

Commissioner's Award Book



15TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

SUPPORTING PROMISING PRACTICES & POSITIVE OUTCOMES
A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

April 18-23, 2005
Sheraton Boston Hotel
Boston, Massachusetts



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2005 Commissioner's Award Ceremony. This award recognizes those who, through their hard work and dedication, have made outstanding contributions toward the prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

The individuals featured in this publication have demonstrated a strong personal commitment to ensuring the safety and well being of children and to supporting and strengthening our nation's families. Awardees come from across the many disciplines involved in preventing and responding to child maltreatment. They represent the fields of social work, education, mental health, health, law enforcement, and the judiciary as well as faith and community organizations.

The theme of this year's conference *"Supporting Promising Practices and Positive Outcomes: A Shared Responsibility"* reminds us that it is through the joint efforts of these committed professionals that many children will have the opportunity to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment and to reach their full potential.

On behalf of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, I extend my warmest congratulations, I commend each of you for your dedication, and I thank you for putting the needs of our children first.

/s/

Joan E. Ohl
Commissioner
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Introduction

The Commissioner's Award Ceremony, a highlight of the 15th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, provides the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of an exceptional group of individuals from across the United States who have made outstanding contributions to the field. Their efforts serve to enable local communities and entire states to realize significant progress toward ensuring the safety and well-being of our nation's children. In some instances, the influence of these award recipients extends nationally and even internationally.

All those being recognized at the Commissioner's Award Ceremony have had the honor of being nominated by the Governors of their respective states as worthy recipients of this prestigious award. This year our 44 honorees represent 41 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories. Among them are 25 women, 17 men, a Children's Task Force, and a Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program. These honorees work as professionals and volunteers and typically in both capacities. Many are protective service and social workers who serve on the front line and as supervisors and administrators. We also honor a judge, a Standing Master, lawyers, pediatricians, professors, a psychologist, a police commander, nurses, a licensing specialist, and the founder of a community development initiative.

Passionate, tireless, persistent, dedicated, innovative, compassionate — a handful of the adjectives repeatedly used to describe this special group of honorees. All are advocates and leaders in their field. Some strive for change in policy and legislation. Many are innovators who have created new programs and changed the service delivery systems in their communities. Others excel in the direct services and support they provide to children and families in need.

Our honorees reflect the complexity of the field and the spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration. We congratulate them on their achievements and express our appreciation for their remarkable contribution.



William D. Hitchcock, J.D.

Master
Children's Court
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William D. Hitchcock serves a vital role in the lives of children and families as Standing Master for the Children's Court in Anchorage. His involvement extends beyond this position to an active advocacy role at national, state, and local levels.

Master Hitchcock devotes his time to numerous projects, committees, and organizations. Nationally, he has been involved with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, which is dedicated to improving the nation's courts of juvenile and family jurisdictions. On a statewide level, he has been a member of Alaska's Court Improvement Project since its inception and also the Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, a citizen's advisory group. Locally, he has been involved in the Robert Wood Johnson Healthy Futures grant, which is designed to provide culturally relevant, integrated treatment services to teens.

Master Hitchcock identifies necessary improvements in the child welfare system in a way that influences everyone to work together to build a better system. He frequently takes a critical look at the processes used in his own court to ensure they exemplify best practices.

Finally, Master Hitchcock epitomizes the view that judges should use their role to exercise leadership in bringing agencies together to encourage cooperation and coordination in dealing with the issues affecting children and families in both the child welfare and juvenile justice arenas. He reaches out to other disciplines, educates himself regarding these disciplines, and works toward community partnerships — all for the betterment of children and family. His community efforts to improve the lives of abused and neglected children exemplify clearly the principles of safety, permanency, and well-being for children.

American Samoa



Vaaomala Kennedy Sunia
Commander
Criminal Investigation and
Intelligence Bureau
American Samoa Police
Department
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Vaaomala Kennedy Sunia, “Vaa” to his community, is the Commander of the Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Bureau under the American Samoa Department of Public Safety. A police officer for 17 years, he primarily serves as a criminal investigator but also devotes much of his time to increasing community awareness of crime, specifically, crimes against children and families.

For the last two years, Commander Sunia has led the local Prevent Child Abuse Task Force in community outreach and education. Together with his dedicated staff, he organized a presentation slide show on child abuse that has become well-known across the island, reaching as far as New Zealand, Western Samoa, and the University of Hawaii.

In American Samoa, where child abuse and neglect typically is not addressed publicly, Commander Sunia has taken bold steps to educate parents, families, first responders, service providers, faith-based communities, and the community at-large. He uses straightforward language, tells candid stories and experiences, and shares detailed descriptions of the faces of child abuse and neglect.

Clearly, Commander Sunia has helped American Samoa to face the reality of child abuse and neglect. He speaks out about what he sees as a police officer and the impact it has on him directly as a father, brother, uncle, as well as a respected member of the community. His actions reflect his dedication and commitment to preventing and treating child abuse and neglect in American Samoa.



Anna Arnold

Community Advocate
P.O. Box 78
Cave Creek, AZ 85327

Anna Arnold has dedicated her life to protecting Arizona's children. Her social work career spans 26 years in both prevention and protection.

In her position as the Child Protective Services Program Manager for Maricopa County, Ms. Arnold assumed responsibility for creating three new and innovative programs: the Project THRIVE Program for substance exposed newborns, the Intensive Family Preservation Program, and the Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Program. She established the State Office of Prevention and Family Support in 1994. Under her leadership, the Healthy Families Arizona Home Visitation Program doubled in size, Federal funding for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program increased, and the nationally recognized Family Builders Program was created.

In the last three years of her career as the Assistant Director of the Division of Children, Youth and Families, Ms. Arnold provided leadership to Child Protective Services as well as to prevention staff. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Arizona National Association of Social Workers in March 2002 and the Healthy Families Arizona Vision Award in December 2002. Although she retired from Arizona State service in December 2002, Ms. Arnold continues to be involved with the Healthy Families Arizona Steering Committee.

Arkansas

**Dee Ann Newell**

Principal Investigator and
Program Manager
Services for Children of Prisoners
and Their Families
Centers for Youth and Families
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Dee Ann Newell advocates consistently and tirelessly in Arkansas on behalf of incarcerated parents and their children. Instrumental in developing a program to teach parenting education to female prisoners in 1991, she subsequently was awarded a grant from the Department of Justice National Institute of Corrections. Of the five grants awarded, the National Council of Crime and Delinquency named the Arkansas program as the most promising. During this period, the Division of Children and Family Services of the Department of Human Services came to value and to fund parenting classes at both the women's prison and subsequently at two men's units.

Ms. Newell also developed and facilitated a pilot program of support groups for kinship caregivers. As these direct services developed, advocacy efforts and public awareness emerged as important components of the overall services. This led to support on the part of the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services, of Ms. Newell's effort to establish Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind. The mission of this nonprofit group is to advocate and reform policies that have an impact on children of prisoners and their families. Supported by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Arkansas Voices is directed by family members and adult children of prisoners, former incarcerated parents, and advocates. Arkansas Voices initiated the first State legislation for services for these families, which was passed unanimously in the 2003 legislative session.

A presenter at several national conferences, Dee Ann Newell was awarded the 2004 Public Citizen Award by the Arkansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. She is married to Frank B. Newell and the mother of two adult children.



Richard Krugman, M.D.

Dean of Pediatric School of
Medicine
University of Colorado at Denver
and Health Sciences Center
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An internationally respected expert on child abuse and neglect, Dr. Richard Krugman is an extraordinary pediatrician and leader — an admired, deeply dedicated, and tireless advocate on behalf of children. Currently, Dr. Krugman serves as the Dean of the Pediatric School of Medicine, University of Colorado at Denver Health Sciences Center, as well as editor-in-chief for *Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal*.

Three areas of Dr. Krugman's background particularly merit attention: his early experience as a pediatrician, his ability to bring together the many communities in which pediatrics is practiced, and his leadership in advocacy for maltreated children. Dr. Krugman has served as a caring critic of poor practices, as well as a builder of better child abuse research and management. Acting on his belief that there must be accountability for professionals charged with protecting children and their families, he began within a year of his arrival at the C. Henry Kempe Center to promote self-evaluation practices in an effort to encourage faculty and staff to learn more from both successes and errors in regard to intervention. He directed more attention to diagnosis of child abuse fatalities, researching and writing about fatal child abuse cases and testifying in well over 60 fatal child abuse and neglect cases in more than a dozen states.

To all his activities, he brings his wisdom and experience, incredible patience, warmth, depth of concern, and a great sense of humor. Dr. Richard Krugman's legacy is his ongoing effort to promote understanding and response to child maltreatment as a "mainstream issue" for pediatrics and society by his personal example and leadership and, most especially, his devoted and effective caring.



Melanie DeFranco
Social Worker
Department of Children and
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Melanie DeFranco, a social worker with the Department of Children and Families since October 1999, displays outstanding case practice in her work. She is an experienced ongoing service and permanency planning worker. On a daily basis, her dedication, hard work, and careful and thoughtful planning for each individual in her caseload reflect her deep commitment to the children and families she serves.

Ms. DeFranco advocates strongly for the children in her caseload, exerting tremendous effort to assure their safety and well-being. She skillfully assesses children and families both individually and in the context of the family system to identify and foster strengths to preserve the family but without compromising child safety and well-being. Ms. DeFranco engages families in a way that promotes shared responsibility, making possible the creation of a mutual plan to address family concerns. Her approach of shared planning and responsibility allows Ms. DeFranco to reunify children with their parents and prevent them from entering the foster care system. Her success is attributable to her perseverance to ensure that children and families receive competent, culturally compatible services that address identified concerns and promote positive growth within the family system.

Ms. DeFranco excels at achieving the goal of permanency for children. In a timely manner, she effectively identifies services and resources to facilitate reunification and, when necessary, to search out relatives to allow children to stay with family. When there are no viable relatives, she strives to identify a permanent placement to promote bonding of the child and family. Ms. DeFranco works swiftly to complete adoption paperwork, completing six adoptions in August 2004 to finalize long awaited permanency arrangements for these children.

The dedication and compassion of Melanie DeFranco for the children and families she serves is endless and unconditional. She has a true commitment and passion to ensure that every child has a safe, stable, and permanent home.

**Jeanette Sauers**

Child Care Licensing Specialist
Department of Services for
Children, Youth and Families
Division of Family Services
Office of Child Care Licensing
1825 Faulkland Road
Wilmington, DE

Jeanette Sauers, the Delaware Division of Family Services Employee of the Year in 2003, serves as a shining example of the values of the Children's Department. A Licensing Specialist with the Office of Child Care Licensing, she has been with the Division of Family Services for 21 years. Nominating her for employee of the year, an executive director of the Young Men's Christian Association wrote: "Jeanette should be commended for her dedication and untiring efforts in helping to develop quality early childhood programs in Delaware. Ms. Sauers has always been a team player and a partner in our child care program and demonstrates that year after year."

For several months, Ms. Sauers, despite her struggle with a life threatening illness, would manage to return to work and in full spirits to update her caseload. She experienced some setbacks with her illness yet maintained her caseload visits to ensure child safety, as well as continued to assist her colleagues and to offer technical assistance to child care facilities prior or subsequent to opening. Recently, in fact, Ms. Sauers licensed seven facilities in one day - a modern day record!

Jeanette Sauers serves as an ambassador, representing the Children's Department on numerous committees that work to improve the quality of child care. These include FACET, Early Head Start, and the New Castle County Head Start Advisory Board. She also has worked diligently as a member of the task force charged with revising Child Care Center Regulations.

Always striving to better herself with professional development, Ms. Sauers created a training program, Staying in Compliance, to help providers better understand and meet requirements. Recognizing a need in the community, she now strives to establish a Hispanic Providers Support Group.

Jeanette Sauers persists as a strong advocate for children. Her work to ensure safe and stable child care is both her calling and her passion, an embodiment of the Children's Department vision statement: "Think of the Child First."

District of Columbia



Shane Salter

Executive Director
CASA for Children of D.C.
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Shane Salter grew up in the District of Columbia foster care system. He now devotes both his professional career and personal time to improving the lives of abused and neglected children.

In 2002, Mr. Salter founded Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of the District of Columbia and now serves as Executive Director. CASA's volunteer advocates spend time with the child, make recommendations to the court in the child's best interest, and collaborate with social workers and attorneys to ensure that the child receives appropriate services.

CASA is only the most recent milestone in Mr. Salter's 15 years of senior management and volunteer participation on behalf of children and families. When an assistant to the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders, he supported oversight of District government agencies, including: Human Services, Health, Mental Health, Child and Family Services, Office of Aging, Parks and Recreation, Office of Human Rights, State Education Office, and Public Library System. As director of Foundation Giving, Mr. Salter played a leadership role in a Freddie Mac Foundation record investment of more than \$100 million in nonprofit organizations serving children and families.

Mr. Salter also formerly served as Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Office of For Love of Children, a local nonprofit agency that serves more than 1,000 children and families annually. He led a full-scale restructuring of all agency programs and operating systems while overseeing programs in foster care, neighborhood tutoring, youth development, transitional housing, and alternative education for severely emotionally disabled students. For eight years, Mr. Salter served as senior hospital administrator and reengineering consultant at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

In a volunteer capacity, Shane Salter has served as President of Adoptive Families of America, Vice President of Creating Opportunities for Parent Empowerment, and on the boards of the National Association of Counsel for Children and the National CASA Association. Shane Salter and his wife Gloria parent their three birth daughters together with the four children with special needs they adopted from the D.C. Child and Family Services agency.



Carl L. Weinrich

President and Chief Executive
Officer

Sarasota Family YMCA
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Sarasota, Manatee, DeSoto, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties boast at its helm one of the nation's most influential players in the field of child welfare - Carl L. Weinrich. As the founder of the community-based care initiative in Florida, Mr. Weinrich, the ultimate visionary, is the driving force in motivating and organizing community agencies to come together as a coalition to care for Florida's most needy children. He has forged the framework for a coalition that currently involves more than 75 agencies: all experts in their service delivery areas.

This visionary holds the respect of his entire staff, as well as that of the community's citizens and project stakeholders. Community-based corporations came to the table to form a partnership that enhances the lives of the community's children. Community coalition members give \$10,000 per year for three years in cash or in-kind goods and materials to support one of Florida's group homes and also encourage hands-on involvement on the part of their employees. Local individuals bring their talents and strengths together in the form of stakeholders committees, recognizing responsibility for the children and families in their own communities. These committees of concerned community leaders provide ongoing oversight, support, advocacy, and advice to the community-based care project.

Heading a nonprofit corporation of 1,000 employees and a budget in excess of \$83 million, Mr. Weinrich provides the spark behind the development of the state-of-the-art YMCA Health enhancement facilities and social service programs, rivaling any other in the country and many around the world. He now prepares to celebrate his 30th year with the Sarasota Family YMCA in April 2005.

Mr. Weinrich recounts the early struggles of his runaway teen daughter, now a successful business woman. He identifies this experience as the influence that led him to a focus and commitment to serving troubled, needy children and to his subsequent work developing prevention programs for abuse and neglect and for establishing prevention as a core concept for all staff and service areas.

Carl Weinrich, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Sarasota Family YMCA, Inc. challenges all of us to provide an environment in which children can develop spirit, mind, and body and learn the core values of caring, responsibility, honesty, and respect in order to be fully prepared for a future as productive community citizens.



Deacon Ricky Bernard Shelton

Vice President
Youth in Action, Inc.
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Ricky Bernard Shelton, a founder and volunteer of Georgia's Youth in Action, Inc. contributed to defining the organization's mission. Youth in Action strives to enhance the lives of young males in Ben Hill County academically, socially, physically, and economically by providing a school monitoring program together with after school and summer initiatives. Currently, the organization offers 25 to 30 young males between the ages of 4 to 18 a safe place to learn during the most critical time of the day.

Mr. Shelton truly believes that by fulfilling the mission of Youth in Action he and other volunteers will be able to prevent child abuse and neglect. Volunteers receive notice when young males in the community experience truancy issues or require tutorial or social assistance. Referrals come from school personnel, the Ben Hill County Department of Family and Children's Services, Juvenile Court, Department of Juvenile Justice, parents, or the young people themselves.

He and other volunteers make home visits and assess the young man and his family to identify how Youth in Action can help to better the life of each young male individually. Volunteers provide the needed services or refer the young male and his family to the appropriate community resource. Mr. Shelton also strives to help the youngsters to make a spiritual rather than a gang connection. Short-term benefits of Youth in Action include the opportunity to obtain assistance from community resources before it is necessary for the Department of Family and Children's Services to become involved with their families, regular school attendance and subsequent graduation, and the development of more and better-educated young men who are able to obtain employment, become self-sufficient, and realize better futures.

Mr. Shelton also hosts car washes, weight lifting tournaments, and sporting events to raise funds to take the young participants on field trips and to sporting events in the community. For some events, Mr. Shelton purchases all of the supplies and awards so that the organization will make a profit and to teach the young men participants that working brings its rewards.

Mr. Shelton believes his involvement will prevent parents from abusing their young male children because parents are aware that someone will be checking in on their child and visiting him at school. His involvement also helps to build the child's self-esteem and to demonstrate that someone cares about his future and his success.



Victoria L. Schneider, M.D.
Director
Kapiʻolani Child At-Risk
Evaluation (CARE) Program
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The leading forensic pediatrician in Hawaii, Dr. Victoria L. Schneider moved her successful pediatric career from California to Honolulu in 1994. She also teaches in the Pediatrics Department of the John A. Burns School of Medicine and serves as a member of many task forces.

In her role as child welfare medical consultant, Dr. Schneider learned that 97 percent of the children reported did not receive medical forensic diagnostic examinations, including those entering the foster care system. To address this concern, she led a multidisciplinary team to visit model abuse prevention programs in California. Dr. Schneider mobilized community support and funding to create both the HOPE (Hawaii Outreach Pre-Placement Evaluation) and the CARE (Kapiolani Child-At-Risk Evaluation) programs. Two HOPE clinics provide comprehensive pre-placement exams for children entering foster care. The CARE program conducts comprehensive forensic medical examinations for children reported for abuse and neglect, gathering the forensic evidence needed to prosecute perpetrators of severe abuse. Dr. Schneider has raised over \$1.2 million for these programs, establishing model services for victims of abuse, providing needed care, and reducing the likelihood of re-abuse. Currently, she seeks State funding to assure these services become a permanent component of child welfare services.

Hawaii much appreciates Dr. Victoria Schneider — an outstanding pediatrician and a tremendous leader in advocating for the vulnerable children of our State.



Joyce Gilbert, M.D., F.A.A.P.

Pediatrician
Sandpoint Pediatrics
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Dr. Joyce Gilbert moved to Sandpoint, Idaho, 20 years ago to practice pediatrics in a small rural community and to make a difference in the lives of the children she cares for in North Idaho. Dr. Gilbert makes a difference on a daily basis, advocating for all children: children with disabilities, children who have been neglected or abused, and children affected by prenatal drug exposure. An active member of the Multidisciplinary Bonner County Child Abuse Task Force Team, she also served for four years on the Governor's Child Mortality Review Board.

Dr. Gilbert's newest passion is drug-affected infants. In 2003, she attended the first Idaho Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Conference and was a featured speaker at the second Conference in 2004. Dr. Gilbert has assisted in implementing the DEC protocol in Region I and has developed a data base within her office to track methamphetamine exposed infants and children.

Her efforts to disseminate information about drug exposed infants to local law enforcement, judges, health care professionals, and schools persist. Dr. Gilbert also works closely with local law enforcement, Department of Health and Welfare social workers, and the Prosecutor's office to advocate on behalf of the children of North Dakota.



Bobby J. Hall

Chief

Office of Program Development
and Support

Department of Children and
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Bobby J. Hall serves as Senior Administrator with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and as Chief, Office of Program Development and Support, Division of Planning and Performance Management. During his 33 years with DCFS, Mr. Hall has held many positions with DCFS in the field and in management. He has distinguished himself as a leader in developing innovative programming for children and families, securing and monitoring numerous Federal grants and projects, and supervising important aspects of the Department's planning process, particularly in the area of child protection. Mr. Hall is a primary architect of the DCFS Family Centered Services Program, which partners with community-based agencies and local service networks to support abused and neglected children and their families and deflect them from entering the child welfare system. A Department emissary throughout the State of Illinois, Bobby J. Hall's leadership has increased greatly needed services for children and families in every region.

In addition to his leadership at DCFS, Bobby Hall has dedicated himself to community service. He has served on numerous boards, task forces, and commissions in Springfield, Illinois, which address the needs of disadvantaged children and families in creative and positive ways. Mr. Hall has served on the Board of Directors of Big Brothers Big Sisters, Attention Home for Youth, Family Services Center, the Head Start Policy Council, the Illinois Inter-Agency Athletic Association, the Springfield Area Literary Council, the Human Services Education Council, the Community Services Advisory Council, and the Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois. He is a long-standing member of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, the Eta Psi Sigma Chapter that helps tutor and mentor African-American youth.

For the past decade, Mr. Hall has led the effort to establish a community health center in Springfield and currently serves as President of the Board of Directors. The Central Counties Community Health Center Inc. opened its doors in October 1999 and continually has expanded its services to the uninsured and underinsured residents of central Illinois. His vision and dedication have been recognized by the National Association of Community Health Centers, which awarded him the Health Center Governance Leadership Award in 2002. The State of Illinois proudly honors the inspiring public service of Bobby J. Hall.

**Lois Smidt**

Executive Director
Beyond Welfare
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Lois Smidt, a co-founder, serves as the Executive Director of Beyond Welfare, a community development initiative in Story County, Iowa. Beyond Welfare is committed to the leadership development and economic self-sufficiency of people marginalized by poverty, the safety of children and their families, and the engagement of community members in relationships with families leaving welfare and the working poor.

Ms. Smidt initiated the organization's "Circle of Support", the key structure for "building communities of caring across class and race lines where everyone leads." She contributed to the creation of Wheels to Work, a car donation program of Beyond Welfare that has transferred nearly 150 donated cars to families where transportation imposes a significant barrier to economic and family well-being. Ms. Smidt also founded the Community Leadership Team, a group of 50 to 60 families and allies who meet weekly over dinner in an effort to establish healthy social and community ties.

While a single mother of two children, Ms. Smidt used public assistance to meet her family's basic needs. During that time, she volunteered with the Ames Community Schools, served on the board of Children's Services of Central Iowa, taught parenting classes, and vowed to make something positive of her experience with public assistance.

Through Beyond Welfare and its Learning Center, Ms. Smidt now works to facilitate relationships across class and race lines. The intent is to build a diverse constituency of caring that addresses both individual and systemic poverty, and the safety of children and families, and to make this effort the work of the whole community. Lois Smidt has provided training and technical assistance across Iowa, as well as in several other states and Nova Scotia, on the community engagement and development strategies of Beyond Welfare.

We in Iowa much appreciate Lois Smidt for her commitment to thinking "outside the box" and creatively leading collaborative efforts to engage families in developing their strengths and becoming part of the solution; for her passion and ability to make the issues of poverty and child abuse and neglect the work of the whole community; and for her success at moving children and families that typically would be abandoned to "the system" into fully reciprocal community life.

Kansas



Katherine J. Melhorn, M.D.
Associate Clinical Professor,
Pediatrics
University of Kansas School of
Medicine - Wichita
1010 N. Kansas
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Dr. Katherine J. Melhorn contributes significantly to the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Kansas. A pediatrician, a Clinical Associate Professor, and a Residency Program Director at the School of Medicine of the University of Kansas, she is held in high regard by her peers, child protective service social workers, the courts, and law enforcement, as well as beloved and respected by many children and families.

For over 20 years, Dr. Melhorn has worked in pediatrics and as an advocate to prevent child abuse and neglect. She helped to establish the State Child Death Review Board in Kansas, formed by the 1992 Legislature, and has served on this voluntary Board since its inception and currently as Vice Chair. Dr. Melhorn volunteers her time to review hundreds of child death cases, as well as to participate in meetings. This Board also serves as a Citizen Review Panel and, Dr. Melhorn shares responsibility for gathering input on the improvement of Child Protective Services in Kansas.

Active in the Wichita community as well as statewide in the education of professionals regarding child abuse and neglect, Dr. Melhorn frequently speaks at Kansas State and local conferences. She has authored and assisted in the development of educational materials to help prevent child maltreatment. Highly respected for her knowledge and expertise on child abuse and neglect, Dr. Melhorn is considered an expert witness and is available to testify in difficult cases.

Dr. Melhorn persists as an advocate for child safety and well-being. The State of Kansas recognizes and appreciates the passion, commitment, and contributions of Dr. Melhorn to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Kentucky

**James Grace**

Coordinator
Child and Family Services
Reviews/Population
Information Program
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and
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James Grace has made significant contributions toward the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect in Kentucky. In September 2003, he assumed the position of coordinator for the statewide implementation of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP). Mr. Grace works diligently with all 16 regions in Kentucky to develop strategies addressing safety, permanency, and well-being for at-risk children and families. Coordination of the PIP proves vital to the Cabinet's mission to enhance child welfare outcomes.

Mr. Grace also provides domestic violence training to numerous professionals, including judges, prosecutors, and mental health and medical professionals. He has worked for over twenty years for the State in Adult and Child Protective Services and provides ongoing consultation to staff related to best practice.

Louisiana



Larry J. Hebert, M.D.

Founder and Chair
Louisiana Children's Trust Fund
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A consistent and strong child advocate, Dr. Larry Heber spoke about the prevention of child abuse and neglect long before it became a program focus. Many times a lone voice, he often faced considerable opposition but held to his advocacy position. Dr. Hebert, a pioneer for the future of primary prevention programs, educated the State of Louisiana about the need for legislation and funding for primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. Initially, he served as the Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee for the Louisiana Child Protection Plan. As his efforts proved the single greatest catalyst for the formation of the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund, he led the Fund as founding chair from 1984 to 1992 and now serves as Vice Chair. For the 1979 to 1989 decade, Dr. Hebert also held the position of Medical Director for Louisiana Child Protection Programs.

Dr. Hebert did more than speak out to promote primary prevention. He took action, hosting and serving as executive producer of a live parenting television show on Louisiana Public Broadcasting. Following this show's success, he hosted a television news magazine. His shows, the first of their kind, focused on educating and reinforcing parenting skills, that is, primary child abuse prevention. Dr. Hebert has received numerous awards, including: 1979 Lagniappe Award, Louisiana Public Broadcasting; 1985 Excellence in Medical Journalism and the Louisiana State Medical Society; 1980 Friend of Children, Louisiana Association of Children Under Six; and 1982 Baton Rouge Pediatric Society Appreciation Award in recognition and appreciation of work on behalf of abused and neglected children in Louisiana.

Currently, Dr. Hebert serves as Director and Chief Health Officer for the State of Louisiana. The majority of Dr. Hebert's time and service to child abuse prevention is voluntary. In lieu of reimbursements or honorariums, he asks that organizations make donations to child abuse prevention programs. Dr. Hebert's groundbreaking work on behalf of child abuse prevention in the State of Louisiana has been recognized throughout the United States as well as internationally. His address at the First International Congress of Child Abuse and Neglect in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1975 proved to be only the beginning of numerous presentations and publications advocating the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Thankfully, Dr. Hebert persists in his advocacy role.



Frances Ryan, L.C.S.W.
Director of Special Projects
Department of Health and
Human Services
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Frances Ryan has made outstanding contributions to improving the lives of Maine's abused or neglected children. As Director of Special Projects for the Department of Health and Human Services, she often is called upon to tackle complex, multi-system cases and has contributed to a great number of successful initiatives that have enhanced safety, well-being, and permanency for children in State custody.

Her efforts in an initiative to return children placed in residential care outside Maine has resulted in more than 130 children coming back to placements in the State during the past five years. In this and other assignments, Ms. Ryan demonstrates her skills at collaboration and problem solving, working across multiple systems related to child welfare, behavioral health, corrections, and education. She has been especially effective in fostering collaboration between child welfare and children's behavioral health to support better outcomes for children. Ms. Ryan is credited with the leadership role of an initiative that transitioned children from psychiatric hospitals to successful community placements. Many of these situations involved cases where children had been hospitalized for significant periods of time.

Ms. Ryan also has a demonstrated record of leadership in creating permanency for children. Her initiative as a team leader in successful transitions of children from residential care to family homes has contributed directly to a reduction of children in residential care. She also dedicates her skills and leadership to creating more effective home-based interventions to prevent children from needing residential care.

Frances Ryan has played an integral role in Keeping Maine Kids Connected, an interagency protocol supporting greater educational success for Maine's foster children. Those who work closely with Ms. Ryan on these vital initiatives recognize her as a skilled problem solver and leader, committed to working collaboratively to find the best answers for children and families.



Steve Zepnick, L.C.S.W.-C.

Social Worker

Families Now

Montgomery County Child Welfare

1301 Piccard Drive

Rockville, MD 20850

For 32 years, Steven Zepnick has served as a social worker in Montgomery County Child Welfare Services. He is dedicated to the children for whose safety he is responsible.

For the past decade, Mr. Zepnick has worked in Families Now, preventing the placement of a multitude of youngsters at imminent risk. He is creative, incorporating therapy, parenting education, referrals to other agencies, and case management in his approach. An astute diagnostician, he skillfully matches techniques to families. His greatest skill is fostering independence among families by utilizing a strengths-based model, which identifies family and community supports to help a family build upon their skills. A master at developing community resources, in one instance Mr. Zepnick persisted on behalf of a family without running water until he secured a Habitat for Humanity home for them.

A social worker who is deeply committed to the well-being of children and families, Mr. Zepnick participates in various committees and organizations through child welfare and in the community. He serves as co-leader of a parental support group, a member of the Maryland National Association of Social Workers Children, Youth and Family Task Force and on the Montgomery County Interagency Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Parenting. An advocate for families and children in the community, Steven Zepnick has won the Social Worker of the Year Award from the Maryland Bar Association, Juvenile Section.



Patricia E. Scibak, Esq.
Regional Counsel
Central Region
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Social Services
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Worcester, MA 01608

Patricia E. Scibak, Regional Legal Counsel for the Central Massachusetts Region of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, has been an unflagging champion for Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) prevention and the Department's leader for the last three years. Her focus on SBS began in 2001 when the Central Region experienced several SBS-related deaths and severe injuries in rapid succession. As Regional Counsel, she became involved in the legal aspects of these cases ... but did not stop there.

Working with other Central Region staff and the Massachusetts Citizens for Children, Ms. Scibak initiated organizing a regional preventive response to the occurrence of SBS. Drawing on SBS prevention experience across the nation and under Ms. Scibak's leadership, the Central Region developed a comprehensive approach to prevention. This approach focused on a broad public awareness campaign, training for new mothers in obstetric wards at the region's hospitals, and school-based training to reach young males.

In the past year, deaths by Shaken Baby Syndrome have drawn attention across Massachusetts. Once again, Ms. Scibak has assumed the leadership challenge, coordinating and leading the Department's efforts to build a broad-based coalition for SBS prevention in the State. Under her leadership and in coordination with the Department of Public Health, an SBS prevention statute has been filed with the Legislature for the first time, and the Department of Public Health has taken on SBS prevention as a key priority area.

The committed strategic, passionate, and inclusive work of Patricia Scibak on Shaken Baby Syndrome already has saved lives in Central Massachusetts. Her impact now promises to extend across the entire State of Massachusetts.



Margaret Warner
Director
Oakland County Department of
Human Services
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Stoneridge, East
Suite 200
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48034

For many, many years, Margaret Warner has worked both intensively and creatively in the field of child welfare. Her history shows her to be very strong on collaboration and partnership, as well as incorporating innovative and best practices into child welfare.

Ms. Warner supports building and sustaining State and Tribal partnerships in Wayne County where Tribes serve a large group of Native people. She was Wayne County's lead person in the development of the Absent Without Legal Permission (AWOLP) program. Due to her perseverance and persistence, Wayne County developed an excellent protocol, which successfully engaged law enforcement and the courts.

Minnesota



Julia Jaakola

Human Services Program
Development Coordinator
Fond du Lac Reservation
927 Trettel Lane
Cloquet, MN 55720

Julia (Bunny) Jaakola exemplifies the commitment and dedication needed to improve the lives of American Indian children and families locally and nationally. Throughout her long career, she has done much to push to the forefront the needs of American Indian children and families, which are represented disproportionately in the child welfare system.

Ms. Jaakola helped to lead the 11 Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes in Minnesota in negotiating a model Tribal/State Agreement regarding the implementation of the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act and the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act. The Tribal/State Agreement plays a critical role in consistent application of the laws designed to protect and keep Indian families together. Aware of few such Tribal/State Agreements nationally, Ms. Jaakola's leadership and diplomacy proved a source of strength and support in this unprecedented collaboration between the State of Minnesota and the 11 American Indian Tribes within Minnesota's border.

An enrolled member of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and for many years the Social Services Director for Fond du Lac, Ms. Jaakola was the first person to chair the Minnesota Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council. She served as the Chair of the Council for over 14 years and recently was honored at Minnesota's Tribal State Conference, Keeping Families Together: Safety, Permanence, and Well-Being. Other awards and recognition Ms. Jaakola has received include: the Indian Health Service Area Director's Award for Managerial Excellence, a nomination for Woman of the Year by the American Business Women's Association, and the 1996 Honoring Nations Award from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.



**The Honorable
Mills E. Barbee**
County Court Judge
DeSoto County Courthouse
2535 Highway 51 South
Suite 2
Hernando, MS 38632

The Honorable Mills E. Barbee has served as a County and Youth Court Judge in DeSoto County, Mississippi, since July 1, 1980. A tireless and committed advocate on behalf of youth and children's issues, he has worked to influence Youth Court Law, increase the number of foster homes, as well as served as past chair of the Conference of County Court Judges. Judge Barbee has overseen the implementation of a variety of DeSoto County programs and, currently, strives to develop a Juvenile Drug Court.

Judge Barbee earned a baccalaureate degree in public administration from the University of Mississippi and a law degree from Jackson School of Law, now Mississippi College. Prior to eight years of private practice, he worked for one year as a law clerk under Justice Stokes Robinson of the Mississippi Supreme Court. The county's population has exploded since he was elected to the bench 24 years ago, but Judge Barbee continues to expect and inspire excellence from the people around him despite his heavy workload and demanding schedule. He always takes the time to assure that the needs of the county's numerous foster children are met.

A believer in the preservation of families, Judge Barbee always feels moved by "success stories" of foster children safely reunited with their families or successful adoption. Refusing accolades for his work, he directs the praise to foster parents, social workers, guardians *ad litem*, and others who work directly with families. Committed to fairness and the betterment of children, families, and society, Judge Barbee consistently provides leadership, advocacy, and encouragement in the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.



Steve Roling

President and Chief Executive
Officer
Health Care Foundation of
Greater Kansas City
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Steve Roling was appointed Director of the Department of Social Services in March 2003, giving him responsibility for the nearly 850,000 Missourians the Department annually serves through its children's services, income assistance, Medicaid, and related social service programs. During Mr. Roling's tenure with the Department, he proved instrumental in many exemplary improvements to Missouri's child welfare system.

Mr. Roling believes accountability, feedback, and openness to the public to be crucial elements to success. He directed many community partners involved in Department work at both the local and State level to truly serve the needs of the clients. Mr. Roling promoted strong working and personal relationships with community partners. He listened to recommendations on the part of community partners, staff, the State Auditor, and multiple Commissions and then proceeded to turn these recommendations into action. These actions include: establishing, renewing, and improving communication and training between the Department of Social Services and other components of the child welfare system; implementing dramatic improvements in the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline; increasing efforts to locate relatives or others who support families as placement resources for children who cannot remain safely in their own families; cooperating with the Missouri Department of Mental Health to ensure that families relinquish custody in order for their children to access mental health services; and collaborating with the Missouri Department of Corrections to provide parenting training for incarcerated fathers.

Mr. Roling became the first Department Director in many years to shadow hotline call takers and investigators, as well as to hold monthly pizza parties with foster children. He engaged in these activities to understand firsthand what happens in the daily lives of Missouri's children and workers.



Shirley K. Brown, M.A., J.D.
Administrator
Child and Family Services Division
Montana Department of Public
Health and Human Services
CFSD
P.O. Box 8005
Helena, MT 59604

Shirley K. Brown has served as the Administrator of the Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) of Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services since December 2002. The Child and Family Services Division provides State and Federally-mandated protective services to children who are or are at risk of being abused, neglected, or abandoned. Ms. Brown has served in many positions in the area of child protective services, including district supervisor, regional administrator, and division administrator under the former Department of Family Services, and Program Bureau Chief for the Child and Family Services Division.

Ms. Brown began with Child Protective Services in northeast Montana in 1981. She came from outside the system, with no previous child protective services experience. From the start, she understood the importance of foster families to the children to whom the agency provides services. Ms. Brown began by visiting all of the foster families in her five county district. The system has experienced many changes since 1981 but an unalterable fact continues to be the significant contribution made by resource families who provide homes to Montana's most vulnerable children.

Ms. Brown has baccalaureate and master's degrees in sociology from the University of South Dakota. She also holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Montana's School of Law.

The Children's Task Force
c/o Nebraska Children and
Families Foundation
215 Centennial Mall South
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Lincoln, NE 68508

Former Governor Miles Johanns created the Children's Task Force in September 2003 in response to concern about an increasing number of violent child deaths that have occurred in Nebraska in recent years. The charge of the Task Force was to assess the child protection system, identifying strengths and weaknesses, as well as to develop recommendations for improvements aimed at preventing future violent child deaths. Mary Jo Pankoke, Executive Director of the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, and Gary Lacey, County Attorney for Lancaster County, led the Task Force, comprised of 36 individuals representing various disciplines, areas of expertise, and interests.

The Task Force held 16 public forums across the State. More than 400 people attended, providing the Task Force with information to consider while formulating their recommendations. Forum attendees were asked to share ideas, as well as to comment upon: what is working well in the child protection system; what could be improved in the child protection system; and what community resources are available for parents. About 500 people participated in the forums. Comments from the public also were gathered via telephone calls, letters, e-mails, and input forms from the web page. The public input amounted to nearly 250 pages.

On the basis of the Task Force recommendations, Governor Johanns and the Nebraska Legislature funded several items:

- \$5.5 million beginning FY 2004-2005 to fund 120 new protection and safety positions
- \$100,000 annually to conduct public education
- \$350,000 annually to fund coordinators at six existing Child Advocacy Centers and to develop one new location
- \$1 million to enhance the Criminal Justice Information System
- \$35,000 annually to provide additional training for law enforcement in the investigation of child maltreatment reports
- \$35,000 annually to provide additional training to medical professionals in the identification of child maltreatment
- \$80,000 annually to the Attorney General's Office for State and local costs related to prosecuting crimes against children

The work of the Children's Task Force was most necessary and truly will make a difference in the lives of Nebraska's abused and neglected children.

New Hampshire



Nancy L. Rollins, M.S.W.
Director
Division of Children,
Youth and Families
129 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

Nancy L. Rollins, the Director of the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), assumes responsibility for child protective and child care/child development services, the Head Start Collaboration Project, and public administration and oversight of domestic violence services. She brings over 30 years of private and public sector child welfare experience to her work, reflecting such disciplines as child protection, juvenile justice, mental health, developmental services, health care, domestic violence, and substance abuse treatment. Ms. Rollins also currently serves as the President of the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators.

Nancy Rollins advocates strongly for the development of an array of community-based services and supports to help reduce the dependency on more costly long-term institutional placements and assist individuals and families in gaining the skills necessary for their own self-determination. Early in her career, Ms. Rollins focused on community-based youth work, providing a variety of services and supports to adolescents. She now successfully leads a revitalized emphasis on serving youth in the New Hampshire child protection system. As a result, the New Hampshire DCYF has launched a new cadre of staff who specializes in adolescent work with an emphasis on moving increased numbers of older youth to permanency.

Notable about Ms. Rollins is her rare combination of knowledge and abilities, enabling her to balance the administration of the State's child welfare agency with a constant focus on the impact of the work of the DCYF on each individual child and family. Her skills in maintaining public awareness of child abuse and neglect foster a high degree of collaboration with community partners, as well as funding support from the New Hampshire State government.

Nancy Rollins has the ability to understand and explain every facet of the New Hampshire system of family support and intervention. Her unwavering dedication and inspiring leadership has brought genuine positive change to the well-being of children and families in New Hampshire.

New Jersey



Maura Somers Dughi

Chair, Prevention Subcommittee
New Jersey Task Force on
Child Abuse and Neglect
525 Valley Road
Watchung, NJ 07069

Maura Somers Dughi has been a tireless advocate on behalf of children for the past 28 years. From her college years to her current role as a member of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect and Chair of the Prevention Subcommittee, she persists as a voice and a force on behalf of abused and neglected children.

For four years following graduation from law school, Ms. Dughi worked for the Manhattan City Court on cases involving juvenile delinquents and victims of child abuse. Most notable for her were the images of children in need, in trouble, and in perilous situations. Seeing children she had helped in abuse cases appear before her in criminal offenses proved a sobering experience, one which shaped her belief in prevention and her current focus. Ms. Dughi's passion to prevent child abuse led to her work with Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey. Since 1987, she has been on virtually every committee, as well as served as president for six years. In 1993, she moved on to the national parent organization where she served as President of the Board.

Through her work with Prevent Child Abuse, as Chair of the Prevention Subcommittee of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse, and testimonies before the State Assembly and Senate, Ms. Dughi has been involved in policy changing efforts that give prevention the attention it deserves in the State of New Jersey. Her role in the area of prevention has helped to produce the Prevention Subcommittee's publication, *The Standards for Prevention Programs: Building Success through Family Support*. She also played a vital role in ensuring prevention to be a prominent factor in New Jersey's Child Welfare Reform Plan. To Maura Somers Dughi, preventing child abuse truly has become her life's work.



Mark S. Dias, M.D., F.A.A.P.
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KALEIDA HEALTH/CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF BUFFALO

The Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program

The Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program, one of the first primary prevention programs of its kind in the United States, was implemented by Kaleida Health/Children's Hospital of Buffalo through the support of New York's Children and Family Trust Fund. After six years, the program now documents a sustained and consistent 50 percent reduction in Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) occurrences in the eight-county pilot region.

Dr. Mark Dias, pediatric neurosurgeon and founder of this hospital-based program, saw the devastating effects of SBS in his practice. After the birth of his son whose incessant crying produced many a sleepless night, he began to realize the potential for parents to take their frustration out on their children and the need to take action to prevent it.

Initiated as a pilot program in eight counties in Western New York, the program objective has been to educate parents of all newborns about the dangers of violent shaking. The program distributes informational cards, a *video Portrait of Promise*, and a poster discussing the dangers of infant shaking, as well as offers alternative behavioral responses to infant crying and other family stresses. The materials are distributed to all hospitals that provide obstetrical services. All new parents sign a commitment statement documenting receipt of this information. A list of all deliveries and signed statements are analyzed, and the incidence of shaken baby syndrome is tracked before and after implementing the program each year. In 2000, the project expanded to the nine-county Finger Lakes region of New York.

Through the success of the Upstate New York Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program and the strong support of local advocates, a bill recently was signed by Governor Pataki institutionalizing the education program initiated by Kaleida Health/Children's Hospital of Buffalo, requiring all hospitals and birth centers to show the *video Portrait of Promise* to parents prior to discharge and asking parents to sign a consent form indicating they either viewed the video or declined to participate in the educational program. The legislation serves to enhance the efforts of existing programs to educate all parents in New York State about the dangers of shaking.

North Carolina



Jennifer Tolle Whiteside
Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse North
Carolina
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Suite 100 D
Raleigh, NC 27607

Jennifer Tolle Whiteside, a child advocate, leader, and change agent, has served as the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina since 1990. Under her leadership, the organization has grown from one employee to a thriving organization. Prior to North Carolina, she worked with the Louisiana Council on Child Abuse.

Ms. Whiteside has a master's degree and more than 26 years experience in the human services field. She serves as co-chair of the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force and on numerous State and legislative committees, including The Covenant with North Carolina's Children. Ms. Whiteside proved instrumental in bringing intensive home visitation services to North Carolina. A recognized leader in North Carolina's child abuse prevention efforts, Ms. Whiteside lives with her husband and seven-year-old daughter in Raleigh.

North Dakota



Kathy Wilson Mayer

Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota
418 E. Rosser Avenue
Suite 110
Bismarck, ND 58501

Kathy Wilson Mayer, the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, exemplifies the fervor necessary to be the catalyst for statewide child maltreatment prevention activities in North Dakota. She has held the position of Executive Director since 1995.

In her role as a member of North Dakota's multidisciplinary Alliance for Children's Justice, Ms. Mayer has trained child care providers, medical residents, nursing students, school counselors, child protection services social workers and staff from the Catholic Diocese about child sexual abuse and its prevention. She is a passionate partner with the State Child Protection Services in the prevention of child maltreatment, a State leader for the Circle of Parents Program and the Nurturing Parenting Program, an active member of the North Dakota Child Protection Services Task Force as well as the Board of the Bismarck Children's Advocacy Center. Ms. Mayer well deserves her reputation as a leader who gets things done!

**Maria Lawson**

Child Welfare Caseworker
Franklin County Children Services
855 W. Mound Street
Columbus, OH 43223

Maria Lawson, a caseworker and mentor for Franklin County Children's Services, works with adolescent youth and their parents. Typically, she deals with extreme parent-child conflicts, youths who demonstrate unruly and delinquent behavior, as well as the complex treatment plans for these young people with multiple problems and diagnoses.

As the mentor of her unit, Ms. Lawson helps train new workers in addition to managing her large caseload. She provides assistance during crisis situations and, when necessary, assumes a supervisory position.

The signature trait of Ms. Lawson is her ability to develop positive relationships with children and families. Her extremely calm manner enables her to achieve positive results with clients in the face of apathy, hostility, and distrust. She can inherit a case that another worker has not been able to handle and, remarkably, make real progress.

Maria Lawson approaches child protection from the perspective that children do not belong in foster care, treatment centers, or detention facilities. Tireless in her efforts to reunite families or to move older youth into emancipated or independent living situations, she consistently demonstrates initiative. She gives her all to the youth of her caseload. Whether in the courtroom, the school, the office, or the homes of the families she serves, Ms. Lawson presents a most positive public image of a professional in child protection.



Kathryn E. Simms, M.S.W.
Programs Administrator
Children and Family Services
Division
Oklahoma Department of
Human Services
P.O. Box 25352
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

Kathryn E. Simms has devoted her professional career to the protection of children and the improvement of the public child welfare system in Oklahoma. Beginning as a social worker for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services in 1976, she rose through the ranks, serving as a Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisor for many years before moving into administration and management.

As the State's CPS program manager, Ms. Simms constantly strove to develop clear, better, and more useful policy, procedures, and training to support and assist frontline CPS workers in the performance of their most difficult jobs. She proved instrumental in developing an alternative response system to allow workers to more effectively manage their workloads and to intervene with families in the most effective and least intrusive manner appropriate to the specific situation. She developed an administrative appeals process for families with confirmed findings of child abuse or neglect that did not become court involved.

In her role as administrator over Protection and Permanency, Ms. Simms pursued outsourcing of all preventive services in an effort to ensure that prevention efforts did not get neglected due to large numbers of foster care and court-involved cases. Once this was accomplished, she worked closely with the Oklahoma University Health Sciences Center to implement evidence-based research on the statewide preventive services model, seeking to understand the specific demographics and needs of the families served and to determine which services were most effective in meeting the needs of those families.

For the past 14 years, Ms. Simms has served as the State Liaison Officer to the Children's Bureau. She is considered to be the agency's expert on child abuse and neglect. After 28 years with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the driving force behind the work of Kathryn E. Simms continues to be improving outcomes for children and families and developing the capacity of Oklahoma's child welfare staff.



Stephanie Fogli-Terry
Administrator
Child Protective Services
Rhode Island Department of
Children, Youth and Families
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903

Stephanie Fogli-Terry, an Administrator in Rhode Island's Division of Child Protective Services, has over 17 years experience in professional child welfare, serving in a broad range of roles both as a line worker and supervisor. Her promotion two years ago to the position of Administrator was based on her years of outstanding work in both roles, as well as her clear ability as a leader and innovator in support of best practices in child welfare.

In her current role as Administrator, Ms. Fogli-Terry courageously displays an unwavering commitment to family-centered and community-based intervention, never losing sight of the Division's mandate regarding the safety and well-being of children and youth. During a period of change as to what exemplifies best practice in child welfare, she has worked diligently to educate herself and the entire Division about emergent best practices. More than an educator, Ms. Fogli-Terry utilizes the highest level of leadership, extraordinary intelligence, and an innate ability to work effectively within and across the client and provider systems in Rhode Island. She earns the trust and respect of her peers; Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) management; and, most importantly, the clients she serves.

Important personal qualities complement her work performance. Ms. Fogli-Terry has an infectious sense of humor that enables her to express her position and lead others in a supportive but firm way. Her generosity of time and effort with her staff continues to amplify the respect accorded her. Ultimately, of all these outstanding qualities, the most compelling and appreciated is the deep and enduring compassion she shows to every person she serves and every person with whom she works.

Throughout Rhode Island, the admirable professional and special personal qualities of Ms. Fogli-Terry are recognized in her every day interactions. Her dedication, comportment, and hard work have served to change directly the face of how DCYF moves through and functions within the community. She continues to challenge herself and to learn about ways to raise the bar in exploring best practices. Stephanie Fogli-Terry is an extraordinary administrator, an important leader in systems change, and a tireless advocate in the difficult task of translating child welfare theory into actual practice, which means forever walking the tenuous line between the preservation of family and the protection of children.

South Dakota



Mary Livermont
Program Specialist
Department of Social Services
Child Protection Services
700 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501-2291

Mary Livermont, the Protective Services Program Specialist for the Division of Child Protection Services of the South Dakota Department of Social Services since 1998, began her career with Child Protection Services in 1985 as a social worker. In the interim, she held the positions of Child Protection Services Supervisor and Training Program Specialist. Her knowledge of child welfare and commitment to the work of the Department of Social Services is evident in her ongoing effort to improve practice in South Dakota and, consequently, to benefit the families and children the Department serves.

Ms. Livermont has assisted in the Child and Family Services Reviews, as well as been a team leader for the Safety Workgroup formed to develop and oversee the implementation of the safety section of South Dakota's Program Improvement Plan (PIP). South Dakota's Child Protection Services has made significant strides in efforts to improve safety services to children and families due to Ms. Livermont's leadership. Results of the PIP Safety Workshop's efforts include completion of a recurrence study; implementation of a specialized intake system; improved policies related to intake, screening, and response, which helped improve timeliness; and a collaborative effort to create a pilot program that involves alcohol and drug counselors at emergency custody hearings.

Additionally, Ms. Livermont assumed the tasks of providing technical assistance to staff doing quality assurance reviews regarding the safety evaluation and safety assessment processes of Child Protection Services. One of two staff members to facilitate a collaborative effort between Child Protection Services and the core community alcohol and drug providers, she also participated in the Court Improvement Projects granting process for the Court Appointed Special Advocate program and reviewed grants for United Way.



Carolyn Rodriguez

Director, Texas State Strategy
Casey Family Programs
5201 E. Riverside Drive
Austin, TX 78741

Twenty years ago, Carolyn Rodriguez opened the Austin field office for Casey Family Programs and became its first Division Director, assuming responsibility for the development of Casey policies and procedures in the Austin area. To enhance services to children in long-term foster care, Ms. Rodriguez established excellent relationships with the local Child Protective Services (CPS) offices and built the Casey Family Programs Austin Division into a model program. Her efforts resulted in the recruitment of caring families to provide foster care services to the children in the permanent managing conservatorship of CPS. By participating in the Community Resource Council, composed of local stakeholders and community leaders, she also proved a driving force in mobilizing the community to care for foster children.

In 1997, Ms. Rodriguez became a Regional Vice President for Casey Family Programs Southern Region, which comprised four divisions in Austin, San Antonio, Oklahoma City, and Baton Rouge. As vice president, she emphasized the sharing of best practices issues among her divisions and was the first to implement a quality assurance system within the Casey regions.

As the Casey Family Programs began to refocus their energy from direct delivery of service to systems improvements, Ms. Rodriguez became the leader of the Texas State Strategy, a collaborative effort between Casey Family Programs and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). It is on the strength of her personal relationships garnered over twenty years plus her knowledge, enthusiasm, and leadership abilities that the Texas State Strategy Collaboration was launched. The work of Ms. Carolyn Rodriguez and the Texas State Strategy has brought about innovations within the CPS program that include family group decision making, kinship caregiver supports, and better preparation of youth emancipating from foster care. In 2005, Ms. Rodriguez and the Texas State Strategy collaboration intend to continue current efforts and to expand its focus to education issues of children and youth in foster care and the disproportionate numbers of children and youth of color in the child welfare system.

Ms. Rodriguez is a leader and mentor in the field of child welfare. Her dedication and contributions made possible the improvement of systems that affect the lives of thousands of children and youth in care.



Eric Jenkins, C.S.W.

Program Manager
Independent Living Coordinator
State of Utah
Division of Child and Family
Services
1106 N. 1200 W.
Orem, UT 84057

Eric Jenkins is a Child Welfare Caseworker Supervisor with the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) in the State of Utah. He began work at DCFS approximately 10 years ago after completing his baccalaureate degree and gaining work experience with a private agency that provided group care for youth in the custody of the State. He devoted eight years to working with a caseload of youth involved with the Independent Living Program and designed strategies to facilitate a successful transition for youth exiting foster care. Mr. Jenkins has become an expert in working with the adolescent population in DCFS custody.

Mr. Jenkins has represented the Western Region of the State in key steering committees, including the Independent Living Program Steering Committee and the Out of Home Steering Committee. His leadership as the chairperson of these committees facilitated implementing better practice guidelines to help caseworkers to understand the importance of working with youth within the context of adolescent development and to identify the key goals for DCFS to focus on with youth in foster care to promote their ability to live successfully as adults.

A key player in planning and implementing the Transition to Adult Living Initiative that was kicked off in November 2004, Mr. Jenkins continues with major reform strategies for building a community-based network of support for youth who will leave foster care as young adults. This initiative has incorporated the concepts that Mr. Jenkins has researched and identified as critical to improving practices in working with youth.

Eric Jenkins is responsible for system improvements in the Western Region that are leading the State in implementing the reform strategies of the Transition to Adult Living design team. He has built strong community partnerships with others who care about youth and has successfully implemented a teamwork approach that has youth taking care of their lives while involved with DCFS and receiving system support to help them prepare for their transition from foster care. This program developed by Mr. Jenkins and the caseworkers he supervises for the Western Region is regarded as a model for the rest of the State.

**Gyla Dziobek**

Child Protection Social Work
Supervisor
Family Services Division
Department for Children and
Families
100 Main Street
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Newport, VT 05855

Gyla Dziobek, a Social Worker Investigator for the Newport District Office for the past six years, is superb at her job. She engages the most challenging perpetrators and victims, creating an atmosphere of support and trust that allows victims the safety often required to disclose abuse. A highly skilled investigator, Ms. Dziobek can quickly and accurately assess situations and make appropriate referrals. She works closely with other community service providers and makes teaming and collaboration a cornerstone of her daily interactions.

Ms. Dziobek allocates a large portion of her time to community prevention and intervention services for children who are at risk of coming into custody and families who are struggling to maintain their children in a safe and nurturing home. She serves as an active member and leader of the Newport Resource Team that prioritizes family-based services to those community members who require home-based skills sets to achieve success. The prevention and intervention activities that Ms. Dziobek promotes in her day-to-day job reflect strongly her commitment to achieving positive outcomes for children and families in the Newport area.

A phenomenal member of the Newport team, her enthusiasm, sense of humor, and warm disposition make it a joy to work with Gyla Dziobek. An investigator who treats clients and colleagues with the utmost respect, she, consequently, receives the same in return. Ms. Dziobek strives tirelessly on behalf of the children and families she serves to achieve the positive outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being.

Virgin Islands



Roland L. Benjamin

Executive Director
Virgin Islands Behavioral Services
P.O. Box 864
Frederiksted
St. Croix, VI 00841

Roland L. Benjamin, a licensed social worker for forty years, describes his experiences with at-risk youth and families in the Virgin Islands and New York as rich and rewarding work. Currently, he serves as the Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Behavioral Services, assuming responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures and the oversight of day-to-day operations of agency programs and activities. Previously, when Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Commission on Youth from 1971 to 1988, he planned, developed, and implemented an after-school and summer youth employment program.

As a frontline worker and supervisor, he provided direct and quality services to abused and neglected children, as well as to their families. In his current position as Director of Behavioral Services, he emphasizes the need for social service providers, parents, and caregivers to work collectively to protect abused and neglected children and to assure that the services provided respond to their needs.



Joann Hess Grayson, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology
James Madison University
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MSC 7401
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Joann Hess Grayson, a clinical psychologist and professor at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, serves as the editor of the *Virginia Child Protection Newsletter*. Dr. Grayson has over twenty-four years of experience as an educator, researcher, therapist, forensic evaluator, and volunteer in the field of child abuse and neglect.

Dr. Grayson helped to establish the Foster Children's Special Needs Fund for her local community, designed and coordinated a needs assessment to create a local service agency for victims of sexual assault, and volunteers her time to supervise a tutoring and mentoring program for special needs children. She has forged community partnerships resulting in approximately 100 James Madison University students working with community agencies to provide over 7,500 hours of service each year. She has served on numerous local and State-level committees, councils, and tasks forces, addressing a range of child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and mental health issues, including the Board of Virginia's chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America. Dr. Grayson has provided numerous classes, presentations, and workshops for professionals, students, and community groups focusing on child abuse and related issues.

Dr. Grayson has provided distinguished service on the Governor's Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect from 1983-1993, including four years as chairperson. She was the lead author for a report based on a series of state-wide public hearings held by the board. The report guided the Board's agenda for five years.

For over 23 years and 71 issues, Dr. Grayson has edited the *Virginia Child Protection Newsletter*, also serving as lead researcher and primary writer. The intent of the newsletter, which is distributed to approximately 12,500 individuals, agencies, and organizations in Virginia and across the nation, is to educate and update child protective services workers and related professionals on specific topics in the areas of child maltreatment, family violence, and child welfare.

Joann Hess Grayson lives with her husband Phil and two daughters on a farm in Harrisburg, Virginia, accompanied by a menagerie of horses, cats, rare-breed chickens, and goats.



Kyle E. Yasuda, M.D.

Harborview Medical Center
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Kyle E. Yasuda, a leading child advocate in the State of Washington, is a practicing pediatrician at the Harborview Medical Center — the only Level I adult and pediatric trauma center in the State. A Clinical Professor, he teaches at the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Washington, School of Medicine. Previously, Dr. Yasuda served as head of the Pediatric Section of the Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle.

Immediate past president of the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Dr. Yasuda also serves as a member of the Governor's Commission on Early Learning, the Washington State Council on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Board of the Children's Alliance. Last year, Dr. Yasuda received the Healthy Mother, Healthy Babies Organizational Leadership Award. He is married and the father of a four-year-old daughter.



Mary Ellen Griffith
Executive Director
ChildLaw Services, Inc.
1505 Princeton Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740

A tireless advocate on behalf of children, Mary Ellen Griffith works to prevent child abuse every day. She is an attorney who established her own firm, ChildLaw Services, frequently providing pro bono representation to child victims who need legal services and an advocate. Ms. Griffith volunteers her time to provide support for a teen court in Mercer County and serves as a board member of the Mercer County Family Resource Network. Additionally, she is a member of the Governor's Citizens Advisory Council, a group established to advise the Governor and his Cabinet on policy and best practices affecting children and families.

Ms. Griffith is a recognized pioneer and an aggressive leader in the development of West Virginia's Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), which provide a one-stop option to bring together multidisciplinary teams in a coordinated response to help and to protect abused children. She is a founder of the West Virginia Child Advocacy Center Network, created to unite local CACs as well as to provide technical assistance and training support, and travels throughout the State to promote and encourage the development of CACs.

The enthusiasm, effort, and persuasive abilities of Mary Ellen Griffith inspire others. She skillfully unites individuals, civic leaders, public agencies, elected officials, private organizations, and community groups in collaborations to prevent child abuse and neglect in West Virginia.



Gerald R. Huber

Human Services Director
La Crosse County Human Services
300 N. Fourth Street
La Crosse, WI 54602

Jerry Huber has served as Director of the La Crosse County Human Services Department since August 1998. Under his leadership, children and family services were redesigned to deliver a seamless array of services for children and families dealing with complex issues and multiple service systems. Mr. Huber also implemented several strategies to improve the services his Department offers, including the use of mediation in CHIPS cases and innovative approaches to involving foster parents in treatment planning.

In an effort to more effectively identify the needs of children and families throughout the county, Mr. Huber developed the Family Policy Board. A public/private partnership, the Board coordinates and communicates on a wide range of child and family issues to better address their unmet needs.

Currently, Mr. Huber is involved in developing an Alternative Response to Child Protective Service. This response focuses on preventing children from entering the Child Protective Service (CPS) system by identifying the needs of the family and providing appropriate services to address those needs and minimize safety risks. It involves a voluntary and strength-based approach to resolving the issues that brought the family to the attention of the CPS system.

At this time, Mr. Huber is active in the implementation of Wisconsin's Program Enhancement Plan (PEP) as a member of the Executive Steering Committee and PEP Implementation Team. Wisconsin's PEP Implementation Team is guiding the planning and implementation of child welfare program strategies at the State and local level and strengthening the cross systems response to improving the lives of children and families.

Jerry Huber has been working in family and children's services at the public level since 1985 and has made significant contributions to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to improving the lives of abused and/or neglected children. His expertise and knowledge often is sought when policy or practice issues arise. Jerry Huber provides the leadership, creativity, and vision that prove essential in ensuring the safety, well-being, and permanency of Wisconsin's children and families.

**Steve Vajda**

Social Services Consultant
Trust Fund Manager
Wyoming Department of Family
Services
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Cheyenne, WY 82002

Steve Vajda, a consummate advocate on behalf of Wyoming's maltreated children, currently serves as the Program Manager for the Wyoming Children's Trust Fund Board and the Deputy Compact Administrator for the Interstate Placement of Children. His years of public service to the State of Wyoming number 36.

His long relationship with the Children's Trust Fund Board began in April 1994. With Mr. Vajda's initiative and leadership, the Trust Fund Board receives Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) funds, which have facilitated upgrading community child abuse and neglect prevention programs throughout Wyoming.

As a child advocate, Mr. Vajda diligently has assisted communities in developing their abuse and neglect programs. His intent is to build grassroots support for prevention activities and to educate the public regarding the need to give child protection top priority. Communities across Wyoming rely on his grant writing expertise to assist them in procuring new funding sources to enhance their prevention programs. During his decade as manager of the Trust Fund, his conscientious efforts have positioned the Trust Fund into a major resource for community child abuse and neglect prevention programs.

In addition to serving as a director of the Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming Board from 1997 through 2003, Mr. Vajda has participated actively in many of the Board functions relating to the prevention of child abuse. Currently, he is serving his second term as an at-large Board member of the National Alliance of Children's Trust Funds, assuming a most active role in this prestigious organization.

Other volunteer activities include membership in the Cheyenne Wyoming Kiwanis Club, which is known for raising funds for children's programs including those that prevent abuse and neglect of children, and ongoing participation in various fundraising activities for the nationwide network of Shriners Crippled Children's Hospitals.

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