



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

## NETWORK

WINTER 2006 / VOLUME 22 No. 1

### *In Brief*

#### **FAMILY THERAPY MAGAZINE**

published "Children of Alcoholics" as its most recent *Clinical Update* section. Written by NACoA's Stephanie Brown, Ph.D., and Stephanie Abbott, M.A., it is an extensive discussion of current issues and basic knowledge needed by family therapists. The magazine reaches over 35,000 marriage and family therapists.

#### **DENNIS O. ROMERO, M.A.,**

recently hired as Deputy Director of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, has been appointed Acting Director of the Center.

#### **ROBERT J. LINDSEY, M.ED.,**

**CEAP** has been appointed President of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. He succeeds Stacia Murphy, who has led the New York-based Council since 1999. [www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org)

#### **NACoA PRESIDENT, SIS**

**WENGER**, received the prestigious Enrique Camarena Award February 16. See p. 2.

#### **REACH OUT NOW NATIONAL**

**TEACH-IN** will be held April 3-7 in schools across the country. [www.teachin.samhsa.gov](http://www.teachin.samhsa.gov)

**CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS: A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY ACTION**, distributed to the 3000 participants in CADCA's National Leadership Forum, has been updated and is now available. Visit <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/coaweek/> to order the guide and other COA educational materials.

## NACoA'S PROGRAMS AND COLLABORATIONS EXPAND

### **NACoA's Social Work Initiative**

has expanded its core of advisors, strengthened its collaboration with the Council on Social Work Education, and hosted its second expert panel meeting January 18, 2006, at the NACoA conference headquarters in Rockville, MD.

A report blending the work of the initiative's two expert panels in the development of core competencies for working with children of alcoholics and drug dependent parents is nearing completion. In addition, modules for use in generalist social work education and accompanying teaching tools are being created.

### **Coalition/Children's Support Services Project Underway**

NACoA is sponsoring a mini-grant program for coalitions to partner in an effort to implement support services for the children of clients in treatment using the SAMHSA *Children's Program Kit*. Introduced at the CADCA Forum January 15 and on the NACoA and CADCA websites, the project will test the effectiveness of community coalitions as advocates for the establishment of children's supportive education programs in treatment centers. NACoA will provide initial advocacy training, a stipend to cover coalition costs, and the training of persons implementing the support programs.

A *Student Assistance Manual* is under development, building on a draft discussion white paper written by NACoA in 2004. The National Student Assistance Association, a NACoA affiliate, and other leaders in the student assistance field, are contributing to the final publication, which is expected to be published in print form and for web distribution. The target date for completion is September 2006.

### **Recent Faith Initiative Activities**

1) NACoA presented a one-day pilot training January 24, 2006, for over 100 congregational representatives in Detroit hosted by NACoA affiliate NCADD-Detroit. Follow-up consultations are being provided to Michigan's Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community services, and to the trainees who attended the event. (See NACoA website for ordering free pamphlets and posters.)  
2) Major curriculum progress has been made, including initial drafts of modules for seminary training on the Clergy Core Competencies, and on the integration of the competencies into Clinical Pastoral Education.  
3) A Guide for Clergy is being written and is scheduled to be ready for publication by Fall.





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## ENRIQUE CAMARENA AWARD PRESENTED TO SIS WENGER

NACoA's President, Sis Wenger, was presented with the prestigious 2005 Enrique (Kiki) Camarena Award during the annual Awards luncheon at the National Leadership Forum of the Community Anti-Coalitions of America (CADCA).

The award is given annually by the National Family Partnership (NFP) "recognizing and honoring one person who has made a significant contribution in the field of drug prevention and who personifies Agent Camarena's belief that one person can make a difference." NFP President Peggy Sapp presented the award to Sis Wenger (pictured here with Ann Comiskey, Executive Director of the Troy Michigan Community Coalition. Ann received CADCA's Advocate of the Year award given to members who have shown an outstanding commitment and passion for educating their legislative officials).



### OUT AND ABOUT

- Sis Wenger and former NACoA Board President Jim Crowley presented at the CADCA Forum February 15 on working with community treatment programs to establish support groups for children of clients in treatment.
- Sis addressed the SAMHSA Faith Summit two days earlier on the Clergy Core Competencies and the role of the faith community in helping families and children hurt by addiction.
- The newly updated COA Community Action Guide was distributed to all 3000 persons attending the CADCA Forum.
- February 22, in La Jolla, CA, Sis presented for the Department of Education's Drug-Free Schools grantees on helping COAs in the school.
- Children of Alcoholics Week was featured on multiple websites, and SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information created a special section for materials to celebrate the week. Boston's mayor declared Valentine's Day Children of Alcoholics Day in Boston.
- A 2006 Recovery Month webcast on addiction and the family was introduced March 1, featuring NACoA's Jerry Moe, M.A. and Sis Wenger.

Coming soon will be presentations at the Washington, DC Coming Home Veteran's Conference in mid-March, speaking engagements at affiliate NCADD – Cincinnati's annual luncheon and conference April 13, and members of NACoA's Clergy Education and Training Project will present at the annual meetings of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, and the Association of Professional Chaplains.

## STUDENTS TEACH ALCOHOL FACTS

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and State Farm have implemented MADD's "Protecting You/Protecting Me" program in several schools this fall. The program is a science-based course for students in grades 1 through 5 taught by trained high school students.

Course topics include growth and development of the brain, effects of alcohol on the developing brain, health and safety, rules and laws, choices and decisions, and communication. For more information, visit the PY/PM website.

## ANXIETY, DRINKING LINK DISCOVERED

Clues about the neurobiology of drinking alcohol behaviors have been identified in a brain mechanism in rats, according to a study in the October 3, 2005 issue of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. Scientists have discovered that rats bred to prefer alcohol showed more anxiety-like behaviors and drank more alcohol than non alcohol preferring rats. The animal's level of anxiety was measured by how much it preferred spending time in a closed area of a maze as opposed to the open area. These alcohol preferring rats also showed lower levels of brain molecules that are known to play a role in anxiety and alcohol-drinking behaviors.

## ADULT CHILDREN CONFERENCE

U.S. Journal Training, Inc. and NACoA will celebrate and honor adult children and recovery on March 29-April 1. The event, to be held at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, will allow

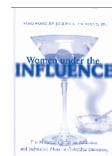
participants to explore contemporary issues as well as share personal stories about recovery. Participants can receive up to 24 Continuing Education Credit Hours and hear lectures presented by leaders of the adult children movement, many of whom are recovery's top pioneers and NACoA leaders. Robert Ackerman, Ph.D., a NACoA founder, is conference chair.

For more details, visit <http://www.usjt.com/acoa06>. Register online and receive a 10% discount by entering code NA11AW. Call NACoA for a complete program brochure.

## ALCOHOL LINKED TO CANCER

Research into why alcohol increases risk of cancer has focused on acetaldehyde, a suspected carcinogen formed as the body metabolizes alcohol. In the journal *Nucleic Acids Research* (vol. 33, num. 11), studies give new clues to the process. "This work provides an important framework for understanding the underlying chemical pathway that could explain the association between drinking and certain types of cancer," says Ting-Kai Li, M.D. director of the NIAAA.

## CASA RELEASES BOOK ON WOMEN



*Women Under the Influence*, based on 10 years of study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, was unveiled February 9 by Joseph A. Califano, Jr., CASA Chairman and CEO, on Capitol Hill in Washington DC before a large luncheon gathering of leaders in the addictions field. The book is available in all major bookstores and online.



NACoA President Sis Wenger with Florida First Lady Columba Bush at CASA book release.

A CASA Conference, *WOMEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE: Substance Abuse and The American Woman*, was held on March 2nd in New York.

## ALCOHOLISM RISKS DIFFERENT FOR WOMEN

Four studies of families affected by alcoholism have revealed several differences between women and men in the causes of alcoholism. For women, childhood stress in general, as well as a nervous, anxious personality, were found to be factors in alcoholism risk. One study found that severe physical punishment in childhood appeared to raise the risk of alcoholism in females but not males.

Other evidence confirmed that children of alcoholics are at increased risk of alcohol problems, but that genetic factors may be more important for men, whereas environment may be somewhat more important for women. In that study, alcoholism in a biological parent, as opposed to an adoptive parent, had a stronger effect on a son's risk of alcoholism. The findings were first reported at a symposium of the Research Society on Alcoholism and are summarized in the February 2006 *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research* (Vol. 30(2), pp. 377-387).



## HARDWIRED TO CONNECT

By Steve Hornberger



“...the human child is hardwired to connect... [to] other people and for moral meaning and openness to the transcendent.

Meeting these basic needs for connection is essential to health and to human flourishing.”

*Hardwired to Connect: The Scientific Case for Authoritative Communities (2002) Institute for American Values (with the Dartmouth Medical School) Executive Summary*

If, as suggested by the above, spirituality is grounded in human biology, is an essential component of our innate humanness, and urges one to find connection, meaning and/or purpose in life, then spirituality is fundamental to human development. This may explain in part why children and adolescents “crave” risky experiences, some of which lead to alcohol or substance use problems, especially if they are not provided with nurturance and healthy choices.

Particularly at risk are children of addicted parents, who are not living in a nurturing environment, one that encourages the development of spirituality. Parental addiction fosters fear, shame, and the development of an inauthentic connection to the world in an effort to hide the family’s problems.

Spirituality can be understood as more expansive and inclusive than any one spiritual belief system, spiritual tradition or relationship with the divine. One need not believe in God or an unseen unifying and organizing energy, or even a higher power, to be a good, moral, ethical, human being with clearly defined codes of behavior (toward others and the environment), to have a purpose to their life and a

yearning for connectedness. For the agnostic, atheist, or existentialist, this striving and yearning for “something” greater than one’s self could mean striving to be a better human being, to be more loving, or to make a stronger contribution to society.

Spirituality is relational and can be understood within the context of one or any combination of four primary relationships: (1) between people and the environment (the land, sea, mountains, sky, etc.); (2) between people and other people in terms of love and justice; (3) between people and their heritage (ancestry); and (4) between people and the divine.

Acknowledging and infusing this expanded definition of spirituality with the developmental tasks of children and adolescents helps them to participate and thrive in today’s society, while also preparing them to be responsible stewards of tomorrow’s society. By

appreciating the complexity and diversity of each human being, by providing for equitable opportunities and competencies, we foster a sense of belonging, strengthen resiliency and offer hope. Such support, belonging and hope is what 12 Step programs offer those struggling with and impacted by alcohol and other addictions.

It is fundamental to acknowledge that the developmental tasks of childhood and adolescence cannot be accomplished by the child or adolescent alone. They do not grow up into well functioning, healthy, contributing

adults only by their own actions. The adult generation is responsible to socialize and care for children and adolescents. We have the challenge and responsibility for how well, or ill-prepared, this next generation will be to succeed us, and for the conditions of society and the environment that they will inherit from us. All of us, family members and non-family members, have a stake and responsibility in the healthy physical, cognitive, emotional, psycho-social and spiritual development of children and adolescents. Their successful development builds the foundation of a just and sustainable society. Yet, children living in families affected by addiction are not likely to experience the consistent care and nurturance essential to healthy emotional, spiritual and social development. It is incumbent upon adults who touch their lives – in schools, faith communities, neighborhoods, health clinics, courts and extended family – to step up, inter-

vene, support and guide these vulnerable young people.

“A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are

sitting, and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. ...the fate of humanity is in his hands.”

-- Abraham Lincoln

*Steve Hornberger, M.S.W., is the lead author of the chapter “Spirituality: Bridging to Public Policy and Civil Society” in the recently published The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence. Roehlkepartain, E., King, P. E., Wagener, L., and Benson, P. L. (Eds.) Thousand Oaks: SAGE*

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“SPIRITUALITY...  
URGES ONE TO FIND  
CONNECTION, MEAN-  
ING AND OR PUR-  
POSE IN LIFE...”

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## BOY SCOUTS STUDY DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

By Stephanie Abbott

Scouting today is much more than learning 19th century skills such as starting a fire without matches or locating the North Star so you can find your way when lost in the woods. Those still may be useful, but today's boys need guidance to find their way in our culture. Alcoholic parents or drugs in the schools are a more likely menace than a bear.

Scouts earn badges to wear on their uniforms to prove competence. To earn a badge in Fitness, the young scout (or Webelo) learns about the dangers of alcohol, other drugs, and inhalants. To quote the manual "Alcohol makes some people do bad things they would never consider doing when they are sober. Drunk drivers are responsible for thousands of deaths on our nation's streets and highways every year. A person who drinks too much for several years may suffer from serious illnesses of the liver and other organs."

"...prescription drugs are dangerous if they are misused. You should never take a prescription drug unless it is prescribed for you by a doctor. All other drugs are dangerous for you.... Marijuana, cocaine and "crack," heroin, "speed", and "pep pills", LSD and other drugs bring nothing but trouble..." Requirement for the badge includes reading and understanding Take A Stand Against Drugs, obtainable through the Boy Scout council service center.

Makes you wish all adults would earn their Fitness badges, too. Sort of like locating the North Star to find our way out of the woods.

## HEALING OUR REGULATORY SYSTEMS

By Tian Dayton

The limbic system is control central for self regulation. It governs such wide ranging functions as appetite and sleep cycles, mood and our ability to regulate our emotional states. So connected are our minds and bodies that, if we want to affect and improve our emotional states, we need to make meaningful changes in the way we treat our bodies. Unfortunately, our limbic or emotional selves can and often do become deregulated when we live with the stressful and traumatic ups and downs of addiction. But this needn't be the end of the story. There is much that we can do each and every day to restore emotional, psychological and physiological balance; such as:

**Getting enough sleep:** We need sufficient sleep to give our nervous system, muscles and minds the rest they require to function well. Lack of proper sleep can exacerbate depression, anxiety, energy, mood and ability to concentrate.

**Breathing:** Scientists have discovered that oxygen is critical for the production of ATP; in fact it is its most vital component. If something goes wrong with the production of ATP, the result is lowered vitality, disease and premature aging.

**Yoga:** Increases respiratory efficiency, normalizes gastro-intestinal, endocrine and excretory functions and increases musculoskeletal flexibility and joint range of motion.

**Eating well:** Eat a balanced diet and stay away from sugar, white flour and caffeine.

## SUPPORT GROUPS SHOW RESULTS

In Northern California's San Mateo County, NACoA's affiliate, The Children's Place, has demonstrated statistically significant increases across seven of ten indicators on the evaluation of its school-based program required by the county's outcome based management and budgeting initiative. The remaining three indicators also showed measurable positive changes but the changes were not large enough to identify it as "statistically significant."

The Children's Place hosts the annual summer camp for children of addicted parents featured in the Emmy-award winning film *Lost Childhood: Growing Up In an Alcoholic Family*. The film aired on over 100 PBS stations throughout 2005 and is available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information. Program design and activities for both the school and summer camp programs are similar to those in SAMHSA's *Children's Program Kit*.

## SAP CONFERENCE



2006 National Student Assistance Conference will be held March 23-25 at The Westin St.

Francis in San Francisco. The conference theme is "Promising Practices in Keeping Students Safe and Drug-Free." It is sponsored by NACoA affiliate National Student Assistance Association and the Student Assistance Journal.

For more information or to register visit [www.nsaac.info](http://www.nsaac.info) or call 1-800-453-7733.



# Affiliates



The **Troy Community Coalition** for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse's Executive Director, Ann M. Comiskey, received the Advocate of the Year Award from CADCA at its Awards Luncheon February 16, in Washington DC. The awards are given to CADCA members who have shown an outstanding commitment and passion for educating their legislative officials. Troy also sent a team of clergy and coalition staff to participate in NACoA's Faith Community Pilot Project held in Detroit on January 24 (story on p.1) [www.troycoalition.com](http://www.troycoalition.com)



## The Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse For Greater New Orleans

is continuing to bring comfort and services to people in great need. Staff members walk the neighborhoods and visit people devastated by Hurricane Katrina and who are afraid or unable to go out. John King, CADA Executive Director, asked NACoA to thank those who stepped in to help. While the struggle continues to be great and local funding sources are not able to provide the level of support needed, CADA has ¾ of its staff back and has added two support group programs for children of alcoholics who have also suffered great losses from Katrina. [www.cadagno.org](http://www.cadagno.org)



## Volunteers of America of Alaska, Inc. gets today's prize for creativity in raising awareness: With some available printing funds, they

put this message on small, pocket sized band-aid dispensers, handy for getting the word out to a variety of folks: The people hurt most by alcohol don't even drink - Children of alcoholic or addicted parents need more than a band aid... Let them TALK, TRUST & FEEL. The band-

aid dispensers are being distributed at the local winter festival in Anchorage and at a native-hosted conference in Fairbanks where much of the focus will be on grandparents raising grandchildren. [www.voa.org/alaska](http://www.voa.org/alaska)



## The National Association for Children of Alcoholics, UK

reports that its helpline for children of alcoholics is bringing help and hope to thousands of children and youth.

- 84 trained volunteer helpline counselors responded to 13,092 calls from children of alcoholics throughout the UK.
- 655 calls were from children age 11 and younger and 8,722 calls were from those age 12 to 18, all living in homes where one or both parents have a problem with alcohol today.

NACOA-UK's helpline provides anonymity and safety for children who may be afraid to ask for help. [www.nacoa.org.uk](http://www.nacoa.org.uk)



## The Alcoholism Council of Cincinnati Area

will host its annual Recovery with Dignity Day during National Alcohol Awareness Month on April 13. There will be a full day for the professional community, including morning and afternoon workshops. Sis Wenger, NACoA's President/CEO will be the keynote speaker at the luncheon and will lead a workshop session. [www.alcoholismcouncil.org](http://www.alcoholismcouncil.org)



## NACOA Deutschland

will publish NACoA's Kit for Early Childhood Professionals in German this year. It will be distributed to all primary schools in Berlin by the Berlin Senate for Education. It is hoped that other federal states will follow. In the spring, NACOA Deutschland will offer a course for pediatricians taught by a NACOA member who is

a pediatric psychiatrist in a joint effort with the Berlin pediatric federation. Coming up in the fall NACOA Deutschland will be co-organizers with the Berlin Senate for Education of a conference about COAs for teachers and educators. And, their highly successful joint school project with Al-Anon/Alateen in Berlin is continuing. [www.nacoa.org.de](http://www.nacoa.org.de)



## TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)

provides clinical case management and other services to men, women, and adolescents in the criminal justice and corrections systems. TASC serves approximately 30,000 clients in Illinois each year, including inmates at the Sheridan National Model Drug Prison & Reentry Program Center, an entire prison dedicated to substance abuse recovery and prisoner rehabilitation. While 54 percent of inmates in Illinois commit new crimes and end up back in prison, early results show that the recidivism rate for men who have been through the Sheridan Correctional Center, where TASC now provides case management, is only 13 percent. [www.tasc.org](http://www.tasc.org)



## Betty Ford Center Children's Five Star Kids Program

in Irving TX held its annual Reunion Roundup during National Children of Alcoholics Week. Over 600 children and their immediate family members gathered to celebrate with dancing, music, games, arts and crafts, face painters, a milking contest, and "rollo-roper" where kids try to rope a steer. Some children - now teenagers - were returning for the seventh time. In the tradition of past Reunion Roundups, to close the event everyone gathered for the Serenity Prayer in the largest circle ever.

[www.bettyfordcenter.org/children](http://www.bettyfordcenter.org/children)



## OUR DEEPEST THANKS!

NACoA is deeply grateful to the many generous donors who continue to support our growing efforts to help children and families impacted by alcohol and drug dependence. Since our previous newsletter, contributions have been received from our loyal members, Federal, State and corporate employees who have designated Children of Alcoholics (NACoA) during their annual Fall workplace campaigns. We thank all of you for your help. (Individuals and corporations supporting our Run for the Children® are listed in our special insert.) We especially thank the following generous donors:

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## PRIDE CONFERENCE

PRIDE Youth Programs will host its 2006 PRIDE World Drug Prevention Conference at the Washington Hilton April 12-15, 2006 in Washington, DC. For more information visit [www.prideyouth-programs.org](http://www.prideyouth-programs.org). NACoA is pleased to be a part of PRIDE's Washington, DC Steering Committee for this 29th World Drug Prevention Conference.

## REGISTER FOR ALCOHOL SCREENING DAY

The National Alcohol Screening Day, a program that helps communities educate the public about alcohol's impact on health, will be held on April 6. The theme this year is "You Don't Have to Have an Alcohol Problem to Have a Problem with Alcohol." Organizations that participate can register for the program and receive a kit including screening forms and materials to educate visitors about the effects of alcohol on overall health.

Sites that participated in the 2005 program and have materials left over can register for the "no materials" option and be listed on the event locator free of charge. To register, visit [www.NationalScreeningDay.org](http://www.NationalScreeningDay.org) or call 781-239-0071. NACoA is a co-sponsor of this annual event.

## NM DWI LAW MANDATES INTERLOCKS

New Mexico has adopted a law mandating judges to sentence those convicted of driving while intoxicated, even first-time offenders, to have an ignition-interlock device installed in their cars.

Retired physicist and Santa Fe resident Dick Roth heads Impact DWI, a nonprofit organization that compiles and analyses data on drunken driving in the state. "We have more interlocks installed per capita than any other state," he said... "but we hope to see the number get closer to 100 percent."



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS  
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March 16-18  
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10TH RENEWAL CONVENTION  
 ON ADULT CHILDREN  
 RECOVERY

March 29-April 1  
 Las Vegas Hilton  
[www.usjt.com](http://www.usjt.com)

APRIL IS ALCOHOL  
 AWARENESS MONTH

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

**“We are not traitors to the family honor to admit that we learned some inadequate ways of dealing with reality.” -Earnie Larsen**

**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



National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month

NACoA will honor and celebrate family recovery during the 2006 Recovery Month at Disneyland in Anaheim, CA. Jerry Moe, M.A., national director of the Betty Ford Center Children’s Programs, will chair the celebration, which will include *NACoA Run for the Children®* teams in the Half Marathon, the 5 K Run, and family teams in the Family Fun Run.

The event will be Disneyland’s Inaugural Marathon Weekend and will be held September 15-17, 2006. Call NACoA for more information at (888)55-4COAS.