

InterConnections

linking the ties that bind

Issue No. 7
March
2008

State Coordinator's Message

Hello, everyone! I am so pleased to provide my first official State Coordinator's message in my first issue of *InterConnections*! As you all know by now, I was hired as the newest ANCAC State Coordinator in late December and began my new position on January 7, 2008.

I like to think that I have hit the ground running, with several important issues springing up that demanded immediate attention from the State Office materializing in my first two weeks on the job. In the midst of dealing with these critical policy issues, JJ and I managed to get the State Office moved from our former home at the Alabama State Trooper's Association to our new space in downtown Montgomery at 817 S. Court Street, Suite 301. Please stop by and say hello if you happen to be in Montgomery!

JJ and I attended the NRCA Summit in Birmingham last month and are gearing up to attend the 24th Annual Symposium on Child Abuse in Huntsville this month. We will also be scheduling some site visits over the next few months so we can see the work of ANCAC member CACs firsthand. ANCAC has applied for a capacity building grant from the Alabama Civil Justice Foundation to complete the strategic planning process initiated by the ANCAC Long-Range Planning Committee.

Again, thank you all so much for giving me the chance to serve as your State Coordinator. I am very excited about being selected for this great opportunity and I am genuinely looking forward to what the future holds for ANCAC!

— Amy Hinton

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Just to remind you...

- **March 17-20: 24th National Symposium on Child Abuse in Huntsville, AL sponsored by NCAC**
- **April 10: ANCAC quarterly reports are due to the state office**



ANCAC Board Meetings 2008

Executive Committee meetings begin at 3 p.m. at The Network office unless otherwise stated.

Board meetings begin at 10 a.m. at The Network office unless otherwise stated.

Monday, Jan. 14

Tuesday, Jan. 15

Monday, April 21

Tuesday, April 22

Monday, July 22

Tuesday, July 23

Monday, Sept. 22

Tuesday, Sept. 23

State Legislative Update — March 2008

The Alabama Legislature has received information from the Executive Budget Office and the Legislative Fiscal Office regarding available funds for the FY 2009 budgets. With the Governor's budget office claiming more available revenue for FY09 than the LFO projects will be available, lawmakers have decided to postpone work on state budgets until the second (or possibly third) week in April. This will permit the Alabama Department of Revenue to post receipts from the most recent tax

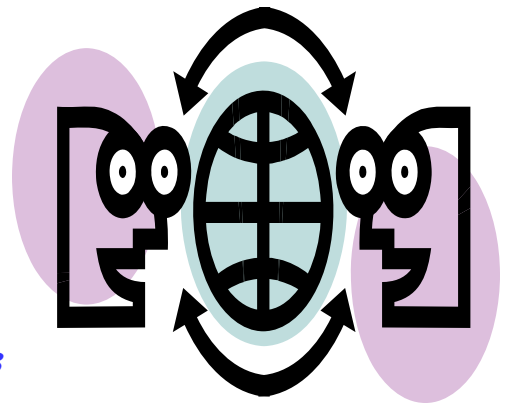


quarter and will give lawmakers a more realistic idea of how to deal with projected budget shortfalls with the most current available numbers. Regardless, the growth in the General Fund is down more than 10%, while growth in the Education Trust Fund has grown by 3.75% over FY 08. For ANCAC and other non-education agencies, this means that level funding for FY09 is the best case scenario. Funding bills aside, the vast majority of legislative activity is in the House of Representatives, with the Senate still gridlocked by infighting and partisan dispute.

Continuing Your Education in the Workplace

Continuing Education Credits will be available for nurses, social workers, law enforcement professionals, attorneys and mental health treatment professionals at the upcoming following events. Please use the contact information below for registration and any additional information you need:

- ***9th National Conference on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention in New Orleans, LA (Aug. 26-28, 2008)*** — This conference is sponsored by NCAC and information will be online soon.
- ***National CAC Training Center Courses offered in 2008*** — Tuition assistance may be available from Southern Regional CAC to offset costs for CAC members. The courses are: Forensic Interviewing of Children, Advanced Forensic Interviewing, Forensic Evaluation, Advanced Forensic Evaluation, Family & Victim Advocacy 101, and Spanish Speaking Forensic Interviewing. You can visit the NCAC website at <http://www.nationalcac.org> for more information. ***Please refer to the guidelines from the ANCAC State Office regarding requesting letters of support for tuition assistance applications. If you do not have a copy of these guidelines, please contact the ANCAC State Office.*



Network Neighborhood News

Children First Trust Fund – Funds were finally received and disseminated in March

ANCAC submitted the following reports or applications to various entities in the past month:

Civil Justice Foundation: Capacity Building Grant application (2008), **March, 3**

Recent activities and meetings:

SRCAC & ANCAC: Cym Doggett, Susan Martin, Amy Hinton & JJ, training meeting, **Feb. 15**

District Attorney's office: DA Michael Jackson, Debra Brock, and Nikea Moore, meeting, **Mar., 12**

United Voices: meeting, **Feb. 12, Feb. 26, Mar. 11 & Mar. 25**

Alabama Dept. of Public Safety Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Program: Lt. Karl Youngblood, ICAC enforcement officers, DPS Communications Director Martha Earnhardt, meeting **Mar. 27**

Pilot Project: Central Alabama Regional CAC (Selma)



Many of you may already know that Central Alabama Regional CAC in Selma received a Technical Assistance site visit from the ANCAC State Office on March 12 to help them re-establish and reorganize the CAC after a period of logistical difficulties. Former CARCAC Executive Director Jessica Hope has resigned her position to accept a Family Advocate position in the office of District Attorney Michael Jackson. The ANCAC family wishes Ms. Hope all the best in her new job. Mr. Jackson has asked to overhaul the CARCAC Board of Directors, which had become inactive, and relocate the CAC into new space. Ms. Hope's successor, Nikea Moore, is a resident of Perry County and has a

background working in child advocacy, child welfare and non-profit organizations. She is anxious to get CARCAC up and running again as soon as possible and may be calling on some of the Executive Directors in the more established CACs for guidance and mentoring over the next several months. The ANCAC family also extends a warm welcome to Ms. Moore as she embarks on her new professional journey!

2008 River City Thunder Rally Fundraiser to Benefit Morgan County CAC

The Morgan County CAC will be having its annual fundraiser 2008 River City Thunder Rally on Saturday, April 19, 2008 at the Decatur Elks Lodge, 2625 Centron Drive, SW, Decatur. The ride begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m. In addition to the 100-mile motorcycle ride through the Bankhead Forrest, the Liberty Bike built by Orange County Choppers will be on display as well as other custom-built motorcycles. BBQ plate lunches will be available for purchase. We are also having a silent auction following the motorcycle ride as well as door prizes and a local band. Cost per bike is \$20 (additional rider + \$10) and each participant gets a free t-shirt and 10 door prize tickets. For more information visit www.rivercitythunderrally.com

Liberty Bike owner Rick Stocks with cast members of TLC's popular TV show "Orange County Choppers," who built the Liberty Bike.



In Memoriam: Kathy Hill

The ANCAC family was informed that former Escambia County Child Advocacy Center Executive Director Kathy Hill passed away on March 8, 2008, following a battle with pancreatic cancer and subsequent complications. Kathy was very much loved and respected by her peers within the Network. She will certainly be missed by everyone who worked with her over the years.

Letters of condolence and expressions of sympathy can be sent to Kathy's sister, Ms. Charlotte Hill, at 407 Alco Drive, Brewton, AL 36426. Please keep the Hill family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.



In the Field: Southeast Alabama CAC (Dothan)

On December 7, 2008 the Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center hosted a “Lunch ‘n Learn” for multidisciplinary team members from Dale, Geneva, Henry, and Houston counties to review the protocols, interagency agreements, and investigative guidelines for child abuse investigations. Butch Binford, Chief Trial Attorney for the Henry-Houston County District Attorney’s Office, was the presenter. The CAC has signed protocols with multidisciplinary agencies in Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston Counties to coordinate the prevention, education, information, reporting, investigative, prosecutorial, and treatment components of the sexual abuse and severe physical abuse of children. By establishing a unified, multidisciplinary system, child victims and their non-offending family members are able to access services that will promote their well-being.

During this meeting, 62 professionals from the Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston County Department of Human Resources; Dale County Sheriff’s Office; Daleville Police Department; Dale-Geneva County District Attorney’s Office; Dothan Police Department; Flowers Hospital; Geneva Police Department; Henry-Houston County District Attorney’s Office; Henry County Sheriff’s Office; Houston County Sheriff’s Office; Samson Police Department; Slocomb Police Department; and Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center met together to review past accomplishments and to make sure that the multidisciplinary team is working together for the best interests of child victims.

*Southeast AL CAC’s
multidisciplinary team.
Executive Director, Sherryl Walker
bottom right*



Beginning March 1, 2008, the Southeast Alabama CAC also kicked off a series of Blue Ribbon Month activities to raise awareness of the issues of child abuse and neglect prevention and to promote awareness of the services offered through the CAC model. The activities include a scheduled Open House at the CAC, various community promotions targeting child safety, education and outreach activities, and faith-based outreach activities.

News from the Field: The Child Advocacy Center, Inc. (Mobile, AL)

On March 3, 2008, the Mobile CAC hosted a well-attended news conference and large reception following to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the CAC opening on March 1, 1988! The Center was incorporated in October of 1985 after a group visited Huntsville and observed Bud Cramer's National CAC. Immediately afterwards, MDT meetings began to staff cases at a private attorney's office who was president of the first board. With no funds and just dreams, the Board began fund raising. They bought the current facility in March 1987 and spent one year completely remodeling and renovating the entire structure.

Pat Guyton was hired as Executive Director in January 1988 and held a news conference on March 1, 1988 to officially announce that the Mobile CAC was open! At that time, 4 people worked in the CAC — one police officer, one assistant district attorney, an administrative assistant/bookkeeper, and Pat. Today, the CAC houses 28 professionals from 7 different agencies, including the Mobile Police Department, the Prichard Police Department, the Mobile County Sheriff's Office, the Mobile County Department of Human Resources, the Mobile County District Attorney's Office, Wilmer Hall Children's Home, and CAC staff.

In 1988, the Mobile CAC had 240 visits. In 1989, the number jumped to 420. Since 1988, children have come to the Mobile CAC 62,208 times for a wide range of services from the professionals who have worked here over the past two decades.

The Mobile CAC also announced a series of special events over the next year to commemorate their 20 years of Our

L to R: Mobile County DHR Director Rose Johnson, CAC Board President Terry Ankerton, CAC Board member Kimi Oaks, CAC Executive Director Pat Guyton



ANCAC Staff Attends Leon Prince Hearing

ANCAC State Office staff attended an administrative hearing on Friday March 28, 2008 aimed at clearing up legal confusion surrounding the registration requirements of the Alabama Community Notification Act. The hearing, which was open to the public, was held at the state Personnel Department at 9:30 am. ANCAC staff distributed a prepared press release in support of the position held by Attorney General Troy King and one of Prince's victims, Alison Black Cornelius, that Prince was indeed legally required to register under the provisions of the Alabama Community Notification Act. At issue was whether Prince, who was convicted in 1991 of the crime of "carnal knowledge of a child" for his sexual abuse of Cornelius as a child, was legally required to register as a convicted sex offender under the Alabama Community Notification Act as the crime "carnal knowledge of a child" no longer exists in the Alabama code. That crime has since been incorporated into a more specific list of crimes against children that do require offender registration. King noted that a resolution to this issue was extremely important, as 297 other convicted sex offenders could potentially challenge their required registration under the Community Notification law should Prince prevail in his claim that he falls outside the registration requirements. The judge ruled against Prince and noted that he does fall under the requirements of the law.

Upon his conviction in 1991, Prince made national headlines, largely because of the amount of time that had passed between the crime and the trial. Cornelius was 7 when she was raped and 26 when she testified at Prince's trial. After news of the trial was publicized, authorities said more than 50 other people came forward claiming to have been abused by Prince as children, but none would testify against him. Prince was sentenced to 30 years in prison, but was released after 15 years for good behavior. In 2007, Prince was the subject of a feature article in a Frazer United Methodist Church newsletter that said he was volunteering for the Montgomery church with children at the state's Mount Meigs Youth Center. Cornelius saw the article, told church officials about his background and told state officials he wasn't on the sex offender registry. Mount Meigs officials failed to conduct a required background check. Frazer UMC officials said they typically conduct background checks on their own volunteers, but count on the state to run checks on volunteers they send to prisons and the youth center.

Our mission is possible...



The Alabama Network of Children's Advocacy Centers promotes the multidisciplinary process in fostering an abuse-free society for Alabama's children and supports the development of the children's advocacy center model through public awareness, training and networking.

Adopted by the ANCAC Board of Directors on May 2nd, 1997

Testimonials

It is extremely important that none of us lose sight of the true impact our work can have on families in crisis and on children in need. Therefore, I want to use this space to share testimonials received by ANCAC Member CACs from real families helped by our services. Thanks to Sherryl Walker from Southeast Alabama CAC in Dothan (Ph: 334.671.1779) for submitting this testimonial.

Dear Mrs. Walker:

We would like to express our appreciation to you and your staff for the care you gave our daughter during our family's time of need. I must be honest and tell you that we were somewhat unsure about trusting people considering the circumstances that brought us to you. We found ourselves in a whirlwind of sorts, and it was difficult at first to even get our bearings and to begin to know how to help our daughter.

At our initial meeting, our fears and concerns were laid to rest. Each time we came to the CAC we were welcomed as if we were old friends. Your intake staff proved to be very professional and yet very caring. I am sure it is easy for any job to become routine, but we never felt that we were just an appointment on anyone's calendar. It is evident that the staff you have employed have a love for children and their families. Please forgive me for not remembering the young man's name and young lady's names at that initial meeting, for we were not at our best. However, please thank them for us!

Our daughter's therapist was kind to her and she was able to connect with her and work through some of her issues. We also appreciated having someone from your office be with us when we had the court hearing. Many times we were nervous and had questions, but you and the CAC staff always put our fears to rest.

We have walked a path that we certainly did not expect to have to travel, but God has been so good to us. He has sent us caring people to help us find our way, and for that we will be forever grateful. Please count yourselves among those we hold in highest esteem! We will certainly look for opportunities in the future to give back to the CAC, because you all have been such a blessing to us. Also, feel free to call us if you ever need "envelope stuffers" or the like!

Again, thank you so much for answering the call to be advocates for hurting children and their families.

Sincerely,

A Thankful Mother