Public awareness, such as PSAs, posters, and brochures that promote healthy parenting, child safety, and how to report suspected abuse;
- Skills-based curricula that teach children safety and protection skills. Many of these programs focus on preventing sexual abuse;
- Parent education to help parents develop positive parenting skills and decrease behaviors associated with child abuse and neglect;
- Parent support groups, where parents work together to strengthen their families and build social networks;
- Home visitation, which focuses on enhancing child safety by helping pregnant mothers and families with new babies or young children learn more about positive parenting and child development;
- Respite and crisis care programs, which offer temporary relief to caregivers in stressful situations by providing short-term care for their children;
- Family resource centers, which work with community members to develop a variety of services to meet the specific needs of the people who live in surrounding neighborhoods

Two elements have been shown to make prevention programs more effective, regardless of the type of service or intended recipients. Involving parents in all aspects of program planning, implementation, and evaluation helps ensure that service providers are working in true partnership with families. Parents are more likely to make lasting changes when they are empowered to identify solutions that make sense for them. Another key to success is providing prevention services that are evidence based. This means that rather than relying on assumptions or "common sense," research has been conducted to demonstrate that a particular service improves outcomes for children and families. This helps service providers feel confident in what they are doing. It can also help justify a program's continued funding when resources are scarce.

Continued on next page

### *Protective Factors*

Prevention programs have long focused on reducing particular risk factors, or conditions that have been found through research to be associated with child abuse and neglect in families. Increasingly, prevention services are also recognizing the importance of promoting protective factors, conditions in families and communities that research has shown to increase the health and well-being of children and families. These factors help parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing or neglecting their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

The following protective factors have been linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- **Nurturing and attachment.** When parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, children develop trust that parents will provide what they need to thrive.
- **Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development.** Parents who understand how children grow and develop can provide an environment where children can live up to their potential.
- **Parental resilience.** Parents who are emotionally resilient have a positive attitude, creatively problem solve, effectively address challenges, and are less likely to direct anger and frustration at their children.
- **Social connections.** Trusted and caring family friends provide emotional support to parents by offering encouragement and assistance in facing the daily challenges of raising a family.
- **Concrete supports for parents.** Parents need basic resources such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, and access to essential services that address family-specific needs (such as child care, health care, and mental health services) to ensure the health and well-being of their children.

### *How You Can Help*

Parenting is one of the toughest and most important jobs in America, and we all have a stake in ensuring that parents have access to the resources and support they need to be successful. Entire communities play a role in helping families find the strength they need to raise safe, healthy, and productive children.

Here are some things you can do:

- **Get to know your neighbors.** Problems seem less overwhelming when support is nearby.
- **Help a family under stress.** Offer to babysit, help with chores and errands, or suggest resources in the community that can help.
- **Reach out to children in your community.** A smile or a word of encouragement can mean a lot, whether it comes from a parent or a passing stranger.
- **Be an active community member.** Lend a hand at local schools, community or faith-based organizations, children's hospitals, social service agencies, or other places where families and children are supported.
- **Keep your neighborhood safe.** Start a Neighborhood Watch or plan a local "National Night Out" community event. You will get to know your neighbors while helping to keep your neighborhood and children safe.
- **Learn how to recognize and report signs of child abuse and neglect.** Reporting your concerns may protect a child and get help for a family who needs it.

### *Resources on the Child Welfare Information Gateway Website*

Child Abuse and Neglect

[www.childwelfare.gov/can/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/)

Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

[www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/identifying/)

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

[www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/)

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

[www.childwelfare.gov/responding/reporting.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/responding/reporting.cfm)

## Halloween Health and Safety Tips

Provided by the Centers for Disease Control

For many people, autumn events like Halloween and Harvest Day are fun times to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties, and eat yummy treats. These events are also opportunities to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety. Below are tips to help make the festivities fun and safe for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

### Going trick-or-treating?

- S** Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.
- H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you.
- A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.
- L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.
- L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- O** Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.
- E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.
- N** Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Child Abuse Prevention (DCAP) secures resources to fund evidence-based community programs committed to the prevention of child maltreatment; we advocate for children and the strengthening of families.

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