



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

NETWORK

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In Brief

THE 10TH ANNUAL CONVENTION ON ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS will be held in Las Vegas, NV March 30-April 1, 2006. Sparked by the success of the recent ACOA conference, U.S. Journal Training, Inc. has announced plans for the 2006 event. www.usjt.com

LOST CHILDHOOD: GROWING UP IN AN ALCOHOLIC FAMILY continues to experience widespread airings on PBS stations across the country. Available in video or DVD format for under \$13.00. It includes a comprehensive viewer's guide. Watch for airings in your community and see www.nacoa.org for more information.

NACOA's Run for the Children® will have teams of runners and walkers in five outstanding destination marathons this season. Beginning in late October and running through mid-January, beautiful and fun-filled events are available from Washington, DC to Detroit and Florida to Arizona. Call NACoA (1-888-55-4COAS) or email marathon@nacoa.org



NACOA FOUNDERS REUNITED at ACOA conference in February. See page 2.

A NACOA CHILDREN'S COUNCIL gathering is being held in New York April 27 and hosted by Board member Tian Dayton, Ph.D. Additional Council gatherings are planned for the Fall in Washington and Florida, with other sites under consideration.

SOCIAL WORK INITIATIVE is launched. See page 2.

WISCONSIN 2010 HEALTH PLAN FAVORS FAMILY TREATMENT

The state of Wisconsin is leading the way for the rest of the country with an emphasis on the importance of the needs of families of alcoholics and addicts. *Healthiest Wisconsin 2010: A Partnership Plan to Improve the Health of the Public* is the Wisconsin state health plan for the decade 2000-2010, and its detailed implementation plan was developed in a collaborative process involving many partners across the state. It includes sections that have statistics on the effect that addiction has on families, and mandates treatment for those families.

The Plan's rationale includes the statement that forty percent of children from violent homes report that their fathers had a drinking problem, that teachers have reported a need for protective services three times more often for children who are being raised by someone with an addiction than for other children, and that fewer than half of pediatricians ask about problems with alcohol when taking a family history.

The Plan states that research indicates that persons with a family history of alcoholism have a higher prevalence of lifetime dependence than those without such a history, and particular attention must be given to young persons under age 18 years who have an addicted parent, because these youth are at increased risk for substance abuse.

Also included were the following statements: "...recent reviews of marital and family therapy in alcoholism treatment support the importance of involving family members in the treatment process....The vast majority of private insurance companies...will not reimburse for family treatment without an independent mental health diagnosis for the affected family member. This results in many people being identified as suffering from depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, or general anxiety disorder when they do not really have these psychiatric conditions..."

Short-term Outcome Objectives include: The Department of Health and Family Services Bureau of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services will prepare a report for the State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse that includes the baseline on workforce needs (the provider gap) between the current supply of health care providers and the numbers and types of trained professionals needed for the treatment of family members of those with problem use of, or addiction to, alcohol and other substances.

The state of Wisconsin intends to have all providers in the public health spectrum be educated to understand the impact of substance use disorders on family members, and to provide appropriate screening tools and treatment strategies to those family members, according to the Implementation Plan.

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U.S. JOURNAL AND ACOA CONFERENCE HONOR GIANTS IN COA FIELD

The ACOA conference in late February was rich with new information from leading adult child and co-dependency research and clinical experts, and sprinkled with enriching nostalgia and the reunion of early leaders and old friends of NACoA.



at Founder Luncheon



Moe, Brown, and Black with U.S. Journal's Peter Vegso and Gary Seidler

NACoA co-founder **Stephanie Brown, Ph.D.**, received the first Janet Woititz Award for extraordinary contributions to the understanding of adult children of alcoholics and effective clinical methods to facilitate their recovery.

Claudia Black, Ph.D., also a NACoA founder, was honored with a one-time special achievement award for 25 years of writing, teaching and developing effective interventions for children of alcoholics of all ages.

A newly-established Jerry Moe Award was announced and the first award was given to **Jerry Moe, MA**, national director of the Betty Ford Center Children's Programs, for his quarter century of advocacy, training, and guiding the field to provide effective preventive interventions for young children of alcohol and drug addicted parents.

SOCIAL WORK MEETING PLANNED

Leading social work experts will come together June 5-6 at the NACoA headquarters in Rockville, MD, to develop a plan to include information on addictions and its impact on children and families in social work education and training systems. Lala Strassner, Ph.D., Professor at New York University of Social Work and publisher of the *Journal of Social Work Practices in the Addictions*, will chair the NACoA Social Work Initiative, which will begin with this meeting. Dr. Strassner is the former chair of the ATOD section of the National Association of Social Workers.

This multi-year effort will focus on strategies to ensure that social workers, who regularly address human dilemmas that are caused by or grow out of living with addiction in the family, will have the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective.

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FASD TARGETED

A Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention Collaborative was launched recently in a series of meetings among health professionals from the public and private sector in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

“Studies have shown that no exposure to alcohol during pregnancy is safe for the fetus, however surveys of obstetricians reveal that 80 percent are still telling their patients that it’s OK to drink moderately,” said Ira Chasnoff, M.D., an expert in perinatal substance abuse who addressed the Collaborative.

Health care professionals in Baton Rouge are being asked to screen those with positive screens will be referred to trained social workers for assessment and possible referral to treatment programs as needed.

YOUTH WEB SITE



www.thecoolspot.gov

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism has launched a new version of “The Cool Spot,” a Web site about underage drinking prevention for children aged 11 to 13. The site’s games and comic book art work deliver messages to young audiences about the risks of drinking and ways to resist peer pressure. The Reality Check section questions users about how much drinking is really going on nationwide. The animated Peer Pressure Bag of Tricks invites kids to identify common peer pressure tactics, and Know Your No’s is an interactive section that introduces a variety of ways to say “no” in different circumstances.

The revamped site is part of NIAAA’s ongoing commitment to develop strategies to help children make healthy decisions about alcohol.

MATERNAL SMOKING INCREASES RISK

An expectant mother’s smoking of a pack or more a day doubles the risk that if her child does become a smoker, he or she will become addicted to tobacco, according to the first study to examine rates of tobacco addiction in adults who were prenatally exposed.

The study was led by Dr. Stephen L. Buka of the Harvard School of Public Health, together with Drs. Edmond D. Shenassa and Raymond Niaura, both of Brown Medical School in Providence, Rhode Island. “The evidence from this study, which reinforces the findings of experimental research with animals, is compelling,” says Dr. Buka. “Early exposure to tobacco during pregnancy apparently affects the individual’s responses to cigarettes in later adolescence and adulthood....The most likely hypothesis is that the toxins in cigarettes cross the placental barrier and...permanently alter cells’ responsiveness in ways that increase vulnerability to tobacco addiction.”

RECOVERY WEBCASTS AVAILABLE

A series of webcasts that speak to everyone about important aspects of treatment for alcohol and drug use disorders is available now on VHS and DVD formats. Men and women experience life changes along the road to recovery, and treatment has often played a significant role; yet many people don’t understand that treatment is effective and recovery is possible.

These webcasts are produced each year by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and offer research-based information and clinical best practices in ways that are interesting,

easily understood, and inexpensive. They are useful for staff training, individuals in recovery, family and friends, family counselors and educators and criminal justice system representatives. To view online visit <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/2004/multimedia/> or order at 1-800-729-6686.

CASA RELEASES FAMILY MATTERS

Parents who abuse alcohol, use illegal drugs, and use tobacco put half the nation’s children – more than 35 million of them – at greater risk of substance abuse and of physical and mental illnesses, according to a new 81-page white paper, *Family Matters: Substance Abuse and the American Family*, released in late March by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. www.casacolumbia.org

The report found that 13 percent of children under 18 live in a household where a parent or other adult uses illicit drugs, and 24 percent of children live in a household where a parent or other adult is a binge or heavy drinker.

The white paper also finds that alcohol and drug-abusing parents are three times likelier to abuse their children and four times likelier to neglect them than parents who do not abuse these substances.

Such children are at increased risk of accidents, injuries and academic failure and more likely to suffer conduct disorders, depression or anxiety, conditions that increase the risk children will smoke, drink and use drugs.

NACoA Executive Director Sis Wenger, Al-Anon’s Claire Ricewasser, and NACoA Scientific Advisory Board member Karol A. Kumpfer, Ph.D., were report reviewers.



CORE COMPETENCIES FOR CLERGY

By Reverend Mark A. Latcovich, Ph.D., and Sis Wenger

It is crucial that clergy and other pastoral ministers have a clear understanding of addiction's effect on the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of their parish families. It is widely known that this disease, if untreated, destroys marriages and alienates families from their church. Not only does alcoholism block the capacity for a meaningful spiritual life, it blocks the capacity for healthy, appropriate, interpersonal relationships and partnerships.



Hurting parishioners always have perceived clergy and pastoral ministers as potential sources of help and support. Parishioners may present with "marriage problems" or "unfaithfulness" and often do not name alcohol or drug use as the culprit.

Clergy are seldom prepared to deal with addiction-related issues. A survey (So Help Me God!) released by the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University in November, 1999, reported that 94.4% of clergy considered addiction to be an important issue they confronted, yet only 12.5% had done any course work during their seminary studies.

The Clergy Training Project, a partnership project of Johnson Institute(JI) and NACoA, recognized the need to develop an adequate knowledge and skill base for clergy and worked with an interdenominational panel to produce the "Core Competencies for Clergy and Other Pastoral Ministers in Addressing Alcohol and Other Drug

Dependence and the Impact on Family Members."

These core competencies establish the basis for appropriate educational modules that can be incorporated into existing courses and post-ordination education programs. The competencies are not just elements of knowledge; they are better described as elements of "know how." These elements of knowledge and practical skills are spelled out in the finished set of twelve core competencies.

Because clergy and others who minister in a pastoral setting have different opportunities in different situations, they are designed as a general framework which can be expanded to apply as needed. They reflect the scope and limits of the typical pastoral relationship, and are intended to mesh with the most common spiritual and social goals of such a relationship.

Being supportive and encouraging is a pastoral norm. The majority of spouses of alcoholics, who often present as irrational and helpless, are simply overwhelmed by the insanity of someone else's addiction. They need support offered by such groups as Al-Anon. They need to hear messages of hope and the possibility of recovery for their whole family, and they need help in finding the resources they need.

Children of alcohol or drug dependent parents need a safe haven where they can meet adults who will talk to them openly about what may have been their "family secret." The isola-

tion and stigma the children may feel are lifted when trusted adults validate their experience, and when they learn that others face the same confusion and chaos that dominates their lives. When those "trusted adults" are part of their parish leadership, they gain hope and become free to pursue a spiritual connectedness with God and to feel that they can "belong" and be valued in the parish community.

Substance abuse and addiction is a systemic deconstruction that estranges, alienates, and sedates the self from God. Ministers who support individuals in treatment need to be ready to offer some guidance, especially after treatment. The aftercare process of recovery often includes the need

to forgive oneself. It involves a reconciling community that invites those who have been estranged from each other to rediscover each other and them-

selves all over again.

Mastering the Core Competencies can help priests, ministers, and rabbis in the development of a healthy attitude about alcohol use, including how it may have affected their own lives, as well as the ability to reach out and support the many individuals and families in their congregations affected by alcohol or drug dependence.

Reverend Mark A. Latcovich, Ph.D., is academic dean and associate professor of pastoral theology at Saint Mary Seminary and Graduate School of Theology, Wickecliffe, Ohio.

Sis Wenger is NACoA executive director.

The Core Competencies document can be found on NACoA's web site: www.nacoa.org

"...ELEMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE (AND) ELEMENTS OF 'KNOW HOW'"

BOOK SHELF

By Stephanie Abbott

The Lowdown on Families Who Get High Successful Parenting for Families Affected by Addiction

By Patricia O’Gorman, Ph.D., and Philip Diaz, MSW



What can you do when you are trying to be a good parent and your spouse is addicted? The authors offer some specific action steps. What to do when you have been sober a year and your family isn’t incredibly grateful but is still putting demands on you? Um, maybe it’s time for a little less self-focus and more attention on learning good parenting skills. See Chapter 2.

O’Gorman and Diaz also offer a sensitive chapter on how caregivers can help COAs, as well as an overview on how children cope with recovery of their parents. They spotlight a clueless counselor who advises children “not to put stress” on their newly sober parents. As one young teenager commented “Who did he (the counselor) think was taking care of Mom every time she fell apart?...I think all adults are crazy. When do we get taken care of? I am supposed to take care of them now that he’s sober?...I left feeling guilty for not wanting to help out anymore!”

Sections include the impact of addiction on the family, parenting through addiction and recovery, and lastly a word to professionals and other helpers. For me the strongest section was “A Child’s View of Recovery,” because that is the area that is so little addressed in our field. How do children react to the great shift in the family, the recovery talk, the

parental lectures about addiction, the scary treatment center? How in fact does the child or teenager feel about it? For many of them, it’s just more of the same: focus on addiction, no attention to their needs, and family members who do not enjoy each other’s company.

ANNUAL MAATI SUMMER SCHOOL



The five-day summer school, sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Training Institute and chaired by NACoA founder Robert J. Ackerman, Ph.D., will once again offer educators, prevention specialists, court workers, pastoral counselors and other mental health clinicians an array of outstanding speakers and workshops.

The school will run from July 18-22, 2005 and be held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, PA. Contact NACoA at 1-888-554COAS.

AT THE MOVIES

By Stephanie Abbott

Sideways

An alcoholic ACOA wakes up with his usual hangover, and takes a field trip with his friend, the has been actor/ sex addict, to the wine country in gorgeous California. They meet up with two great looking and willing women played by Sandra Oh and Virginia Madsen, but of course our hero is much more interested in swallowing all the wine in town. In fact at one point he even swallows the contents of the “spit bucket.” I amused myself by thinking what a good “here’s when I hit my bottom” story

this would make at the rehab center.

The alcoholic, played by Paul Giamatti, needs some money to finance the trip so he visits his mother on her birthday, giving her a card and then stealing money from her bedroom, clearly not for the first time. Mom is placating, delighted to see him and his friend, making great plans for the next day, and is last seen passed out in front of the television as the men tip toe out. She obviously won’t remember the plans made and won’t be surprised that her son has vanished.

Wine can be the perfect cover for addiction because people don’t associate wine drinking with alcoholic behavior, not even the drinkers themselves. They share such words as “tannins” and “nose” and “bouquet,” all of which mask the fact that for some people the mood enhancing effect is really the point. Can you imagine if grape juice had any variety to it that people would drink it by the quart and rhapsodize about the soil, the bottling, or the vintage that produced it? “This Welch’s has a certain shyness, but I really like its notes.”

The sex addict (Thomas Haden Church), a sweet natured loser, thinks he is doing a fat waitress a favor by going home with her only to find he is a pawn in a game she plays with her husband, and when the Oh character breaks his nose with her motorcycle helmet, he is going to be a sorry sight at his wedding a few days later.

Never mind, the wineries featured in the movie are now doing great business as people line up to taste those wines and sleep in the same sleazy motel. I hope they use that spit bucket.



Affiliates



Comprehensive Alcoholism Rehabilitation Programs,

Inc. (CARP) is celebrating the 25th Anniversary of its Parent and Family Support Groups as an integral part of the CARP Continuum of Care. Located in Florida at each of CARP's several outpatient locations, the Support Groups are free of charge and are offered in both Spanish and English. Support Groups open the door for parents and family members to learn to be a part of a loved ones recovery rather than their addiction. www.carpinc.org



Volunteers of America, Alaska will add an exciting new component to Camp Hope, its annual summer camp for children ages 7

- 11. Founded nearly 20 years ago and sited on a pristine little Alaskan lake, Camp Hope is modeled after Jerry Moe's Kids Kamp. This year, VOA Alaska is initiating a parallel intensive training program for Alaskans wanting to start camps similar to Camp Hope in their own communities. Criteria for the training include: (1) at least two adult participants from each community, and (2) a commitment from participants to initiate their own community mini-camp within a year. Camp Hope draws from SAMHSA's *Children's Program Kit* to create the experience for campers, and VOA Alaska will provide each training participant the complete and highly flexible Kit for use in their community mini-camps. www.voak.org



Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse for Greater New Orleans (CADA) was established in 1960 as a community prevention agency to serve a six-parish area in Louisiana. CADA's annual awards luncheon in April was

keynoted by Miss Teen USA, Shelley Hennig. Having lost her brother to a DWI accident, hers was a persuasive voice to raise during Alcohol Awareness Month to call attention to preventing underage drinking and drinking and driving to the 350-400 professionals, politicians, and educators assembled. Congratulations, CADA, for keeping the focus on prevention for 45 years. www.cadagno.org

White Bison, Inc. fosters the movement of American Indian Communities into wellness and sober living. This year NACoA Scientific Advisory Board member, Jeannette L. Johnson, Ph.D., addressed White Bison's Fifth Annual Wellbriety Conference (April 21-24, Denver, CO) on the topic of Children of Alcoholics. Conference highlights included the introduction of a Wellbriety Coin. www.whitebison.org



The Legacy Foundation is hosting a private screening of the award-winning documentary, "Lost Childhood: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Family." Government representatives, health care professionals, donors and community members will gather for this May 5 event. Emerald Yeh, journalist, producer and creative force behind the documentary, will speak about development of "Lost Childhood" and the work that led PBS stations to air it.



"Lost Childhood" was filmed at The Legacy Foundation's A Children's Place Kids Kamp in northern California. www.thechildrensplaceprogram.org

Informed Families has been awarded a grant from the Children's Trust that will expand their Community Action Team (CAT) Program to two additional South Florida middle schools.



The CAT Program is a multi-agency prevention and promotion program for students and parents to decrease risk/increase protective factors associated with substance abuse. The program will reach 3600 students and their parents.



Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol & Substance Abuse (ECCPASA) has provided a wide range of information, education, advocacy, and training services to the people of the Buffalo, NY area since 1948 and they continue to capitalize on every opportunity to influence public dialogue on prevention of alcohol and substance abuse. To call attention to National Alcohol Awareness Month, they sponsored a Legislative Breakfast where more than 100 guests heard from the Chair of the New York State Assembly's Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. ECCPASA also brought in the Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and Executive Director of the National Drug Court Institute. www.eccpasa.info



The National Student Assistance Association (NSAA) has received a federal grant for \$100,000 to establish the National Center for Student Assistance Program Research and Evaluation at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. The first project of the Center will be to conduct science based research into the efficacy of Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) as a mechanism to connect students in need of mental health and substance abuse services with community based agencies and to remove barriers to learning in schools. www.nsaa.us

Thank You!



Our donors are the key to our work for children of alcohol and drug dependent parents. We are deeply grateful to all of our sponsors, individual donors, marathon runners and their family and friends who have so generously contributed \$100 or more to NACoA's work since our last newsletter. Your help truly makes all the difference.



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NOTE FROM THE FIELD



There isn't a day that goes by that I am not reminded of the overwhelming impact of addiction on families. Currently, I have a 4-year old, a 5-year old, and 7-year old on my mental health caseload, all youngsters living in families where the real (and very hidden) tragedy is addiction.

...social worker

“Children should not be asked to understand or support parents through hard times.”
Ann W. Smith

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



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 EXCITEMENT OF
 THE RACES AT
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