

InterConnections

State Coordinator's Message



June has been full of activity ! I was lucky enough to receive assistance from SRCAC to attend the National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference Washington, D.C. For the very first time, there was a State Chapter track offered and it was exciting to hear about the various similarities and differences between state chapter organizations. Several ANCAC members sent representatives and a wonderful (and productive!) time was had by all.

JJ has been hard at work crafting a training partnership proposal between ANCAC and the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) staff at the state Department of Public Safety that can be funded by a technology grant from the Verizon Foundation. I have high hopes that our project proposal will be funded! JJ has also been busy with our transition to the new online reporting format, which is intended to simplify the reporting process for everyone.

Dr. Richard Davy and I have kept busy with site visits all month long, visiting a total of six CACs across the state. All in all, it has been very interesting and illuminating to visit each CAC and see how each center is similar and how each is unique. These site visits have given me a lot of ideas for internal research and surveys that can be used to share information and best practices among ANCAC's member centers.

Next month, of course, is also a busy time for the state office. Two MDT Team Trainings are scheduled for unserved and/or underserved areas of the state — Walker and Dallas Counties, respectively — as well as the 3rd Quarter Executive Committee and Board of Directors meeting. See you soon!

— Amy Hinton

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Reminders...

- **July 15: Walker County MDT Training**
- **July 21: Dallas County MDT Training**
- **July 22: ANCAC Executive Committee meeting & Board meeting**

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.

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 10 a.m.

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 1 p.m.

State Legislative Update — June 2008

Both the Regular and Special Legislative sessions for 2008 have adjourned. However, there is still some discussion that Gov. Bob Riley may call a second Special Legislative Session sometime in July or August to address an economic development incentive package to lure Volkswagen to Limestone County.



For a time, it appeared as if Alabama were in a strong position to land a VW manufacturing facility in Limestone County, in northeast Alabama. However, discussions seem to have stalled, leading many to speculate that Alabama was no longer interested in competing for the VW plant. State economic development officials were quick to dispute this assessment and assured the public through the media that Alabama was definitely still interested in landing a VW plant. While it is unlikely that Gov. Riley will call another special session this year, it would be necessary to do so if Volkswagen decided they wanted to locate their new manufacturing facility here. Volkswagen is expected to make a decision sometime in early July regarding locating a new manufacturing plant in Alabama.

Site Visit: National CAC in Huntsville

Dr. Richard Davy and Amy Hinton visited the National CAC in Huntsville for a site visit on the afternoon of June 20. The site visit began with a short meeting between Dr. Davy and two National CAC Board members regarding the overall operations and governance of the CAC. Dr. Davy also discussed clinical operations with the new Clinical Director and with CAC Director Chris Newlin. After hearing about various growth and development plans for the National CAC and being briefed on the status of current programs and services offered at National CAC, Dr. Davy and Amy Hinton toured the facility. National CAC is a complex comprised of a main administrative building, a more private and secluded building where children and families receive services, administrative space for Southern Regional CAC and state-of-the-art training spaces of varying sizes. On the day of our visit, the CAC staff were busy preparing for a cookout and family celebration later in the evening. The facility is very nice and equipped with spacious meeting rooms and office space. Dr. Davy and Amy Hinton completed the site visit with an observation tour of the CAC to assess standards compliance.



Network News, Activities and Events

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

Verizon Foundation grant: description, **In progress—due August 1**

Recent ANCAC activities and meetings:

Alabama Civil Justice Foundation grantee press conference (Montgomery): Amy Hinton & JJ Moody, **June 4**

Owens House CAC site visit (Columbiana): Amy Hinton & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 6**

Prescott House CAC site visit (Birmingham): Amy Hinton & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 6**

East Alabama CAC site visit (Opelika): Amy Hinton & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 9**

Tri-County CAC site visit (Dadeville): Amy Hinton & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 9**

ANCAC Long Range Planning Committee called meeting (Birmingham): Amy Hinton, JJ Moody, Timothy Birt, Jerry Renno, Mary Murphy and Paul Young, **June 13**

NCA Leadership Conference (Washington, DC): Amy Hinton, Stephanie Jackson, Chris Newlin, Jana Conlee, **June 15-18**

Hyundai Diversity Team clothing drive outreach call: JJ Moody, Hyundai diversity team, **June 16****

DeKalb County CAC site visit: Lori Lumsden & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 20**

DHR State Quality Assurance Committee meeting (Clanton): Amy Hinton, **June 20**

National CAC site visit (Huntsville): Amy Hinton & Dr. Richard Davy, **June 20**

ANCAC Executive Committee conference call: Amy Hinton & ANCAC Executive Committee, **June 25**

Legislative strategy conference call: Amy Hinton, JJ Moody, Emilyn Gipson, Susan Martin, & James Dupree, **June 30**

****The clothing collected by the Hyundai Diversity Team is at the State Office and can be taken back to any CAC that may be able to use the clothes for needy families seeking services. Any clothing not claimed at the 3rd Quarter Board of Directors meeting will be donated to the Faith Rescue Mission and/or other charities that have clothing needs.**

Site visit: East Alabama CAC in Opelika

Dr. Richard Davy and Amy Hinton visited the East Alabama CAC in Opelika for a site visit on the morning of June 9. The first thing about East Alabama CAC that a visitor will notice is the vibrant and colorful murals that decorate the walls throughout the facility. Even the administrative offices and common areas of the CAC are decorated with flowers, angels, clouds and an assortment of whimsical figures. A former East Alabama CAC Board member is an artist and donated her time and talents to beautify the center and make it an inviting and comforting place. The facility is very child friendly, as well as being large and spacious. Dr. Davy interviewed the Board President and two MDT Team members to discuss the overall operation of the CAC. The site visit was concluded with an observation tour of the facility.



Site Visit: Tri-County CAC in Dadeville

Dr. Richard Davy and Amy Hinton visited the Tri-County CAC in Dadeville for a site visit on the afternoon of June 9. Tri-County CAC has three locations — one in Wedowee serving Randolph County, one in LaFayette serving Chambers County and the location in Dadeville serving Tallapoosa County. According to CAC Director Tim Birt, the three sites combined have a sufficient number of cases for one CAC, but the large geographic area from which those cases come is too large to rely on one facility to provide needed services to families. Staff at Tri-County travel from county to county within their service region on an as-needed basis to conduct forensic interviews, counseling and therapy for child victims and non-offending family members. Dr. Davy interviewed two Board members and a two MDT Team members from the local DHR office to discuss the overall operation of the CAC. The site visit was concluded with an observation tour of the facility.



Site visit: DeKalb CAC in Fort Payne

Dr. Richard Davy and Lori Lumsden of the ANCAC Standards Committee visited the DeKalb County CAC in Fort Payne for a site visit on June 20. The DeKalb County CAC provides forensic interviewing and family advocate services, individual counseling for child victims, therapy for non-offending family members, therapy for at-risk students in the DeKalb County public school system, parenting education classes and child abuse prevention training to children in both second and fifth grades in the DeKalb county public school system. The CAC is warm and welcoming with beautiful, serene décor and engaging therapeutic spaces. Dr. Davy and Ms. Lumsden met with members of the CAC Board of Directors for a status report before completing the site visit with an observation tour of the CAC to assess standards compliance.



NCA Leadership Conference 2008 in Washington D.C.

On June 16, Amy Hinton traveled to Washington, D.C., to attend the 2008 National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference. Her attendance was made possible by a generous travel assistance stipend from Southern Regional CAC and a tuition scholarship from the National Children's Alliance. Other ANCAC members attending the conference were Escambia County CAC Director Stephanie Jackson, National CAC Director Chris Newlin and Child Protect CAC Forensic Interviewer Jana Conlee. The conference schedule included a new state chapter track, which Amy attended on Monday, and various breakout sessions for CAC Directors and employees. Attendees also got to meet the new Executive Director of NCA, Ms. Teresa Huizar.

Tuesday was "Hill Day," and the conference schedule was open in the afternoon to permit attendees to lobby their respective Representatives and Senators and to make them aware of the great child advocacy work happening "in the trenches." Amy Hinton and Stephanie Jackson spent the entire day on Tuesday visiting all of Alabama's House members and lobbying on behalf of the CACs in their respective districts, as well as meeting with all of the Alabama attendees in Sen. Richard Shelby's office. On Tuesday afternoon, Chris Newlin met with staff in Sen. Jeff Sessions' office, while the rest of the Alabama team met with Rep. Spencer Bachus' legislative assistant. Jana Conlee met with Rep. Mike Rogers' staff on Wednesday to discuss CAC issues and funding in central Alabama. All in all, we made sure every elected official from Alabama was made aware of the important work being carried out in all the CACs across the state.

Rep. Bud Cramer, who is retiring this year, met with Amy Hinton on Tuesday morning for almost half an hour to discuss the growth and development of the Network, the availability of federal funding, exploring corporate funding opportunities, and the ongoing work to bring the child advocacy model to unserved and/or underserved areas. Rep. Cramer, as usual, was unwavering in his support of the CAC model and promised to assist the Network and the individual CACs however he could during his remaining few months in office. He also expressed the desire to work closely with the Network in any capacity in which he is needed after he retires from Congress and returns to Alabama in early 2009. ANCAC is truly fortunate to have such a wonderful and supportive friend in Rep. Bud Cramer!



Above left: Stephanie Jackson on the steps of the US Capitol building on NCA "Hill Day"

Above right: the US Capitol

Left: Rep. Bud Cramer and Amy Hinton in Rep. Cramer's office

Site Visit: Owens House CAC in Columbiana

Dr. Richard Davy and Amy Hinton visited Owens House CAC in Columbiana for a site visit on the morning of June 6. The facility is much larger than it appears from the outside and three floors are utilized by CAC staff and clients! Located in Shelby County, the CAC serves a very large geographic area with the bulk of cases coming from the southern part of the county. Owens House is named for the Shelby County District Attorney, Robbie Owens, who was a founding member of the CAC. Mr. Owens and two other Board members, as well as two MDT Team members, met with Dr. Davy and Amy Hinton on the day of the site visit to discuss programs, governance and the overall operation of the CAC. Then, Dr. Davy and Amy completed an observance tour of the facility to assess standards compliance. The facility is open and spacious with an inviting waiting area and administrative office spaces. Owens House has a beautiful mural painted on the walls of the basement, where therapy and interview rooms are located along with storage space and a large conference room that contains framed memorabilia from fundraisers held by Owens House supporters each year. The mural is very colorful — each child who receives services from the CAC may, if they choose, leave their handprints in paint on the wall. Dr. Davy and Amy Hinton saw a large number of handprints all along the walls and many sizes of handprints were represented. There were even a few thumbprints and footprints! Often, it is a visual reminder like this that really underscores the true impact and importance of the services provided by a CAC within a service delivery region.



Site Visit: Prescott House CAC in Birmingham



Dr. Richard Davy and Amy Hinton visited Prescott House CAC in Birmingham for a site visit on the afternoon of June 6. Prescott House is located in the Southside area of Birmingham, adjacent to the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Established in 1987, Prescott House is an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance. The facility is beautifully decorated and the signage on the street is discreet and simple to maintain a sense of privacy about the services provided on site. The house has been expanded from its initial size and what was once the back porch is now a spacious meeting room and office space for two therapists and an interview room. Prescott House also boasts a lovely covered and privacy fenced back porch area that is very inviting so therapists and staff can utilize outdoor spaces when desired. The Board President, David Barber, is also the District Attorney for the Birmingham district of Jefferson County was one of the founding members of Prescott House. Another founding Board member, Mr. Prescott, ultimately purchased the property and donated it to establish the CAC so the facility is named in his honor. Dr. Davy met with two Prescott House Board members before he and Amy completed an observation tour of the facility to assess standards compliance.

The North Alabama Child Maltreatment Collaborative

Since the formation of the National Children's Advocacy Center 23 years ago, there are now more than 900 Centers in existence or in development across the United States who last year served more than 240,000 children! The Southern Region has approximately 385 CACs, including 198 CACs that have been approved as Accredited Members of the NCA; 97 Associate Members; and about 130 communities that are actively working towards establishing a CAC, including Athens/Limestone CAC in Northern Alabama.

Establishing and maintaining the CAC model can be a challenge with difficult economic conditions and resulting limited resources. Social service agencies across the country are discovering that collaboration is increasingly a necessary step in helping to bridge gaps in services by pooling resources. This practice of collaboration is important not just for newly-established CACs but also for well-established CACs. Both need to learn from each other, to draw from one another's knowledge and experience base, and to share common challenges. In this way each CAC becomes stronger due to the collaborative effort, as opposed to staying limited by functioning as an independent entity.

To address the need for collaboration, and with the support of the U.S. Department of Justice - Edward Byrne Memorial Earmark obtained by Congressman Bud Cramer, the **National Children's Advocacy Center** is taking the lead to form the **North Alabama Child Maltreatment Collaborative (NACMC)**. Collaborating CACs include **Morgan County CAC** (Decatur, AL), **Athens/Limestone CAC** (Athens, AL), **Cramer Children's Center** (Florence, AL) and the **NCAC**. Over the next year, these CACs will work in combined fashion for the betterment of services to maltreated children through a variety of activities.

First, quarterly collaborative meetings will be convened by program and clinical directors to discuss programmatic processes and treatment challenges. Collaborative Forensic Peer Review will also be provided on a quarterly basis at alternating sites. The Collaborative is fortunate to have the expertise of Linda Cordisco-Steele, national Forensic Interview Trainer and expert to support the Forensic Peer Review process. Clinical Case Consultation, made available at quarterly meetings and through weekly conference calls, will address the timely therapeutic needs of children with the assistance of peer therapists and clinical supervisors. All NACMC CACs will have access to the plethora of training opportunities at the NCAC. And, as specific needs arise through the collaborative process, specialized trainings will be developed to address those issues.

It is the hope of the NCAC that this project will improve the capabilities of CACs of North Alabama to respond effectively to abused children in the North Alabama region and that the Collaborative will find itself invaluable and worth sustaining long beyond the formative year.



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