



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS NETWORK

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## In Brief

**WHY I RUN**, a poignant story by a NACoA Run for the Children® marathoner, is featured in the current issue of Counselor Magazine.

**THE CLERGY TRAINING PROJECT** is facilitating a targeted national distribution to leaders of major religious groups of the Core Competencies for Clergy and Other Pastoral Ministers. Letters are signed by Charles Curie, SAMHSA Administrator, and a leader from the respective denomination. Over 10,000 have been mailed to date.

**WARRIORS FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS** established to advocate for COAs in Native American communities (See p. 5).

**THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL COUNSELORS** has voted to incorporate into its Body of Knowledge (the basis for certification as a pastoral counselor) the knowledge and skills needed to attain the 12 core competencies developed through the Clergy Training Project.

**CASA** will host a one-day meeting in Washington, DC in April. The conference will add to the discussion about effective education for health care providers begun in the AMERSA Strategic Plan for Interdisciplinary Faculty Development and continued in a two-day meeting at ONDCP.

**TV ADS BOMBARDING TEENS**, A new study from the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University reports that alcohol industry advertising on television maintained a steady growth between 2001 and 2003.

## PBS AIRING COA PROGRAM VIDEO, NEW POSTERS AVAILABLE



The arsenal of effective tools to raise awareness and bring support to children of alcohol and drug dependent parents has grown, as new public awareness efforts and new program materials were introduced nationally during COA Week 2005, February 13-19.

With the production and airing of "Lost Childhood: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home," a powerful new video, which first aired on PBS stations across the country during COA Week, public awareness about the need to establish and maintain supportive education programs for children affected by alcoholism in the family continues to grow. The 30-minute program is available at production and mailing cost in both VHS (\$12.50) and DVD (\$13.00) from SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) 1-800-729-6686. A viewer's guide is included.



New COA posters, developed as part of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, were also released recently just as materials were being requested by affiliates, schools and prevention programs to honor COA Week. In addition, ONDCP is continuing to address COAs in its media campaign's print and web messages.

The posters are also available through NCADI and are free – along with several other substantial community awareness and prevention and treatment program materials designed to address the needs of children impacted by alcohol or drug dependence in their families.

Included is an updated and recently released *Children of Alcoholics: A Guide for Community Action* (order code: MS939) for use by coalitions, other community prevention programs and individuals to raise awareness in the local media, churches, schools and other systems that care about children's well-being. Also included are the newly-reprinted brochures "It's Not Your Fault" and "You Can Help" which, after nearly two years, continue to reflect a strong demand.

SAMHSA's *Children's Program Kit*, a box of program materials, videos and support materials designed for use by prevention professionals, treatment providers, student assistance professionals and faith-based organizations to provide educational support programs for children affected by addiction in the family, has also been reproduced and is available free through NCADI (order code: CPKIT – Native American version: NCPKIT).

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## COA CORE COMPETENCIES CERTIFICATION EFFORT BEGINS

In its continuing efforts to develop and disseminate COA core competencies, NACoA has launched a new certification and competencies project. This initiative supports NACoA's goal to educate all people who are in a position to support and provide assistance to our most vulnerable population.

The project has three tracks and is being spearheaded by Linda Kaplan, MA, NACoA Special Projects Consultant. The first, which is in process, is to develop core competencies for substance abuse prevention and treatment professionals, and mental health clinicians that would be incorporated into the existing core competencies for the respective disciplines. Track 2 involves developing distance and traditional educational products based on NACoA's core competencies and have them disseminated through a variety of venues. The third track is to develop a certificate program for individuals who work with children and adolescents based on NACoA's core competencies.

"This new initiative to expand our competencies projects and develop educational and certificate programs on COA issues demonstrates NACoA's commitment to impact society, and advocate for the needs of all children and families affected by alcoholism and other drug dependencies," said Lewis Eigen, EdD, Chair of NACoA's Governance Committee.

## NEW SCIENTIFIC BOARD MEMBER



NACoA is proud to announce the appointment of Francis D. Fincham, Ph.D. to the Board of Scientific Advisers. Dr. Fincham

is the new director of the Family Studies Research Institute at Florida State University. He is the recipient of many awards, including that of Young Social Psychologist of the Year, British Psychological Society, and the Gerald R. Miller Award for Early Career Achievements. He is an elected Fellow of the American Psychological Society and the British Psychological Society.

The author of many publications, including a recent study of children living with substance abusing fathers published by the *Journal of Family Psychology*, Dr. Fincham did his graduate work at Oxford University.



SAMHSA Administrator, Charles Curie, ACSW, addressed the NACoA Board, marathon runners and supporters January 8, 2005, in Orlando, FL. Mr. Curie discussed the importance of the federal government's partnership with constituency organizations who represent the people in the fields that SAMHSA serves, and he thanked NACoA for its contribution to SAMHSA's mission of promoting recovery and resilience to allow for a place in the community for everyone.



## TEEN DRUG ABUSE DOWN

Youth smoking and drug abuse declined again this year, concludes a federal study that found progress over the last decade in persuading teens to avoid cigarettes and illicit substances.

The smoking rate among younger teens is half what it was in the mid-1990s, and drug use by that group is down by one-third, says the University of Michigan study, sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Researchers credit higher cigarette prices, tighter marketing practices, anti-smoking ads and withdrawal of the Joe Camel logo among the reasons smoking has fallen out of favor with more teens. Close to three quarters of surveyed 12th graders now say they'd rather not date a smoker.

## MARIJUANA MAY INCREASE RISK OF PSYCHOSIS

A Dutch study of 2437 people aged 14-24 over a period of four years concluded that there is an increased risk for psychosis in those who use cannabis. "Cannabis does not act in the same fashion on psychosis risk for everybody. There is a group that is particularly susceptible," said Professor Jim van Os of Maastricht University in the Netherlands.

"The results show that in the group without vulnerability to psychosis, there was a small effect of cannabis on the onset of psychotic symptoms four years later, but this risk was four times bigger in individuals who had a personal vulnerability to psychosis." He added that the odds of experiencing symptoms of psychosis

were higher for people who smoked cannabis more frequently.

The findings were reported online by the British Medical Journal.

## ALCOHOL SCREENING DAY



The 7th Annual National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD) is a free program that offers the chance to educate the public about alcohol's impact on their well-being. To be held on April 7, 2005, the theme of

NASD is "Alcohol and Your Health: Where Do You Draw the Line?" Participating sites will be given screening forms as well as materials to educate patients about the effects of alcohol on overall health, a message relevant to anyone who drinks.

NASD is a free program of the nonprofit Screening for Mental Health, with funding provided by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NACoA is a proud sponsor of NASD. To register to participate, or to find a screening site in your area, visit [www.NationalAlcoholScreeningDay.org](http://www.NationalAlcoholScreeningDay.org) or call (800) 253-7658.

## SURVEY FINDS RECOVERING ALCOHOLICS

More than one third of U.S. adults with alcohol dependence that began more than one year ago are now in full recovery, according to an article in the current issue of *Addiction*. The individuals show symptoms of neither alcohol dependence nor

alcohol abuse, and either abstain or drink at levels believed to be low-risk. The analysis is based on data from the 2001-2002 National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions, a project of the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

The likelihood of abstinent recovery increased over time and with age, and was higher among women, individuals who were married or cohabiting, individuals with an onset of dependence at ages 18-24, and persons who had experienced a greater number of dependence symptoms. This study establishes associations, not cause-and-effect relationships, between factors and results.

Lead author Deborah Dawson, Ph.D. released the latest analysis in an article entitled "Recovery From DSM-IV Alcohol Dependence: United States, 2001-2002." For a copy of the article telephone the NIAAA Press Office, 301-443-0595

## REACH OUT NOW TEACH-IN PLANNED

Reach Out Now National Teach-In to prevent childhood alcohol use will take place April 18-22, sponsored by SAMHSA. Several State Governors' wives have already agreed to participate. Hope Taft of Ohio has agreed to teach a 5th grade class, invite her spouse to teach a class, write an op-ed piece, and send a letter of support to the Ohio Department of Education.

Mary Oberst of Oregon will teach a class and send an op-ed letter to local newspapers and/or record a Public Service Announcement. Nancy Freudenthal of Wyoming will teach a class.



## THE RULES OF CHANGE

By Dennis Wholey



Life is a journey of discovery — and change is the catalyst, the energy source, that propels us toward self-acceptance, unconditional love for others, appreciation of life, and a relationship with God. The journey of life is inward, not upward — and all change is really for the better, regardless of how painful it is at the time.

Life is not a spectator sport: it requires being deeply and actively involved at all times. Change is the process that challenges us and pushes us to the next level of living. To be happy requires not only effort, hope, faith — but also the willingness to move on when faced with change.

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**“ LIFE ISN'T FAIR,  
AND CHANGE  
OFTEN HURTS.”**

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In putting my book *The Miracle of Change* together, I compiled a list of some of the most important principles, the common denominators, of change.

**1. Change creates fear** (but the fear can be overcome). That's true. It's the nature of the beast — of us human beings. It's the way the good Lord designed us. Fear is a normal human reaction when our security is threatened. The greater the change, the greater the fear — but the fear doesn't have to be paralyzing.

**2. Change is hard** (but it's doable). A lot of change is about giving up or losing something or somebody you like (or love). Accepting loss is difficult. Making a change is difficult. Life is hard, but whatever the challenge, it's not the end of the world. In fact, change leads to a new beginning, and something wonderful will come of it.

**3. Expect change** (and enjoy it). Life is packed with joy; it's also full of disappointment. We often don't get what we want or whom we want. Events overtake plans; so plan the action, don't plan the results. Change makes life exciting and fun.

**4. The only person you can change is you** (and nobody else). Keep trying if you want to, but people will prove to you over and over again that they will do exactly what they think is best for them. No offense, but change is not about fixing them, it's about changing you.

**5. Courage is action** (in the face of fear). No fear, no courage. Action and fear must coexist to qualify. Courage is moving forward despite the fear — and you can do it.

**6. Change is really exchange** (so go for it). Only with hindsight do we come to realize that what we gain through change is usually much better than what we lost or gave up.

**7. Change is possible** (even if it doesn't feel like it). Life isn't fair and change often hurts like hell; but people have handled the loss of a loved one, being fired, tragic illness

— even quitting cigarettes. Others have survived even benefitted from these changes. You can too.

**8. Don't attempt major change alone** (do it with an ally). If you are going to change, the first step is to get the support of someone you trust. It's probably going to be three steps forward and two backward; so get the help you need to get through major transitions.

**9. The answer may be acceptance** (and not action). You may have to bite the bullet and accept some things exactly as they are — unchangeable. If that's the case, take a deep breath, yell, and start changing your attitude.

**10. Change is a process** (not an event). Change is about the getting, the going, the moving from here to there. Change is even the turmoil, the upsetness, the middle part. The goal is not even the big payoff; it's what you experience and learn getting to it.

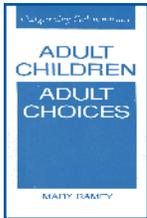
So welcome change into your life and reap its rewards: freedom to be yourself, absence of conflict, a growing sense of well-being and self-confidence, and most of all, happiness and joy. Change is the ticket — and it takes courage to change.

*Dennis Wholey is the host of the nationally distributed PBS television series, This Is America! and the author of five books including The Courage to Change and The Miracle of Change. He is currently working on a new book for fall publication.*

## BOOKSHELF

by Stephanie Abbott

Adult Children Adult Choices  
by Mary Ramey, Ph.D.



It may be time to revisit the concept of codependency, an idea rather thoroughly out of fashion this past decade. In the 1980s it seemed an extraordinary idea that people affected by someone else's addictions could all have traits in common with each other, and this constellation of traits was dubbed, rather cleverly, "codependency."

Popularizers churned out books, pamphlets and articles listing characteristics of children/spouses/parents who organized their emotional lives around the addict in their lives. Groups formed, people took self-tests, therapists specialized, the popular press featured the topic. Eventually the net got cast so widely that nearly everyone on the planet could be labeled codependent, and therefore, by some definitions emotionally "sick." This more or less made the concept useless and, not surprisingly, we have heard very little about it lately.

For those many people who recognize that addictions in their family members have made an impact on them, the concept does make sense of their experiences and normalizes their own responses. I have never been willing to call those normal responses to abnormal stress "sick."

Let me recommend this book by Dr. Ramey to adult children of addicted parents. Her belief is that "codependency is not forever. ..(these) actions are normal and appropriate human behaviors in certain circumstances

and at certain ages, but present a big problem under other conditions." She believes the problem behavior is a result of being stuck in an early stage of development, which can be outgrown. Now isn't that a more useful notion for the ACOA than being chronically ill?

### JERRY MOE SPEAKS AT CIJ CONFERENCE IN MEXICO CITY

Leaders of Mexican substance abuse organizations and government agencies received an extended briefing and discussion for the first time about children of alcoholics. The officials were gathered at a national conference on juvenile justice issues in October in Mexico City. Jerry Moe, National Director of the Betty Ford Center Children's Programs, was asked to make the presentation by the U.S. Embassy, which co-sponsored the conference with the Mexican government. His talk, "Forgotten Children: Kids from Addicted Families," deeply affected the audience.

Miriam Hamdan, a cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy, wrote a note to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy thanking them for recommending Moe:

"He stood up, left the dais and went down to talk to our eyes and to our hearts...He told us that we Mexicans teach our children not to trust anybody, he told us that Mexican mothers are like lionesses in trying to protect their children, but most of the time they are alone, because it is something they don't talk about in public...there was a very high level official from the Mexican Ministry of Government and he did not know

how to react. We the audience had tears in our eyes, perhaps remembering all the times when we ourselves were victims...At the end, many people approached him to hug him... I cannot tell you with words what I experienced with feelings."

Jerry commented to NACoA, "When the audience is in tears, we know they are often hearing their own stories. This needs to be addressed because they create the programs for the children. You know, healing the healers."

Moe's connection with the audience and the impression he made on key officials was so impressive that the State Department asked him to come to Los Angeles in January to brief a delegation of officials from public health agencies in Chiapas, Tabasco, and Mexico City. Said one official in the Chiapas State government after the briefing, "We are going to develop a program to help those children."

### A NEW NANACOA IS FORMED

The National Association of Native American Children of Alcoholics, formed in 1988 and a leading advocacy voice for young and adult children of alcoholics during the following decade, has been re-constituted in cooperation with White Bison, Inc., a national Native American non-profit organization headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO.

Called Warriors for Children of Alcoholics, the new organization will pick up the mantle of NANACOA and continue its mission to bring attention to and provide services for Native American children who have been hurt by alcoholism in their families.



# Affiliates

NACoA welcomes three new affiliates. There are now 37 Affiliate member organizations in 22 States and the UK.



**The Woman's Heart**, headquartered in San Diego, CA, formally launched in February

2005. It will work with women and mothers in recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction, offering a portal of online resources ranging from peer support and social services to educational training and healthcare learning. The Woman's Heart is developing online training modules to help women who are mothers learn to parent and re-parent their children to support family reunification. The program provides innovative relapse prevention and healthcare resources to support both the women in recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction and the reduction of child abuse and foster care.

[www.thewomansheart.org](http://www.thewomansheart.org)



**Bay Area Substance Education Services, Inc. (BASES)**, Charlevoix, MI, is dedicated to providing a drug free environment for young people and to providing substance abuse prevention, education and early intervention to young people and their families in northwest lower Michigan. [www.basesteencenter.org](http://www.basesteencenter.org)

### Neighborhood Legal Services

**Michigan** is the only organization in the Detroit area that offers non-criminal legal advocacy law-related education and supportive services for individuals and families. To break the cycle of homelessness, it pays budget counselors and partner agencies to provide counsel and case management services, security deposits, childcare, and essential items for eli-

gible families to help promote health, safety and self-sufficiency.

[www.freewebs.com/wcnls](http://www.freewebs.com/wcnls)



**The Betty Ford Center Children's Five Star Kids Program** in Irving, TX hosted the 6th annual

Reunion Roundup in early February. Almost 500 children and families came together for an afternoon of music, arts and crafts, barbeque and fellowship. Jerry Moe and staff from the California children's program came to assist with the event and join in the fun. Some children who came through the program during the first year of operation in 1998 were there. At the end of the event the massive facility was encircled with children, parents, grandparents, and children's staff holding hands and reciting the serenity prayer, led by one of the children from the 1998 program. [www.bettyfordcenter.org/children](http://www.bettyfordcenter.org/children)



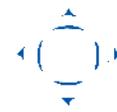
**Troy Community Coalition For the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol**

**Abuse** is gearing up for the 2005 "Parents Who Host, Lose the Most; Don't be a party to teenage drinking" campaign. More than 150 adults recently signed the campaign proclamation. The campaign educates parents about their legal responsibility not to provide alcohol at teen house parties. The Troy Community Coalition is also promoting a healthy Spring Break alternative, free from the temptation of alcohol or drugs. Spring Break Calendars will be given to all high school students for a week of healthy, free or low cost fun activities in Troy. This community-wide effort is increasing the number of students who are choosing to stay home over Spring Break. [www.Troycoalition.com](http://www.Troycoalition.com)



**White Bison** will present its 5th Annual Wellbriety Conference on April

21-24 in Denver, CO. An American Indian owned non-profit corporation established in 1988 with the vision of bringing 100 Indian communities into healing by the year 2010, White Bison offers seven trainings providing a comprehensive approach to developing healthy and recovering Native communities. It includes specific educational programs for Native American children of alcoholics. For more information about the 5th Annual Wellbriety Conference and the work of White Bison to help Native Americans live healthy, non-addictive lifestyles, visit [www.whitebison.org](http://www.whitebison.org)



**Compass Health Care, Inc.** participated in the **NACoA Run for the Children®** in Phoenix

January 9. Steffie O'Neill, former Acting Director of the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, and now Compass Deputy CEO in Tucson, AZ, led a team of Compass staff and supporters in the run. Steffie has spearheaded the development of the new Compass educational support program for children, using the SAMHSA *Children's Program Kit*, designed by NACoA. [www.compasshc.org](http://www.compasshc.org)



**Johnson Institute's Rush Center** in Austin, TX will host a Summit March 31

– April 2 in Austin bringing together religious leaders for whom the faith community's involvement in alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse prevention and addiction recovery support is important. The centerpiece of The Rush Center's work is the Faith Partners program, known widely as an effective congregational team building program. [www.rushcenter.org](http://www.rushcenter.org)

## A NOTE OF THANKS...

...to all our supporters whose gifts of “time, talent and treasure” are truly “major;”

...to our members and supporters who responded to our requests for accurate information so we could bring our data bases up to speed and serve you more efficiently while cutting down on administrative costs; this is making it possible to use your generous support dollars more effectively for children of alcoholics;

...to our CFC and other workplace donors for submitting your name and address with your contributions so we can keep you informed about how we are using your generous salary deductions to help NACoA;

...to Health Communications, Inc, for its faith in our ability to make a difference for children and families hurt by addiction by naming NACoA as the recipient of a portion of its profits on the newly-released Chicken Soup for the Recovering Soul;

...to our Run for the Children® marathon runners and corporate sponsors for “going the extra mile” to insure that NACoA’s critical work will continue to grow;

...to PBS stations airing “Lost Childhood: Growing Un in an Alcoholic Home” and helping to insure that the one in four children living in families with alcohol abuse and alcoholism do not stay hidden and without support;

...to our federal partners, including SAMHSA, NCADI, NIAAA and ONDCP, for welcoming the concerns of children and families impacted by alcohol and drug addiction to their program and product-planning efforts;

...to our affiliates and professional colleague and partner organizations for sharing the work and the vision essential to reaching and supporting the millions of children who need us all;

...to so many of our founders, former NACoA leaders, board members and boards of advisers, who never stop creating solutions for children of alcoholics and supporting efforts to help them;

...to NACoA’s support staff and volunteers without whom the national office “wheels” would grind to a halt.

We salute and thank you all as we move forward with increased energy and commitment to make the critical difference.



Julie Fisher Cummings  
Board President



Sis Wenger  
Executive Director

## MAYOR OF BOSTON DECLARES COA DAY



Boston’s Mayor Thomas M. Menino declared February 14, 2005, Valentine’s Day, to be Children of Alcoholics Day in

Boston. The mayor issued a proclamation of the day to draw citizens’ attention to the needs of the one in four children affected by alcohol abuse in the family.

NACoA Affiliate Children of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc. (COASA), headed by Maureen McGlame, worked with the mayor’s office to obtain the proclamation. COASA, Inc. is also providing COA support groups in the Boston area.

## CHICKEN SOUP BOOK TO HELP NACoA



*Chicken Soup for the Recovering Soul*, featuring #1 New York Times Bestselling Authors is now available from

the publisher, Health Communications, Inc. Positioned as “your personal, portable support group, with stories of healing, hope, love and resilience,” it was authored by such familiar names as Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Robert J. Ackerman, Theresa Peluso, Gary Seidler and Peter Vegso.

The book is available through Health Communications and at bookstores across the country. Five cents for every copy sold for the life of the book will be donated to NACoA in a salute to the staff and volunteers “for their dedication and commitment to children living in a home with alcoholism or drug addiction.”



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS  
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**LEST WE FORGET...**

A lovely Valentine card, with a generous donation enclosed, arrived from a supporter who works with children and youth in a community mental health clinic. It reads: "For most children Valentine's Day is an enjoyable "holiday" celebrated at home and school. For some children, Valentine's Day is just another lonely and empty experience... This gift is a donation to help NACoA reach children who need love and hope."

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and Child Abuse Month. Remember the children!

**"The great man is he who does not lose his child's-heart."**

**Mencius 289-372 B.C.**

**WHAT IS NACoA?**

*The National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA) was founded in 1983, and is the national nonprofit membership organization working on behalf of children of alcoholics. NACoA defines children of alcoholics as those people who have been impacted by the alcoholism or other drug dependence of a parent or another adult filling the parental role. NACoA believes that no child of an alcoholic should grow up in isolation and without support.*

**OUR MISSION**

*To advocate for all children and families affected by alcoholism and other drug dependencies.*

**OUR GOALS**

- To raise public awareness
- To provide leadership in public policy at the national, state and local level
- To inform and educate academic and other community systems
- To advocate for appropriate education and prevention services
- To facilitate the exchange of information and resources
- To initiate and advance professional knowledge and understanding

- To advocate for accessible programs and services

*NACoA's programs are designed to impact systems that affect children. NACoA supports its mission by seeking private and public funding through corporations, individuals, members, donations, grants and foundations.*

*To accomplish this mission we are:*

- A membership organization which includes affiliate groups and cooperative relationships with other organizations
- A national center for information, education and advocacy for COAs of all ages, including:
  - the latest research information
  - culturally and linguistically sensitive materials
- A policy development center that obtains input from expert scientists, opinion leaders, policy makers and practitioners
- A central point of input for children's health and welfare advocates and service providers who address populations of COAs

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

The seventeenth annual summer school, *High-Risk Children\*, Families, and Behavioral Health* sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Training Institute and chaired by NACoA founder Robert Ackerman, PhD is scheduled for July 18-22 at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, in Indiana, PA, and is designed to meet the ever-changing needs of today's youth and families.

Presentations will include the latest information on treatment for young children, improving school-based programs, working with adolescents, sexual abuse intervention, improving cultural competency, adult recovery strategies, anger and violence, building resiliency in children. There will be special sections for educators and clinicians. For more information visit [www.iup.edu/maati/training](http://www.iup.edu/maati/training) or call NACoA.