

For The Child's Clinical Director Is Part of Team to Develop and Implement a Strategic Plan for California Victim Services

For The Child Is The Only Non-Profit Child Treatment Agency Asked to Participate in National Conference

Dr. Michele Winterstein represented California child victim treatment agencies at a strategic planning conference in Washington, D.C. November 6 – 8, 2003, sponsored by the federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators (NAVAA).

Six states were selected (California, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, New Jersey, and Washington) to send statewide teams to Washington, D.C. for training in strategic planning. For The Child was the only non-profit child treatment agency invited to participate in this national event. Participants studied and practiced with expert facilitators and received a Strategic Planning Curriculum to assist them in planning for the future of crime victim services at three levels: their own agencies, community, and statewide.

SOME TIME FOR FUN AND NEEDED INSPIRATION

Michele indicated that although group participants worked long days, the Hawaiians fed everyone macadamia nut chocolates and the Iowa team provided comic relief with disco costumes and dancing in the retro-sixties décor of the Hotel Helix Lounge. The California group organized an inspiring bus tour of Washington D.C. after dark, including the Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Marine Corps, Viet Nam, and Korean War memorials.

2003 Child Protection Award given to For The Child volunteer Linda Asbee by the Greater Long Beach Area Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Prevention Council for her work with children. Linda has been on our Child Abuse Response Team for five years, was a foster parent to 45 children and is a generous child advocate and donor.



Council President Paula Cohen, Linda Asbee, and For The Child Clinical Director Dr. Michele Winterstein.

MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA TEAM INCLUDE:

- RICH ANDERSON,
California Victim Compensation Program
- TRULY SUGHRUE,
Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Planning
- ALEX VARGAS,
Los Angeles City Victim/Witness Assistance Center
- ELLEN YIN WYKOFF,
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- TARA SHABAZZ,
California Alliance Against Domestic Violence
- MICHELE WINTERSTEIN,
For The Child, Long Beach, CA

BACK AT WORK WITH AN IMPORTANT CHARGE

The participants from each state returned home as a core working group tasked with developing and implementing a California strategic plan for victim's services.

The California team is back at work charged with developing a unified voice for crime victim needs and establishing working relationships with new leadership in Sacramento.

According to Dr. Winterstein timing is critical to impacting the policies of the new governor as proposals to cut services to children and reorganize state victim agencies are being considered.

FAVORITE QUOTES FROM KIDS' PLACE DIRECTOR

Parents need to fill a child's bucket of self-esteem so high that the rest of the world can't poke enough holes in it to drain it dry.

- ALVIN PRICE



TRUTHS CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED

No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.

*When your Mom is mad at your Dad,
don't let her brush your hair.*

You can't trust dogs to watch your food.

You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.

Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic-Tac

- AUTHOR UNKNOWN

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Do You Know Where Your Donations Go?

REPRINTED FROM FOR THE CHILD'S JULY 2003 CHILDREN'S CIRCLE OF FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER:

While sitting peacefully getting a haircut several months ago, my cell phone rang. On the line was my irate brother. He is a businessperson who receives numerous requests for support from nonprofits each year at his place of work—many of them phone solicitations.

He had just gone online to the State Attorney General's office to research one of the nonprofit organizations that was asking for support for blind and deaf people. Due to the number of requests and some discussions with his sister "who is in the biz", he has adopted a policy of asking that written materials be faxed to him with the organization's employer ID number.

What had he found online? This organization had raised \$1,500,000 last year and spent over \$1,300,000 on fundraising ...just over \$100,000 had gone to services. When the person called back to ask about the support and my brother started to tell him why he wasn't going to give him any money, the person hung up on him.

Organizations like these undermine legitimate nonprofits and the confidence of people like you who support us with your hard-earned dollars. Most community-based organizations do their best to minimize fundraising and administrative costs so that every penny can go to fulfill their mission.

We encourage you to go online, or ask any nonprofit for a copy of their 990 tax return (which they now have to provide by law), to review how an organization spends your money. Two sites that have tax return information are: www.guidestar.org and caag.state.ca.us/charities/. For The Child's ID # is 953601230.

Denise Dahlhausen, For The Child Development Director

UPDATE - DONATIONS

December's front page article in the LA Times on exorbitant celebrity payoffs for attendance at charitable galas and events as well as the costs for organizing these events speaks to the above article.

At For The Child we believe your charitable donations and tax dollars should provide services to children and families. We believe this is why you give to us. Please review our tax returns and be assured we work daily to contain costs and maximize your investment.

Assist for Sexually Abused Children Needed

When our Child Abuse Response Team (CART) goes out to hospitals in Long Beach, San Pedro and Redondo Beach, it means the police believe a child (0-14) has been sexually assaulted within the last 72 hours. This child is going to have a forensic exam to determine if the assault can be verified and evidence can be collected to put the perpetrator behind bars. Our volunteers respond 24/7 with information and assistance for the parent and child, a teddy bear for the child to hug, snacks and some toys, magazines or games to help the child through the process. They sit with the child until the medical and police process at the hospital is over.

Many times the child's clothing must be kept as evidence to be used in court. For The Child stores clothing at each of the hospitals to be ready to give any child who needs something to wear home. The cost of this clothing is approximately \$500 per year. If you would like to assist, please use the enclosed envelope to donate. You can mark your donation for "CART TEAM".

Michael Peterson's Eagle Scout Project Helps Kids' Place Children

Michael Peterson, a 17 year old Senior at Valley Christian High School, has collected over \$800 and 37 file boxes of new books, diapers, new and gently used toys, clothing, games and art supplies for the children at Kids' Place. For his Eagle Scout project, Michael placed 1100 bags with Kids' Place wish lists on the doors of his Lakewood neighbors. The community response was overwhelming. Just before Christmas, Michael, his parents and fellow boy scouts will deliver the goodies to our courthouse childcare project. A great "Thanks" goes out to Michael for all of his hard work and to all those who supported him in this project.

Kids' Place Opened August 8, 2002 Over 4,500 Child Visits in First Year



Courthouses can be scary and emotionally damaging places for young children, but not for those whose parents entrust them to Kids' Place. Children, aged 0-13, play, do art projects,

read, sleep and work on computers in a safe and nurturing environment on the first floor of the courthouse. Kids' Place emphasizes the wonder of reading. Each child leaves with a brand new book of their own.

FTC's onsite community resource staff also provide referrals to community childcare, education, housing, food and other programs to meet family centered needs. 702 families availed themselves of this service in the first year.

KNOW PARENTS HAVING BUSINESS WITH THE COURT?

Parents with court business can take advantage of this free childcare service so their children do not wait in crowded hallways or listen in on troubling court proceedings.

NEW DIRECTOR SHIRLEY ADAMS JOINS ABLE STAFF

Some things just seem to be destined. Shirley saw For The Child's mobile treatment unit in our parking lot. Considering doing some volunteer work, she knocked on our door to see what For The Child was. As Volunteer Coordinator Sunny Breed interviewed her, she knew she was exactly what we needed.

After volunteering her expertise with our Aware Bears project, we had an opening which meant we would lose a fantastic volunteer, but Kids' Place would gain a great and experienced Director.

Prior to retiring from the Riverside County Department of Education, Shirley monitored child care centers and provided training workshops and technical assistance. She supervised the court child care centers in Riverside Family Law Courts and prepared the Corona site for opening. We are pleased to have Shirley on our staff.

60% of the 4,685 visits to Kid's Place in the first year were by children five and under.

Our youngest visitor to date was 5 days old on her first visit and 11 days old on her second. Her grandmother was caring for her while her mother was in court. It would have been impossible for this grandmother to help both of them without the services of Kid's Place.



SAVE THE DATE

FOR THE CHILD'S THIRD ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CIRCLE OF FRIENDS BREAKFAST

WILL BE HELD TUESDAY, APRIL 6TH, 2004

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT OCCUR IN ALL SEGMENTS OF OUR SOCIETY, BUT THE RISK FACTORS ARE GREATER IN FAMILIES WHERE PARENTS:

REMEMBER RISK FACTORS

- Seem to be having economic, housing or personal problems
- Are isolated from their family or community
- Have difficulty controlling anger or stress
- Are dealing with physical or mental health issues
- Abuse alcohol or drugs
- Appear uninterested in the care, nourishment or safety of their children

By helping parents who might be struggling with any of these challenges, you reduce the likelihood that their children will be abused or neglected. Reach out to the children, too, and show them that you care.

ANYTHING YOU DO TO SUPPORT KIDS AND PARENTS CAN HELP REDUCE THE STRESS THAT OFTEN LEADS TO ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

REACH OUT

- Be a friend to a parent you know. Ask how their children are doing. Draw on your own experiences to provide reassurance and support. If a parent seems to be struggling, offer to baby-sit or run errands, or just lend a friendly ear. Show you understand.
- Be a friend to a child you know. Remember their names. Smile when you talk with them. Ask them about their day at school. Send them a card in the mail. Show you care.
- 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. Show that you are involved.
- Give your used clothing, furniture and toys for use by another family. This can help relieve the stress of financial burdens that parents sometimes take out on their kids.
- Volunteer your time and money for programs in your community that support children and families, like parent support groups or day care centers.

Protecting the Youngest: Long Beach Fire Stations Join County Facilities as Havens For Newborns Whose Parents are Unwilling or Unable to Care for Them 1 (877) BABY-SAFE

The California Safely Surrendered Baby Law was designed to protect babies from being abandoned by their parents and potentially being hurt or killed. It allows "distressed birth parent(s) to legally, confidentially, and safely give up their baby within 3 days of birth. Long Beach City Fire Stations, Los Angeles County Fire Stations and County Hospital Emergency Rooms are all safe places for a parent to take the baby. The baby must be handed to an employee at these locations. As long as the baby has not been abused or neglected, no name or other information is required and the parent(s) will not be arrested or prosecuted."

In case a parent changes his or her mind and wants the baby back, workers use bracelets to help connect them to each other. One bracelet is placed on the baby and a matching bracelet is given to the parent. Parents who change their minds can begin the process of claiming their newborns within 14 days by calling the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services at 1 (800) 540-4000.

The above information and bumper stickers were provided by Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe.

If you or your school, church or other group would like bumper stickers that state:

"DON'T ABANDON YOUR BABY 1-877-BABY-SAFE • 1-877- 222-9723"

Please contact Hilda at our office (562)422-8472. We would be happy to send them out or arrange for you to pick them up.

Preventing Child Abuse, Helping Abused and At-Risk Families Children and Families

We All Need to Work Together

While “It Takes A Village” is an overworked phrase, it cuts to the core of what exactly is needed to begin to chip away at child abuse in Long Beach and other local communities. Children too young to talk for themselves or too frightened, families who love their children, but are too proud to ask for assistance when in crisis and overwhelmed need all of us to reach out and help - friend, neighbor, relative and professional.

Last year, a car stopped in Huntington Beach enroute from Long Beach to Tijuana. The parents of two-year-old Maria Mendoza stopped to call the paramedics because Maria was not breathing.

Maria had been punched and kicked until “she was immobile.” She suffered a split small intestine from being hit with fists and shod feet. This little girl died at the hospital.

2-year-old Maria had been severely abused over a period of time. The autopsy revealed a number of injuries in various stages of healing. “There were signs of multiple, long-standing scars and signs of physical trauma...brutal assaults” said the prosecutor. Court documents reveal witnesses who saw the mother direct her 3-year-old son to beat up his little sister – he would take off his belt and begin whipping Maria. They also saw the mother stuff pizza in her mouth and then punch her in the face, bloodying her nose and mouth. On the night she died, the mother’s brother saw the mother and child involved in what appeared to be a domestic violence incident and observed that Maria couldn’t stand and later was vomiting and turning blue.

How many people saw or suspected what was happening to this child and did nothing? Would Maria be alive today if one person had talked with the parents or called the anonymous Child Abuse Hotline (800) 540-4000 to report what they saw? This is not an isolated incident. We have too many cases in our files of children who sustained severe trauma(s) while people knew the abuse was going on and did nothing.

Prevent Child Abuse America has the following tips for recognizing signs of child abuse and reaching out to help children and families:

THE BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN MAY SIGNAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT LONG BEFORE ANY CHANGE IN PHYSICAL APPEARANCE. SOME OF THE SIGNS MAY INCLUDE:

RECOGNIZE WARNING SIGNS

- Nervousness around adults
- Aggression toward adults or other children
- Inability to stay awake or to concentrate for extended periods
- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Unnatural interest in sex
- Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
- Low self-esteem
- Poor hygiene



If you see these signs in any children you know, reach out to them and to their parents and offer a helping hand.

FOR THE CHILD THANKS THE BESS HODGES FOUNDATION FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR CHILD ABUSE EDUCATION.

WORDS YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO HEAR*

I'M SO LUCKY TO HAVE YOU
YOU ARE A GREAT HELPER
I LIKE IT WHEN YOU TRY SO HARD
LET'S TALK ABOUT IT
I'M SORRY
YOU'RE VERY SPECIAL TO ME
THANK YOU FOR BEING PATIENT
YOU'RE A GREAT KID
I LOVE YOU



* PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS - HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



For The Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse

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