

In this issue:

- **Q&A Corner:** The Healthy Marriage Initiative and Healthy Families America
 - **PCA America News**
 - **Research From the Field**
 - **Funding Opportunities**
 - **New Programmatic Resources**
 - **Conferences**
-

Q&A Corner: The Healthy Marriage Initiative and Healthy Families America

Introduction

Based on years of research on family formation, social service programming and funding has shifted in the direction of focusing on the needs of couples and providing services to couples to help them improve their relationship and promote the well-being of their new child. These efforts are part of the “healthy marriage initiative” which presents opportunities for family support and early care programs. Home visitation programs can play a key role in offering support for healthy marriage programming and augmenting their existing services to address services for couples.

The healthy marriage initiative stems from a growing body of research that explores the impact of family structure on child well being. Such data includes:

- One-third of all births are out-of-wedlock.
- More than 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce.
- Nearly 40 percent of all children do not live with their biological fathers.
- About 6 percent of children in married-couple families were poor in 1999 compared to more than 35 percent in single-mother families.
- Forty-three percent of unmarried women have children with multiple partners compared to 15 percent of married women (Jarchow, 2003).

Are Two-Parent Married Households Better For Kids?

Research confirms that, on average, children who grow up in families with both biological parents in a low-conflict marriage are better off in a number of ways than children who grow up in single-, step-, or cohabitating-parent households (White and Kaplan, 2003). When compared to children who are raised by married parents, children in other family types are more likely to achieve lower levels of education, to become teen parents, and to experience health, behavioral, and mental health problems. In addition, children in single- and cohabitating families are more likely to be poor and experience multiple living arrangements during childhood (Anderson Moore, Jekielek, and Emig, 2002). Despite these findings, however, most children not living with married, biological parents grow up without serious problems (Parke, 2003). Thus, research findings about the risks to children growing up in single parent families should be presented carefully given that the majority of those children grow up as healthy and successful individuals.

The healthy marriage initiative has evoked strong opinions from a range of advocates, policy makers and opinion leaders. This article attempts to give some basic information on the Healthy Marriage Initiative and describes a pilot initiative with a Healthy Families America state system.

The federal healthy marriage activity is centered in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services. Within ACF, Bill Coffin is spearheading the initiative and is the Special Assistant for Marriage Education under Dr. Wade Horn, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families. A piece put out by ACF defined the healthy marriage initiative as the following:

*It is important to clarify what this initiative is **not**. It is **not about**,*

-Trapping anyone in an abusive or violent relationship

-Forcing anyone to get or stay married

-Running a federal dating service

-Withdrawing supports from or diminishing in any way, either directly or indirectly, the important work of single parents

*What this initiative **is** about is helping couples who choose marriage for themselves develop the skills and knowledge necessary to form and sustain healthy marriages.*

(see: http://faq.acf.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/acfrightnow.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?p_cat_lv1=119)

In 2004, healthy marriage funds have come to states through ACF via the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act, the Child Support Enforcement Act, the Refugee Resettlement Program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Act. It is likely that the proposed \$300m for healthy marriage activity in the TANF reauthorization proposals will be discussed widely next year. Each ACF regional office has hired staff to support this growing initiative and can be contacted for further information on healthy marriage activities in their respective regions (see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf_about.html#offices). In addition, ACF has launched a variety of marriage promotion activities through direct contracts to academic and consulting institutions with expertise in marriage programming. These entities are reaching out to programs throughout the country with existing models that are complementary to the marriage initiative.

The *Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study* reports on the optimal “magic moment” (i.e. the prenatal period and the time shortly after the birth of the baby) when most parents are excited and optimistic about a future together. This research suggests that unmarried parents may be most receptive to marriage promotion efforts before or immediately around the time of birth of their child (Ooms, 2002). If the right assistance was offered to married and unmarried couples at these “magic moments,” perhaps some of the relationships could be stabilized. The Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. report, *Helping Unwed Parents Build Strong and Healthy Marriages: A Conceptual Framework for Interventions*, recommends introducing programs that educate parents and strengthen relationships as an effective prevention strategy at this critical stage in a couple’s relationship.

Based on this research, ACF’s support of the healthy marriage initiative has been two-pronged: targeted initiatives that work intensively with sites in selected states and community-wide initiatives.

Targeted Healthy Marriage Initiatives

An excellent example of a targeted approach to the healthy marriage initiative is Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.'s Building Strong Families Project (BSF) (see www.buildingstrongfamilies.info). This project was launched in collaboration with several other national organizations. BSF aims to work with programs that assist unwed low-income parents ages 18 and over who are experiencing the prenatal period and the early years of the child's life. BSF has provided a range of technical assistance and support to programs that traditionally have not done healthy marriage programming but that are beginning to explore this addition to their program.

One such program to receive Mathematica's support to implement a healthy marriage enhancement is Healthy Families Florida (HFF). HFF has been engaged in a five month intensive planning process to enhance the program by incorporating BSF into the core Healthy Families model as part of the Florida Department of Children and Families Healthy Marriage Initiative. Adding the BSF component to the services currently offered by HFF will provide for a greater focus on couple relationships by providing additional resources to educate couples on relationship skills and linking families to services that remove barriers to achieving a healthy relationship. The BSF model complements the existing HFF program in that it is voluntary, directed toward unmarried parents and couples (which comprise 76 percent of the HFF participants) and emphasizes that services begin prenatally or soon after the birth of a child (the period in which Healthy Families enrolls families).

There are four core BSF program elements. These include: relationship and marriage skills education, family support services, individual couple support and strategies for reducing marriage disincentives. The purpose of these elements and their mode of delivery are described in detail below.

- **Relationship and Marriage Skills Education** - These services will provide information to couples using a selected relationship/marriage curriculum that has been adapted for the BSF population. The information will cover essential skills to building a healthy relationship and will help broaden both the mothers' and fathers' understanding of marriage. This element of the BSF component will be provided in a group setting.
- **Family Support Services** - These services will be provided in an effort to eliminate the barriers that couples may have to strengthening or maintaining their relationships with one another. Examples of these services include: employment services, health care, mental health counseling, consumer credit counseling, substance abuse treatment, housing, childcare and transportation.
- **Individual Couple's Support** - Individual support will be needed to recruit couples to the BSF component, maintain continued interest in the services and provide consistent reinforcement of the curriculum skills that are covered in the group setting. Individual family needs will be assessed and referrals will be made as appropriate.
- **Strategies for Reducing Marriage Disincentives** – Strategies for reducing marriage disincentives include identifying and addressing barriers that exist for couples who may be considering marriage. Examples of these barriers include loss of benefits to

individuals in a couple relationship and tax penalties for married couples. The effort to reduce marriage disincentives may occur on the national, state and local levels. To implement this component in Florida, the Department of Children and Families would need to change the development of policy, rules and/or legislation and possibly develop waivers to be submitted to ACF.

Focus groups with families revealed great interest for moving forward with this enhancement. For more information on the BSF enhancement to the Healthy Families Florida program, contact Carol McNally at cmcnally@ounce.org. For more information on the BSF project, see www.buildingstrongfamilies.info.

Community Wide Healthy Marriage Initiatives

ACF is committed to helping communities build comprehensive Community Healthy Marriage Initiatives (CHMI) designed to help couples, who choose marriage for themselves, gain greater access to marriage education services, on a voluntary basis, where they can acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to form and sustain a healthy marriage. Each community interested in developing a CHMI is encouraged to build a broad community coalition as a base for planning and implementing healthy marriage services. ACF encourages communities to use the coalition approach to assure broad support, share community resources, and engage the community at large in healthy marriage services. For more information on the CMHI and other initiatives related to healthy marriage see: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/index.html>.

Advice to State Leaders on Considering the Healthy Marriage Initiative

- Scan your community for what healthy marriage activity is already taking place, i.e. task forces, marriage conferences or key organizations that have received funds for planning and implementing the initiative.
- Survey your programs for the need and interest in healthy marriage programming.
- Seek out social service programs in your area that are serving unwed parents prenatally or in the early years of their child's life to discuss the initiative.
- Explore existing program models that are thriving in your community and look at building a marriage component into those services.
- Contact ACF to learn more about the healthy marriage initiative including program models that have been developed, prospects for funding marriage-related initiatives, and ways to get technical assistance support.

The healthy marriage initiative is raising new questions in social policy and may greatly influence the funding of programs that work directly with challenged families. State leaders should be aware of the research on family formation, their state system's interest in healthy marriage programming and potential collaborations with community-based programs to determine what marriage education programming is appropriate for their target populations.

Selected References

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- Jarchow, C. (2003, February). *Strengthening Marriage and Two-Parent Families*. National Conference of State Legislatures. Available at: <http://www.ncsl.org/statefed/welfare/marriage.pdf>
- Parke, M. (2003, May). *Are Married Parents Really Better for Children? What Research Says About the Effect of Family Structure on Child Well-Being*. Couples and Marriage Research and Policy Brief No. 3. Available at www.clasp.org

Ooms, T. (2002) *Strengthening Couples and Marriage in Low-Income Communities*. Center on Law and Social Policy. Available at www.clasp.org
 White, D., & Kaplan, J. (2003, June). *The State's Role in Supporting Marriage and Family Formation*. Welfare Information Network Brief Vol. 7, No. 8: The Finance Project. Available at www.financeprojectinfo.org/win/famformation.asp

Visit the following websites for more information:

ACF's healthy marriage initiatives: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/index.html>

Urban Institute at www.urban.org

Center for Law and Social Policy at www.clasp.org

Welfare Information Network at www.financeprojectinfo.org

Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study at www.crcw.princeton.edu

National Marriage Project at www.marriagerutgers.edu

Mathmatica Policy Research, Inc. at www.buildingstrongfamilies.info

Child Trends at <http://www.childtrends.org/portalcat.cfm?LID=35C0D4E0-7E24-473C-A2BA891C4C598D21&CID=125>

PCA America News

Advocacy: Congress Completes FY 2005 Appropriations, Left Other Business Unfinished

On Monday, December 6th, Congress officially completed its work on FY 2005 appropriations. Two weeks earlier, on November 20th, lawmakers had hurried to clear a massive spending bill (HR 4818; H Rept 108-792) before recessing for Thanksgiving. However, a controversial provision discovered in the package -- which would have allowed appropriators and their staff to review tax returns for any American -- delayed final enactment. Upon reconvening this week, Congress repealed the IRS provision and then forwarded the \$388 billion bill to the President for his signature.

The omnibus package combined nine separate appropriations measures, including the Labor-HHS-Education bill that funds many programs of interest to prevention advocates. To stay within spending limits, appropriators imposed an additional across-the-board cut of eight tenths of one percent for all non-defense, non-security programs. Overall, most HHS programs received little or no increase over FY 2004 levels. One notable exception is the \$13 million in new dollars appropriated for programs under the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

The column labeled "Conference Final" in the following table provides the last word on selected spending levels for CAPTA state, community-based, and discretionary grants for the 2005 fiscal year:

**FY 2005 FUNDING AMOUNTS (IN MILLIONS) FOR CAPTA PROGRAMS
(NOT COUNTING ACROSS-THE-BOARD CUT)**

CAPTA PROGRAMS	FY2004 ACTUAL	FY05 PRESIDENT'S REQUEST	FY05 HOUSE	FY05 SENATE	CONFERENCE FINAL	+/- FY04
State Grants	\$21.9	\$42	\$28.5	\$27.5	\$27.5	+ 5.6
Community-Based Grants	\$33.2	\$65	\$43.2	\$43.2	\$43.2	+10.0
Discretionary R & D	\$34.4	\$26	\$26.3	\$34.4	\$31.9	- 2.5
TOTAL	\$89.5	\$133	\$98	\$105.1	\$102.6	+13.1

It is anticipated that these spending increases will filter down by current formula to states (CAPTA state grants) and CBCAP lead agencies (community-based grants) that fund community-based prevention efforts. *CAPTA state grants* provide funds for states to improve child protective services. *CAPTA community-based grants* help states develop and implement effective approaches to preventing abuse and neglect.

Though we still have a long way to go to fully fund CAPTA at its authorized level of \$200 million, the \$13 million increase for FY 2005 is an extraordinary accomplishment given the current budget climate. On behalf of PCA America, we thank you for your advocacy efforts during the past year. Increased funds would not have been appropriated for CAPTA had prevention advocates not stepped forward to urge members of Congress to support this important federal program.

CAPTA Community-Based Grants and Home Visitation

CBCAP grants are made on a formula basis to organizations designated by states to be “lead agencies” charged with developing, expanding, and enhancing community-based and prevention-focused programs. Such programs are defined by CAPTA law to include a variety of organizations, including *voluntary home visiting programs*. If you don’t already know the designated CBCAP lead contact in your state, click on your state at <http://www/friendsnrc.org/contacts/nrccontacts.asp>. Contact this person to introduce your program and determine the types of services funded through the CBCAP program in your state.

Unfinished Business

Classic partisan squabbling, coupled with election year pressures, prevented Congress from finishing much else other than appropriations during the lame duck session. Child welfare financing, a topic of numerous Congressional hearings and the focus of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, will therefore need to be addressed by the next Congress. Reauthorization measures for TANF/Child Care (H.R. 4) and Head Start (S. 1940; H.R. 2210) will be re-drafted next year.

Having failed to complete TANF reauthorization before it was set to expire September 30th, Congress passed its 9th short-term stopgap to extend existing law through March 2005 (PL 108-308). Once again there were attempts on Capitol Hill to use the TANF extension as a means to bring about substantive policy changes to the program. In the end, each chamber passed what is known as a “clean extension”. The 1996 welfare reform law, authorized for five years, was originally set to expire September 30, 2002. The House passed its current reauthorization bill in February 2003. A companion bill in the Senate stalemated this past spring over procedural and partisan issues. Before shelving the measure, Senators approved \$6 billion in child care increases. The House bill included a \$1 billion increase.

Post-Election Analysis, What to Expect in the New Congress

In a close reelection victory, President Bush won a second term on November 2nd, and Republicans expanded their majority in Congress by picking up four seats in each chamber. Despite these Republican gains, an examination of election results across the states makes clear that we continue to be a divided electorate. What follows is a brief analysis of the impact of election results on the next Congress, which will convene in January.

Administration: Since the election, eight members of the President's cabinet have submitted resignations, including HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson. On December 13th, President Bush announced his selection of Michael Levitt, former three-term Governor of Utah and administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to replace Mr. Thompson.

U.S. Senate: With 55 seats, Republicans will have an expanded majority in the Senate next year, though not enough votes to break a filibuster. Sixty votes are needed in the chamber to cut off debate on a bill. Without 60 votes, Republican leaders will likely shelve controversial measures, as was the case last year with the Senate TANF bill (H.R. 4, as amended). Due to the Republican gains, combined with the corresponding loss of Democratic committee seats, the President should have more support in the Senate for pushing his agenda – at least through committee -- in the 109th Congress.

U.S. House: The election resulted in less significant change to composition of the House. Out of 435 seats, only seven House incumbents were defeated. An additional 29 House members are retiring. Most significant for prevention advocates is the retirement of Representative James Greenwood (R-PA), a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce who, as a former child welfare caseworker, was very active on CAPTA reauthorization.

Committee Changes: More sizeable changes will take place on committees and subcommittees. Not only will the ratio of Republicans to Democrats grow on certain committees, but key chairmanships will change hands due to term limits. As a result, Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK), chair of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, will step down, as will Representative Bill Young (R-FL), head of the House Appropriations Committee. In the Senate, Thad Cochran (R-MS) will take over as appropriations chair. Representative Ralph Regula (R-OH), who currently chairs the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee, is one of a handful of names being floated to replace Mr. Young.

The chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee – which will have jurisdiction over the early childhood home visiting bill if it is reintroduced next year -- is also set to change hands. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) is expected to assume the chairmanship while the current chair, Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) takes over the Budget Committee. The Senate Finance Committee, which oversees child welfare reform legislation as well as TANF Reauthorization, could have several new faces due to vacancies as well as a loss of one or more Democratic seats on the committee.

Though some committee assignments have already been made, leaders have until January to finalize assignments and determine Republican-Democrat committee ratios.

Congressional Leadership: Both chambers elected their leaders for the 109th Congress upon reconvening for a lame duck session after the November election. Republican leaders in the House and Senate will not change; Democrats in the Senate were forced to elect a new leader after the defeat of Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD). Here is a list of key leaders to watch in the 109th Congress:

REPUBLICANS	DEMOCRATS
<u>Senate</u> Bill Frist (TN), Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY), Majority Whip	<u>Senate</u> Harry Reid (NV), Minority Leader Richard Durbin (IL), Minority Whip
<u>House</u> Dennis Hastert (IL), Speaker Tom Delay (TX), Majority Leader Roy Blunt (MO), Majority Whip	<u>House</u> Nancy Pelosi (CA), Minority Leader Steny Hoyer (MD), Minority Whip

If your representative was elected to a leadership post, or is newly elected to Congress, consider writing a congratulatory letter. This is an excellent way to introduce your organization and outline your priorities and concerns.

Additional Information

Eleven states also had gubernatorial elections. For these results, check out the website of the National Governors’ Association (NGA) at <http://www.nga.org>.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Democrats picked up a few more state legislatures than Republicans. For information and analysis of these races, go to <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/press/2004/pr041103a.htm>.

HFA Regional Resource Center (RRC) Update:

The RRC team met in Chicago in early December. The purpose of the meeting was to do an annual review of our successes, challenges, exchange information on activities, and to develop a 2005 work plan.

During 2004, the Midwest and Western RRCs successfully assumed training and technical assistance duties and provided extensive services, especially in the area of technical assistance related to affiliation and credentialing. There were notable achievements in the area of training with the implementation of training conference calls in the West, a highly successful training institute in the Midwest, and developments throughout the HFA network in distance learning. Additionally, several evaluation and reporting processes were conducted or implemented to help us to continually monitor and improve services. The regional offices assumed responsibility for additional states, bringing the totals to 13 in the Midwest and 15 in the West. The process for a third regional office is nearly complete and an announcement is due in early 2005. As a team, we have developed a vision, mission and goals for the HFA network, and clarified roles and responsibilities.

We are looking at the whole body of sites, states, regional and the national office as a network of services dedicated to, “promoting positive parenting for optimal child health, safety, and development” within the PCA America mission of preventing the abuse and neglect of America’s children. We see the RRCs as extensions of the national office, and as such will begin referring to them as the Western and Midwestern offices of HFA.

The primary challenge throughout the HFA network is funding. The team began formulating a program logic model and work plan and is in the process of developing boiler plate language for

funding requests to support building capacity, ongoing services, and special projects, such as distance learning and training related to mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence.

During the 1st quarter of next year, we will be looking to you to provide feedback on your satisfaction and utilization of the RRCs. This electronic survey is designed to collect information on how the centers can best meet the needs of sites and states in the two regions. For more information on the survey, please contact Lori Friedman at lfriedman@preventchildabuse.org

We invite your comments and input, and look forward to even greater success in 2005 as we work together to promote positive parenting for optimal child health, safety and development. For more information on the RRCs, contact Meri Pohutsky at Americalls@aol.com.

HFA State Systems

The fall meeting of the State Leaders Advisory Committee (SLAC) was held on November 15-16, 2004 with a new roster of members for the 2004-2006 term. SLAC members include:

Wanda Alteri (CA), Jessica Aufrichtig (NM), Gail Breakey (HI), Deborah Callins (AL), Gaylord Gieseke (IL), Joy Griffith (NY), Jim Hmurovich- PCA Board liaison (IN), Lucky Hollander (ME) --until January 2005, Phyllis Kikendall (IN), Donna Klagholz (VA), Carol McNally (FL), Heather Murray-Charles (GA), Becky Ruffner (AZ), Micah Stirling (OK), Kathleen Strader (MI).

Currently, SLAC concentrates its efforts in three areas: Research, Advocacy and Leadership Development. The fall meeting also focused on infant mental health and issues surrounding "the big three". If you are interested in SLAC's efforts and would like to see minutes from the meetings, contact Lisa Schreiber at lschreiber@preventchildabuse.org

The State Leaders Directory has been updated and contains the contact information for all state leaders across the country. For a copy of the directory, please contact Phyllis Medrano at pmedrano@preventchildabuse.org. The information is only as good as what you tell us, so please review and provide any changes to Phyllis.

On December 14th, a meeting of the Home Visit Forum Public Policy Committee was held in Washington, DC. The meeting was planned and co-hosted by HFA, Parents as Teachers, HIPPY, Parent Child Home Program and Early Head Start, all home visiting programs collaborating via the Forum. Representatives from over 30 child advocacy organizations attended the meeting which focused on collaboration and the ways home visiting connects to a larger continuum of early childhood services. The meeting was very productive and outlined several next steps in the policy arena. For more information contact Lisa Schreiber at lschreiber@preventchildabuse.org

HFA Training

A small grant has been received by the Training Department to offer the prenatal training ("Great Beginnings Start Before Birth") at a reduced rate to home visiting programs outside of the PCA

America network. This three day train-the-trainers is scheduled for February 21-23, 2005 in Chicago, IL. Capacity is limited.

A newly developed training module on Reflective Supervision is being completed and is currently under review by an outside committee. The training is divided into three large skill sets. The first is an overview of the key principles of leadership and management, the second is on clinical supervision and the third skill set is designed to assist supervisors in the area of staff accountability. This training will be offered to certified trainers at an Advanced Training scheduled for March 14-16, 2005. For further information, contact Phyllis Medrano or Helen Reif at 312-663-3520.

HFA Quality Assurance/Credentialing

As 2004 draws to an end, the Quality Assurance/Credentialing Division reflected on its accomplishments for the year. As of January, 58 sites were credentialed, 46 site visits were conducted, 29 new programs were affiliated, 12 new peer reviewers were trained, and 15 existing peer reviewers skills were refreshed. We are also happy to announce that four new members were added to the HFA Credentialing Panel in November. The names of the new members with the state they represent and the positions that they will be filling are as follows: Juanita Arnold (FL - State Leaders); Sharri DaSilva (OR - Program Managers); Kay Loftus (MI - Trainers); and Jesus (Jay) Otero (FL - Program Managers). Those interested in peer reviewer training, our next training is scheduled for April 21-23, 2005 in Arizona. More information related to this training will be distributed in January. A conference call regarding the Cultural Sensitivity Workbook will be offered in January. Invitations for this call were disseminated in November. There will be opportunities to participate in future calls related to this subject later in 2005. For more information, contact Wendy Mitchell at wmitchell@preventchildabuse.org

PCA America Research Department

Research Response Team Contributes to Virginia Child Protection Newsletter: The Research Response Team (a multi-disciplinary team formed to address HFA research issues) contributed to the development of a special issue of the Virginia Child Protection Newsletter. This particular issue focuses on early childhood home visitation and profiles several HFA programs throughout the state. The publication has a readership of 12,000 people across the country including child protective service workers, therapists, day care workers, police officers, and other practitioners. The newsletter can be downloaded at <http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/graysojh/volume%2072.pdf>

Acceptance of Letter to the Editor: PCA America's Letter to the Editor in response to Mark Chaffin's commentary published earlier this year in *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal* has been accepted for publication. Our response will be published together with other letters received by the Journal. Expected publication date is February/March 2005.

Two Abstracts Accepted for Presentation at the 15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect: Two abstracts were accepted for presentation at the 15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect pertaining to findings from the *HFA Implementation Study* and findings from the *HFA Prenatal Project* focus groups. The conference is scheduled for April 18-23, 2005 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Findings from the HFA Prenatal Study now available: *Healthy Families America Prenatal Project “Great Beginnings Start Before Birth”*: What Parents and Home Visitors Think About Prenatal Home Visiting Services, A Report on 10 Focus Group Discussions in New York, Ohio, and Virginia, Working Paper Number 08182004.1, Published August 18, 2004.

This report highlights the main findings from the focus groups conducted with both parents and home visitors from the HFA Prenatal Project pilot sites who received/provided prenatal home visiting services. Topics include challenges that home visitors encountered in sharing information and conducting activities with prenatal parents; activities/information that home visitors found easiest/most difficult to share with prenatal parents; and benefits that home visitors gained from the HFA prenatal training. From the parents’ (program participants) perspective, topics include expectations that parents had when first deciding to participate in the program, how the prenatal services have met their expectations; what information/activities parents found most/least helpful to them; and benefits that parents gained from the prenatal services. Implications of these findings for program improvement are discussed. For a copy of the paper, please contact Helen Reif at [href@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:hreif@preventchildabuse.org) or Ching Tung-Wang at cwang@preventchildabuse.org

Conferences

As part of the Conference Division’s goal to continue to provide service and support to our network members, PCA America has decided to implement a Conference Calendar Clearinghouse that will be housed on the PCA America website under our new Conferences & Events section. This will be a listing by month and year of all the conferences PCA America and our network members will be hosting. We will list the dates, locations and name of each conference posted. For those conferences posted for one of our network members, we will add a link to their website so that the end user can contact the appropriate party if they are in need of additional information.

Our goal is to have this up and running by the end of this year. So, if you would like to participate and have your conferences posted – please provide Rebecca Loden with a list of any conferences you have scheduled for the 2005 calendar year at rloden@preventchildabuse.org .

PCA America Chapters Department

PCA America is thrilled to announce that it is one of three national recipients of the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) BECAUSE Kids Count! grant (Building and Enhancing Community Alliances United for Safety and Empowerment). The intent of the BECAUSE Kids Count! program is to expand the capacity of national organizations and their state, local, and regional affiliates to effectively address the prevention of child maltreatment.

The CDC is funding the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, Parents Anonymous, and PCA America to expand each organization's leadership role in addressing the prevention of child maltreatment before it occurs; foster collaborations to respond to emerging policy and program issues; conduct assessments to determine organizational readiness; and develop a plan to guide prevention activities.

Implementation steps will include the development of the following (1) an inventory and

assessment to catalogue the primary prevention activities that currently exist in the PCA America Chapter network and the HFA and Circle of Parents program networks, as well as identify best practices for these activities and gaps in their implementation; (2) convene a prevention work group comprised of national experts in the field and beyond which will serve as an advisory body; and (3) the development of a national prevention plan to be implemented by the Chapter network.

This is a two-year cooperative agreement with CDC. It started on October 1, 2004 and will run through September 30, 2006. If you should have any questions about this program please do not hesitate contact Ben Tanzer, Director of Chapters and Principal Investigator, at 312.334.6823 or btanzer@preventchildabuse.org

Research from the Field

Study Assesses Effectiveness of a Breastfeeding Promotion Class for Fathers

"We hypothesize that the [breastfeeding promotion] class worked by educating expectant fathers about the value of breastfeeding; the fathers then worked to convince their partners to choose that mode of feeding," write the authors of an article published in the September 2004 issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*. The benefits of breastfeeding are well known, the authors state, and the perceptions and preferences of a woman's support system, and especially the father's perceptions and preferences, have a tremendous effect on her feeding preference. However, no research has tested an intervention that specifically targets the father's demonstrably influential role in the mother's decision-making process. The purpose of the study described in this article was to test such an intervention: to eliminate misconceptions through education, to teach fathers how to advocate on behalf of breastfeeding, and to teach them how to work with their partners to make breastfeeding successful.

The authors found that:

- * Mothers whose partners attended the breastfeeding class were significantly more likely to initiate breastfeeding than those whose partners attended the parenting class.
- * There was no significant difference between groups in the duration of breastfeeding.
- * The mother's intention to breastfeed during the first month of her infant's life, the infant's maternal grandmother's belief that the infant should be breastfed, and the infant's father's belief that the infant should be breastfed were all associated with an increased incidence of breastfeeding in a regression analysis that controlled for whether the expectant father attended the breastfeeding class or the parenting class.
- * Women who were predisposed to breastfeed were more likely to breastfeed if their partner attended the breastfeeding class than if their partner attended the parenting class.

Wolfberg AJ, Michels KB, Shields W, et al. 2004. Dads as breastfeeding advocates: Results from a randomized controlled trial of an educational intervention. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 191(3):708-712.

Research Brief Explores Abuse in Childhood and Adolescence as Predictor of Future Victimization

Violence Against Women: Identifying Risk Factors summarizes two studies that used different methodologies and samples to determine the extent to which physical and sexual abuse during childhood or adolescence contribute to later victimization. The research brief, published by the National Institute of Justice, describes the methodologies, limitations, and findings of the two studies. The brief also presents information on prevention strategies, and it includes references. It is intended for use by service providers and counselors working with adolescents and young adults, victims' and women's advocacy groups, and researchers. The brief is available at <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/197019.pdf>.

Measuring Strengths-Based Service Delivery

A new tool for measuring strengths-based service delivery, the Strengths-Based Practices Inventory (SBPI), may help workers evaluate early childhood and family support programs to determine whether the programs reflect a true strengths-based perspective. The SBPI is a 16-item inventory based on measuring four factors: Empowerment Approach, Cultural Competency, Staff Sensitivity-Knowledge, and Relationship-Supportive.

The authors suggest that the SBPI is a reliable and valid measure of strengths-based practices in voluntary early childhood and family support settings. It also may be used to assess whether staff practices are congruent with a strengths-based philosophy. The SBPI has not been tested in nonvoluntary settings such as child protective services.

"The Strengths-Based Practices Inventory: A Tool for Measuring Strengths-Based Service Delivery in Early Childhood and Family Support Programs" was published in the July-September 2004 issue of *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*. Information about subscriptions can be found at www.familiesinsociety.org/.

Funding Resources

1. FY 2005 OVW Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program, Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

Closing Date: Feb 3, 2005, Amount: Award Ceiling: \$900,000.00

The primary purpose of the Rural Program is to enhance the safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and child abuse by supporting projects uniquely designed to address and prevent these crimes in rural America. All entities must collaborate to ensure that victim safety is a paramount consideration in developing their strategy to address domestic violence.

For detailed information go to: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/docs/fy05ruralgrant.pdf>

2. Health Resource Service Administration (DHHS) Grants Promote Collaborations To Ensure School-Ready Children, State Maternal and Child Health Early Childhood Comprehensive System Grants, State. Closing Date: February 1, 2005

Funds help state plan, develop and ultimately implement collaborations and partnerships to support families and communities to raise healthy, school-ready children. This year's funding will be a mixture of planning and implementation grants. Information: Dena Green (301) 443-9768.

3. Health Resource Service Administration (DHHS) Funds Go To Form Partnerships to Improve Care for Children. Maternal and Child Health Research Network on Pregnancy-Related Care. Nonprofit institutions eligible. \$250,000 for one award. Closing Date: March 1. The new center called the Research Network on Pregnancy-Related Care will coordinate research on risk reduction in pregnancy care. The hope is to improve services for low birth weight and preterm births. Info: Rita Haggerty (301) 443-3146.

4. Center for Disease Control and Prevention Procurement and Grants Office, Grants for Violence-Related Injury Prevention Research: Youth Violence, Suicidal Behavior, Child Maltreatment, Intimate Partner Violence, and Sexual Violence. The ceiling is low, \$300K, but they are awarding 6 to 8 grants. You have to have a letter of intent submitted by Dec 6th, 2004, and the proposal is due by Feb 6, 2005. For more information, see: <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/HHS/CDC/PGO/CDC-RFA-CE05-012/listing.htm>

5. Hanna Andersson Foundation (CA, CO, IN, KY, ME, MN, NY, OR and WA). The foundation provides funds to improve the lives of children residing in areas where it has operations. Focuses include: Promoting children's participation and empowerment, building healthy lives for children and supporting coalitions/public policy efforts to support children. Letters of inquiry are due March 1 for the spring funding cycle and Sept. 15 for fall funding. Letters should be sent (preferably as email attachment) to allisakg@hannafoundation.org. Grants average \$5,000. Contact the foundation at: (503) 553-3551 or www.hannafoundation.org

6. Allstate Foundation, the philanthropic effort of the insurance company, focuses on three areas- tolerance, inclusion and diversity; safe and vital communities; and economic empowerment. There are no deadlines. www.allstate.com/foundation

7. ConAgra Foods Foundation supports programs in areas where it has operations, including those focusing on children's and family services, food safety, nutrition and hunger. Applicants must be nonprofits in existence for at least a year. To determine whether you're in an eligible area, Con Agra suggests calling your local Chamber of Commerce. Applications are considered quarterly. The next deadline is the last business day of January. The foundation only wants written requests. www.conagrafoods.com/leadership/community_guidelines.jsp

8. Tiger Woods Foundation has funds available for under-served children and families, with a focus on health and welfare. The next deadline is February 1. The foundation makes one-year grants to nonprofits based primarily in urban areas. Successful nonprofits must be fundraising-savvy. A proposal must not exceed 25% of a nonprofit's budget, and applicants must have received at least \$100,000 from other sources. (714) 816-1806. grants@twfound.org or www.twfound.org

The Grant and Funding Information section on the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect website is now live. The new content area includes information on: Funding for child welfare services by topic, including child abuse prevention; Information on Federal and private funding sources; Grant writing and fundraising resources; Links to adoption and foster care funding information. See: <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/profess/grant/>>

New Programmatic Resources

National Association of Counties (NACo) Counties Care for Kids Awards Applications Available in Late December. Annually NACo honors outstanding member county early childhood and family strengthening programs. The application will be available under awards at www.naco.org

Profiles of Early Childhood Measures

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services has posted its 2004 Early Childhood Measures Profiles. This compendium includes profiles of early childhood assessments that are commonly used to measure areas of development, including language and literacy, cognition, mathematical understanding, social and emotional competency, and approaches to learning. This compendium is available online at:

<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/ECMeasures04/>

A new resource entitled **From Dads to Grandparents to Parents Recovery – States' Experiences in Supporting Diverse Populations** will be available shortly. This document was created for Circle of Parents and contains examples and lessons learned from states who have addressed a variety of barriers to provide parenting support groups to: Fathers, Grandparents raising grandchildren, Incarcerated parents, Parents raising children with special needs, Parents in recovery and Rural parents. This document will be available early next year on the Circle of Parents website at: <http://www.circleofparents.org>

Getting Ready for School Begins at Birth: How to Help Your Child Learn in the Early Years-A new booklet and Web site from ZERO TO THREE--explains how young children develop skills in 4 areas essential for success in school: language and literacy skills, thinking skills, self-control, and self-confidence. This booklet is a great resource for parents and has been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. ZERO TO THREE Press will be selling sets of 20 for professionals who want to distribute them to parents or staff members. To order copies of "Getting Ready for School Begins at Birth" (Item # 325) or "La Preparacion para la Escuela Empieza al Nacer" (Item # 326) in packets of 20 for \$30, call toll-free (800) 899-4301 or place your order at www.zerotothree.org/bookstore.

Workplace Lactation Program Resource Kit Available

Business Backs Breastfeeding: A Flexible Workplace Program for Breastfeeding Mothers is a resource kit containing instructions, tips, and template materials to help employers support workplace lactation programs. Abbott Laboratories has partnered with the Families and Work Institute and Working Mother Media to promote and distribute the kit, which is intended for use by business owners, executive decision makers, and human resource professionals, as well as health professionals and policymakers, in their efforts to support mothers who breastfeed their infants. The kit and other breastfeeding resources are available at

<http://www.Ross.com/BF/backtowork.asp> or <http://www.ross.com/images/library/Business Backs Breastfeeding.pdf>.

"Positive Change -- Managing Financial Stress" has been created for families facing financial hardship. Here's what "Positive Change -- Managing Financial Stress" offers your programs and the families:

- * practical tips on spending wisely, conserving energy, and following a budget
- * easy-to-use stress-management techniques
- * guidance on how to help children understand why their family is experiencing temporary hardship
- * strategies for keeping families strong when times are tough
- * a concise, quick-reading 10-panel format. Go to <http://go.channing-bete.com/wa/promotion?p=4&code=B001H> to see this folder.

Parenting and Addiction

Providing children with the caring, nurturing environment necessary for healthy physical and emotional development is difficult when one or more caregivers are addicted to drugs or alcohol. A recently released book, "The Lowdown on Families Who Get High: Successful Parenting for Families Affected by Addiction", by Patricia O'Gorman and Philip Diaz, describes the impact of addiction on children and families and offers parenting strategies for each stage of a child's life. The book can be ordered online from the Child Welfare League of America at www.cwla.org/pubs/pubdetails.asp?PUBID=8730.

Donated Web Design Services Available to Nonprofits

Michigan IT Solutions, a provider of web development, online marketing, software development and Internet consultancy services, donates web design services to nonprofit organizations. Eligible organizations must be designated as 501(c)(3) nonprofits, have operating budgets of less than \$1,000,000, have 30 employees or less, and pay a \$40 monthly hosting charge. Visit <http://www.michiganit.com/helpingmeit/> for more information, or to register.

New Report Shows Huge Long-Term Payoff to West Virginia Taxpayers from Early Investment in Kids

A new study released by the West Virginia KIDS COUNT Fund and the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) finds that investments in comprehensive, high-quality early childhood development (ECD) programs would pay for themselves in 17 years and, in 30 years, would give taxpayers a \$2 savings for every \$1 invested.

"Exceptional Returns: Economic, Fiscal, and Social Benefits of Investment in Early Childhood Development" by economist Robert G. Lynch also found that investment in the health and education of young children (0 to 5 years old) will produce significant increases in economic productivity and growth and help stabilize the Social Security system. For the full copy of the "Exceptional Returns" report, go to www.ourfuture.org/docUploads/epi_kids_report.pdf.

The OJJDP Model Programs Guide is a user-friendly, online portal to scientifically tested and proven programs that address a range of issues across the juvenile justice spectrum. The Guide now profiles more than 175 prevention and intervention programs (including HFA) and helps communities identify those that best suit their needs. Users can search the Guide's database by program category, target population, risk and protective factors, effectiveness rating, and other parameters. The OJJDP Model Programs Guide is available at http://www.dsgonline.com/mpg_non_flash/mpg_index.htm.

Conferences

January 2005

***19th Annual San Diego Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment** (Chadwick Center for Children and Families, Children's Hospital-San Diego; January 24 through 28, San Diego, CA; www.chadwickcenter.org).

***Indian Child Welfare Training Institute** (National Indian Child Welfare Association; January 24 through 28, Nashville, TN; www.nicwa.org/services/training/institutes/index.asp).

February 2005

***Symposium 2005: Connect. Support. Empower. 30 Years of Reflections and Revelations in Youth Services** (National Network for Youth; February 6 through 9, Washington, DC; info@nn4youth.org).

March 2005

***A System of Care for Children's Mental Health: Expanding the Research Base** (Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health; March 6 through 9, Tampa, FL; <http://rtckids.fmhi.usf.edu/rtconference>).

***21st National Symposium on Child Abuse** (National Children's Advocacy Center; March 8 through 11, Huntsville, AL; www.nationalcac.org).

April 2005

***15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect "Supporting Promising Practices and Positive Outcomes: A Shared Responsibility"**

(Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services; April 18 through 23, Boston, MA;

<http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/profess/conferences/cbconference/index.cfm>)

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information

(<http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>) and the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse

(<http://naic.acf.hhs.gov>) are planning their conference attendance schedule for the coming fiscal year. In order to better serve State and local child welfare agencies, the Clearinghouses would

like to support upcoming conferences sponsored by CBCAP grantees. If you would like the Clearinghouses to attend or provide materials to an upcoming conference, please contact Ann

Marie MacConnachie at 703.219.4401 or amacconnachie@caliber.com. The Clearinghouse can be contacted for general information at 800-394-3366 or

<http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/topics/prevention>

Thanks for reading SCOOP! Happy New Year and we'll see you again in March 2005!

Lisa Schreiber
HFA State Systems Support

Jessica Palmer
HFA Credentialing