



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS NETWORK

FALL 2002 / VOLUME 18 No. 4

In Brief

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NACoA!

2003 will be NACoA's 20th year of helping children cope with parental addiction. How perfect that we will kick off this year-long celebration at WALT DISNEY WORLD®, where children and families have been having fun together for generations!

We have planned a weekend of excitement and fun for the whole family. Beginning with a pep rally and dinner for our runners, friends and families on January 11, 2003, continuing with the *Run for the Children*SM marathon and half marathon, and culminating in a celebration dinner and NACoA's 20th Birthday party on January 12th. It will truly be a weekend to remember.

There will also be a FamilyFun Magazine 5K & Kids Races as well as plenty of time to explore the many attractions. Bring the whole family to enjoy the magic of WALT DISNEY WORLD®, cheer on our runners and walkers, and celebrate with NACoA. We can't wait to see you there!

Call Mary Gillilan at (888) 55-4COAS for details.



NACoA CONTRIBUTES TO HEAD START MAGAZINE



The Fall issue of *Children and Families*, the magazine of the National Head Start Association, will feature stories by NACoA members as it focuses on helping children of alcoholics and other drug dependent parents. The members of the association will also receive with their copy of the magazine NACoA's new *Kit for Early Childhood Professionals*.

The articles were solicited and collected by Stephanie Abbott, editor of the *NACoA NETWORK*, from professionals with a strong interest in helping COAs. "Working with Julie Konieczny, who edits the magazine, was a complete joy," she said. "It was a wonderful opportunity to get our message out."

Topics included the effects of the trauma of growing up in an alcoholic family on the developing child; how caregivers can be helpful to these children; working with children from addicted families; who can help this population; tips on how to reach the non alcoholic parent or

caregiver; and important messages that the COA needs to hear.

Also included is information about children of alcoholics that has been established by good research, useful books on the subject, and available resources, all contributed by the NACoA office.

Contributing authors were: Stephanie Abbott, M.A., adjunct professor at Marymount University; Tian Dayton, Ph.D., Director of Program Development of the Caron Foundation; James Emshoff, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Chair of the Community Psychology Program of Georgia State University; Catherine Herzog, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Services, Waterford School District, Michigan; Jeannette L. Johnson, Ph.D., Director of the Research Center on Children and Youth at the State University of New York at Buffalo; and Jerry Moe, M.A., who is Director, Children's Program, Betty Ford Center, California.

Donald Ian Macdonald, M.D., the C.E.O. of Employee Health Programs in Maryland, and NACoA Chair, wrote the guest editorial.

To send a letter to *Children and Families*, write to 1651 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

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SOCIAL WORK INITIATIVE

The NACoA Board of Directors agreed at the October meeting to focus attention on a social work initiative and to engage experts in the social work field to be part of an expert panel. The initiative will focus on efforts to raise awareness of the needs of children living with addicted parents, and of the numerous opportunities there are to help them within the scope of social work practice. A first step will be to begin the professional consensus process to develop a set of "core competencies" similar to the process that was used for primary health care providers, and those being developed currently for clergy.

In a collateral effort, *Social Work Today* featured NACoA in an article on the contribution of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) to addiction treat-



ment and recovery. Our message – that EAP workers need to be prepared to help the entire family when addiction is present, and that, sometimes, the troubled employee is actually the spouse or parent trying to deal with addiction in the family.

The article, written by NACoA's Marion Torchia, Ph.D., was based on interviews with experts in occupational social work and managers of EAPs. Social Work Today's Web Site is www.socialworktoday.com.

NACoA IN RUN FOR RECOVERY



NACoA staff and volunteers participated in the 5K National Run for Recovery, held in Washington DC, Saturday, September 21. As a reminder to recovery advocates that recovery includes the family and children, all wore a NACoA Run for the Children t-shirt...and finished the 5K.

ANNUAL MEETING

The 2002 annual meeting of the NACoA Board of Directors will take place in Orlando FL on January 10, 2003. NACoA members in good standing are welcome to attend. Those interested are asked to contact the national office so that adequate arrangements can be made.



NIAAA DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

National Institutes of Health Director Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D. has announced the appointment of Ting-Kai Li, M.D. as the new director of the NIH's National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Dr. Li is currently Distinguished Professor, Department of Medicine, and of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Indiana University School of Medicine, where he also serves as Director of the Indiana Alcohol Research Center.

"I am honored to come to NIAAA at this exciting time," said Dr. Li. "Great progress has been made over the last two decades in our scientific knowledge base of genetics, neurobiology, and the behavioral and other aspects of alcohol abuse and alcoholism."

Dr. Li is a major participant in two NIAAA-supported research consortia - the Collaborative Study on the Genetics of Alcoholism, and the Integrative Neuroscience Initiative on Alcoholism. He received his medical degree from Harvard University in 1959.

ALCOHOLICS' WIVES IN STUDY

Women who are married to alcoholics are three times more likely to drink heavily and often, three times more likely to have careers, and had no higher rates for major depression or bipolar disorder than women married to non-alcoholic men, according to new research.

Dr. Marc Schuckit, director of the Alcohol Research Center in the Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System, has been conducting a genetic study on 453 sons of alcoholics since 1978. Ninety-two became alcoholic themselves,

and the research follows their lives as well as tracing the prevalence of alcoholism in their own children. Dr. Schuckit decided to study the wives of the subjects as well, and these findings are based on interviews with 327 women.

"People who drink a lot tend to congregate with other people who drink a lot, which tends to magnify the probability that drinking will lead to severe problems," said Dr. Schuckit. "Whatever it is that is going on in these marriages, it's not that the woman is impaired. They are pretty highly functioning people."

The study appears in the September issue of the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*.



POLL REVEALS CHILDHOOD DRINKING

Leaders in education, government,

public health, law enforcement, and prevention tell us that the problem of drinking in childhood is serious in the U.S. and growing worse. The following key statistics were revealed by the nationwide opinion leader poll entitled "The Hidden Costs of Childhood Drinking": 78% of respondents said drinking by children is a "very serious" problem in the U.S.; 74% responded that more children are drinking alcohol at an earlier age compared to 10 years ago; and 85% agreed that it was either "very easy" or "somewhat easy" for children 9 to 15 to get access to alcohol.

Self-reporting by the children indicated that 71% of 8th graders and 88% of 10th graders believe alcohol

is readily available to them; 41% of 9th graders reported drinking in the past month; 32% of students had their first drink before age 13; 23% of 8th graders have been drunk; and 51% of 8th graders reported having consumed alcohol in their lifetime.

The poll was conducted by the opinion research firm of Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which released the report jointly with NIAAA's *Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free*. The latter initiative features more than 30 Governors' spouses spearheading efforts to prevent the use of alcohol by children aged 9 to 15, and is the only national coalition that focuses on prevention in this young age group. It is advised by representatives from 28 public and private organizations, including NACoA.

NIDA LAUNCHES NEW PUBLICATION

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) will publish *Science & Practice Perspectives*, a new publication that will promote a practical dialogue between researchers and treatment providers. It is expected to help clinicians maximize their programs and treatment outcomes and help researchers design studies relevant to the needs of providers and patients.

"Drug abuse researchers and clinicians share a common dedication to reducing the devastation caused by drug abuse and addiction. By combining forces, researchers and clinicians can produce treatment results and improvements that far surpass the results that either could achieve alone," commented NIDA's Acting Director Dr. Glen Hanson.

For more information, go online at NIDA's Web site www.drugabuse.gov.

In The News continued on Pg. 7, col. 3.



RECIPROCAL RECOVERY

By Jeannette L. Johnson and Juanita J. Leonard



The effects of addiction treatment on adults are well known. The literature is quite clear: when adults stay in treatment, they reduce their alcohol, heroin and cocaine use,



their involvement in illegal and criminal activity goes down, and their engagement in health-risking behaviors decreases (www.bsasinc.org). Treatment works and adults are seeking help in unprecedented numbers.

Many of these adults seeking treatment have children, and in some cases, the children come along to the treatment clinic while their parent participates in the treatment regimen. Indeed, you can go into many clinics and observe that the corners of these waiting rooms have small tables littered with coloring books, crayons, and other toys that have typically been donated to the clinic for the entertainment of the smallest clients.

But are these children clients? Although the government recognizes that primary prevention is an effective strategy to stop the intergenerational transmission of substance abuse, and gives millions of dollars to schools, faith-based organizations, and after-school programs, very little is done for the children who come along to their parents' treatment clinic. We miss an opportunity to reach these children. After all, we know that they are the ones who are at the greatest risk for

becoming alcoholics by virtue of their parents' alcoholism or other drug use. We know that they are the ones who may come walking into the treatment clinic of their own accord, with their own addiction or other problems, perhaps within the next decade.

When parents are in recovery, their children need support and education so they can make sense of the changes. When they participate in a prevention program, such as a group support program, they can also become active participants in their family's recovery program, and they do not have to stand passively by while only the parent receives help.

Treatment programs, if they work, engage the clients to learn about living a life without drugs or alcohol. It means to live differently, to think differ-

ently, and to act differently. Recovery from addiction is an actively evolving lifestyle, and the children of these adult clients are actively evolving with the parent. Perhaps we should involve the children in the recovery process by providing something for them while they are at the clinic.

Most prevention programs that are designed for children teach them some basic facts about alcoholism and drugs; they teach them about relationships, families, and themselves. Primarily, the children learn that they are not responsible for their parents' behavior. They learn that they did not cause the parent to abuse drugs or alcohol and that they cannot stop the parent's drug taking

behaviors. Indeed, the camaraderie they achieve with other children and the knowledge that they have likeable peers who live in the same type of environment also teach them fundamental truths about themselves. First they learn that they are not alone, and they learn that there can be more to their lives than the disease of alcoholism. They learn about life's possibilities.

Essentially what these children find is a safe haven. They meet adults who will talk to them openly about what may well have been their "family secret." The isolation and stigma are quickly lifted when they meet other children who share the

same experiences. They gain hope and become free to pursue their own interests with the surety of knowing that their actions do not cause their parents to drink

"RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION IS AN ACTIVELY EVOLVING LIFESTYLE..."

or take drugs.

What does this do for the home environment? It puts the focus back on the parents and their problems. The problem is no longer hiding the drinking from the child or denying that there is a problem. The child who tried to manipulate sobriety is removed from this responsibility.

Reciprocal recovery: when one changes, the other one does too. It doesn't matter who starts first, only that the change begins.

Jeannette L. Johnson, Ph.D., is Director of the Center for Studies on Children and Youth, University at Buffalo (SUNY), Buffalo, NY. Juanita J. Leonard is a Research Consultant with Active Guide, LLC, Denver, CO.

OUR DREAM

By Stephanie Abbott

We have a dream at NACoA. We visualize every American understanding the nature of parental addiction and how it affects children. We visualize them reaching out effectively to give hope and help in whatever the context of being with those children.

For counselors, social workers, and psychologists, we imagine good training in addiction studies – including training in the impact of growing up with addiction in the family – so that they are well equipped to deal with a problem that statistically is a very large part of their practice.

For doctors, dentists, and all in health care professions, we hope for training in recognizing the effects of alcoholism on the family, so that they are equipped to do appropriate interventions.

For the faith community, we can see all clergy having the information they need to counsel and refer effectively, to welcome twelve step groups to their houses of worship, and to educate their parishioners on the nature of addiction, and the needs of the children.

For teachers, we imagine them knowing the community resources, how to communicate with children of alcoholics with helpful messages, and how to encourage parents to use the help available.

As we work toward this dream we cooperate with other agencies with the same goal. This greatly extends our ability to affect systems that affect children. Part of our work has resulted in Kits for professionals who are interested in children and families hurt by alcoholism, one for parents,

and one for the kids themselves. All of these Kits are full of useful information and “how-tos,” resources and referrals.

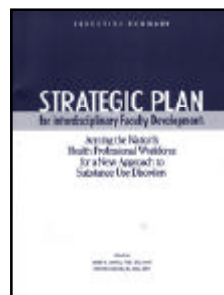
Right off the press is our latest Kit, the colorful *Kit for Early Childhood Professionals*. As always, we encourage reproduction of the publication so the information will reach as many people as possible.



We believe in our dream.

PLAN FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN for Interdisciplinary Faculty Development - Arming the Nation's Health



Professional Workforce for a New Approach to Substance Use Disorders, has been adopted by multiple health professional organizations

following two years of development.

The plan, developed by the Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse (AMERSA), is designed to bring about the systemic changes needed to prepare health professionals to take on an expanded role in addressing the Nation's substance use disorder problems. It includes essential “core competencies” and numerous references to addressing the needs of children affected by parental substance use disorders. The full document is available at www.amersa.org

VIDEO SHELF

By Stephanie Abbott



Two videos have been released recently featuring Claudia Black, Ph.D. One is new, the other is a re-release.

Double Jeopardy: Addiction and Depression, Viewing the World Through Clouded Lenses

In this video, Dr. Black explains clinical depression and how it can interact with addiction to alcohol, drugs, gambling, violence and sex. She uses a lecture format and covers the key points of the cause and treatment of depressive illness, the importance of abstinence from addictive behaviors and substances, the problem of relapse, and the use of anti-depressants.



The second video is a revised edition of *Children of Denial: Growing Up With Addiction* which demonstrates the three basic rules of a troubled family system: Don't Talk, Don't Trust, and Don't Feel.

Dr. Black is a lecturer, author, clinical consultant, and trainer who has expanded her work with family systems and addictive disorders to develop models of intervention and treatment for multi-addictions, anger, family violence and relapse.

For more information go online to www.claudialblack.com or call (800) 698-0148.

THE RED ROAD TO WELLBRIETY *In the Native American Way*,

was released in September. The book draws on the philosophies and practices of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous – and is available at www.whitebison.org.





Affiliate News

Throughout September, NACoA affiliates celebrated National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, to raise public awareness that addiction is a treatable public health problem, and that children living with alcoholism or illicit drug use deserve support from the entire community.



Encouraged by the Oregon Partnership in Portland, Oregon, several hundred advocates of addiction treatment launched Recovery Month on September 1 by joining hands across the Columbia River's Interstate Bridge. Their message—that support for those in recovery reaches across state lines—was clear.

Governor John A. Kitzhaber proclaimed September as Recovery Month in Oregon, calling upon citizens to deliver the message that addiction is a chronic, relapsing illness that can be successfully treated. For more information, contact Chris Curtis, the Partnership's communication director, at 1-800-282-7035.



Faith Partners celebrated Recovery Month

with a pair of conferences – in Austin, Texas, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Faith Partners trains congregational leaders and religious networks to address the problems of addiction among their members, and supports their prevention, intervention, and support efforts. For more information contact Trish Merrill at 512-451-9504.



recoveryresources

A full slate of public awareness activities helped Recovery Resources celebrate

Recovery Month, including a press conference with the mayor of Elyria, Ohio. Elaine Georgeas, executive director of Lorain County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, and

Helen Jones, president of Recovery Resources, spoke of the importance of supporting people in recovery.

Announcements went to local radio stations and area churches. Recovery Resources' employee assistance program (EAP) newsletter made Recovery Month its lead story. For more information, contact Janet Crate at 216-431-4131.



White Bison, Inc., an organization whose mission is to promote "wellbriety"

within the Native American community, held its Third Annual Circles of Recovery Conference in Billings, Montana, from September 26 to 29.

On display at the conference was a set of new anti-drug posters with messages expressed in terms of Native American culture. Among them was a poster and pamphlet jointly developed by



White Bison and NACoA, telling children and teens that their families' problems are not their fault, and that they can find help for themselves. 1000 COA posters and 10,000 pamphlets were distributed.

White Bison has sponsored four special Native American "Wellbriety Month" celebrations, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Anchorage, Alaska; Yuma, Arizona; and Billings, Montana. For more information about these events, contact Richard Simonelli at 1-877-871-1495.



On September 26 Sis Wenger, NACoA's executive director, and Mary Carol Melton, former NACoA chair, visited with the leadership at two Cincinnati affiliates: Nan Franks Richardson of the Alcoholism Council of the Cincinnati Area (NCADD) and Dr. Bea Lampkin of Glad House, Inc. Ms. Melton has recently been elected Chair of the Board for NCADD Cincinnati.



Sis also visited with Ann Comiskey, executive director of the Troy Community Coalition in Troy, Michigan. Ann is planning to walk the Half Marathon in the *Run for the Children*SM. (Last year, Myrtle Muntz of Recovery Resources completed a Half Marathon.) The Coalition will be working with 17 neighboring coalitions that make up the Coalition of Healthy Communities, to develop public awareness activities for Children of Alcoholics Week 2003.



Informed Families supported or hosted multiple drug prevention events throughout Florida in connection with Red Ribbon Week, October 23-31. Peggy Sapp, president of Informed Families, is also president of the National Family Partnership, the national sponsor of Red Ribbon Week.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

NACoA's work is sustained by our generous and caring supporters. We especially thank the following individuals for their contributions received since our last newsletter.

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ALCOHOL STILL PRIMARY DRUG OF ABUSE

Alcohol continues to be the primary reason people seek treatment, according to data from the national Treatment Episode Data Set. In 1999 (the most recent year for which data is available) there were 737,429 admissions to treatment facilities for alcohol abuse, more than three times the number for any other drug. There were 257,426 admissions for opiates, 228,206 for cocaine, and 223,597 for marijuana. The treatment facilities surveyed included only those that are licensed or certified by state substance abuse agencies to provide substance abuse treatment and required to provide client-level data.

For more information online, go to www.samhsa.gov/oas/teds/99TEDS/99Teds.pdf.

MARYLAND STUDENT ASSISTANCE RATES HIGH MARKS

The Maryland Student Assistance Program (MSAP) earned top grades in a recent evaluation. Nearly two-thirds of parents interviewed reported positive changes in their children's behavior, attitude, attendance, or grades. When the MSAP assessor recommended therapy, 96% of the parents agreed with the recommendation. Call 301-403-8329 for a copy of the report.



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Support groups help. November is National Student Assistance Month. Support your local school's SAP programs.

www.nacoa.org



Please Check



Children of Alcoholics(NACoA)



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

NACoA's *Run for the Children* has gained two additional volunteer coaches. Ellen and Gary Bloome of Boca Raton have joined Christina Pitts in supporting *TEAM NACoA* walkers and runners participating in the January 12th marathon.



Ellen and Gary will run the New York Marathon in early November; this will be Gary's 40th. They can be reached via their Website www.ontherighttrack.org

Read Christina's newsletters on the NACoA Website, or email her at christina@odysseyprojects.org