



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS NETWORK

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A SORROWFUL HOLIDAY

by Stephanie Abbott

Our hearts go out to the many children who lost a parent in the tragedy of September 11. For them, this time of year will never be the same again. It will be a somber holiday as well for those of us who grieve with them.

There are millions of children who have lost a parent to addiction, and who may have lost the other parent as well to preoccupation and worry. These parents may be physically present but the disease makes it impossible for them to be tender guardians of their children. Every year at the holiday season, when luckier children look forward to happy times, COAs dread the increase in chaos, quarreling, and tension that the season brings to their families.

NACoA wishes all of you a holiday spent close to people you love. Let us all remember the children during this time.

In Brief

Alcohol, Other Drugs, and Child Welfare, published by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), can be obtained from CWLA at 440 First Street, NW, Washington DC 20001-2085, or at aod@cwla.org.

NATIONAL ALCOHOL SCREENING DAY

NACoA will again co-sponsor this nationwide screening, to be held April, 11, 2002. NACoA affiliates will receive planning materials soon.

AMERSA IS 25 YEARS OLD; INCLUDES COAs IN PROJECT

AMERSA 25: Looking Back, Moving Forward was the theme for the twenty-fifth annual conference of the Association for Medical Education & Research in Substance Abuse, held on November 8-10 in Alexandria, VA.

AMERSA is a multi-disciplinary organization of health care professionals dedicated to improving education in the care of individuals with substance abuse problems. One of AMERSA's current projects is the development of an Interdisciplinary Faculty Development project, which will train and support mentors throughout the country. In turn, these mentors will provide education and support to health care professionals to identify substance abuse and its related problems in primary health care settings. The project, directed by Richard L. Brown, M.D. M.P.H., and funded primarily by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is also supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. The project incorporates the *Core Competencies for Involvement of Health Care Providers in the Care of Children and Adolescents in Families Affected by Substance Abuse* developed by NACoA's health care initiative's expert working group, with leaders of primary health care organizations.

"The inclusion of a focus on the children and family of those suffering from addiction will help to bring the knowledge and skills necessary for

health care providers to be comfortable and effective in identifying and assisting the other victims of addiction—the affected family members," said Hoover Adger, Jr., M.D., M.P.H., former President of AMERSA and former NACoA President.

Mary Haack, Ph.D., R.N., of Rutgers University's College of Nursing faculty, is director of the Strategic Plan for Interdisciplinary Faculty Development; Dr. Adger is associate director. The Strategic Plan, acting in an advisory role to federal agencies, will delineate the national needs in substance abuse treatment and prevention in clinical and community settings, identify the recommended competencies across all represented medical disciplines, discern the training needs for students and faculty, and propose a national strategy for addressing those needs. NACoA Board member Antonnette V. Graham, Ph.D., M.S.W., R.N., is part of the AMERSA team creating the curriculum for the Faculty Development Program.

Meeting highlights included a plenary presentation on "Recent Developments in the Genetics of

Continued on Pg. 3, AMERSA

INSIDE:

Comment	p. 4
Bookshelf	p. 5
Affiliate News	p. 6
Marathon News	p. 7



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WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Haack, Ph.D., R.N., is a researcher, clinician, and professor of addictions nursing at Rutgers University. Her clinical interests include family intervention and family drug courts. She is currently principal investigator of "Strengthening Families," a program in Philadelphia that helps mothers involved in the court system and works with their children as well.



Dr. Haack is also director of AMERSA's Strategic Plan for Interdisciplinary Faculty Development, which includes strategies that build on NACoA's *Core Competencies* (See p 1.)

Argin M. Hutchins, M.A., L.C.P.C. is a committed "lifetime learner," currently studying for a doctorate in public health at Morgan State University in Baltimore. He is coordinator of the Baltimore Public School System's Office of Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention; earlier he worked in the school system's Alternative Schools and Programs.



According to Mr. Hutchins, "Exposure of the children to family addiction is the Number One issue facing our school system today. Even before the children are tempted to use drugs themselves, this familial exposure has a negative impact on their academic performance." His work counteracts this negative influence.

NACoA GEARS UP FOR COA WEEK 2002

Preparations are underway for the nationwide celebration of *Children of Alcoholics Week 2002* during Valentine's Day week (February 10-16). The theme for next February's observance, "No Child Unsupported," proclaims the responsibility all share for the well-being of all children, but especially for those who are struggling with addiction in their families. NACoA envisions a society where these vulnerable children have access to adults who can help them.

NACoA's affiliates have received a kit to help launch a local *COA Week* celebration. The centerpiece is a series of posters and pamphlets developed by the White House Office of Drug Control Policy, the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, and NACoA to encourage young people to talk with supportive adults. The kit contains suggestions for distributing these materials to various community organizations that touch children's lives.

During *COA Week*, NACoA's fourth annual poster contest will be held in schools and youth service organizations throughout the country. This year's theme is "It's Good to Ask for Help." Posters must be submitted to NACoA's judges by March 1, 2002. Prizes will include U.S. savings bonds and McDonald's gift certificates.

Child-serving organizations and individuals who care about children are encouraged to take part in the observance. Materials to celebrate *COA Week* and to sponsor the poster contest can be downloaded from the NACoA Web site at www.nacoa.org.



PREVENTION LEAGUE OFFICERS

The National Drug Prevention League, a private-sector coalition for substance abuse prevention, has elected officers for the coming year:

- President: Steve Hornberger, Child Welfare League of America
- Vice President: Bobby Heard, Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Vice President: Ford Kuramoto, National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
- Secretary/Treasurer: William Caltrider, Jr., Center for Alcohol and Drug Research and Education
- At Large: James Emshoff, Georgia State University and NACoA Board of Scientific Advisors
- At Large: Marie Dyak, Entertainment Industries Council

Sis Wenger, NACoA's executive director, is immediate past president.

AMERSA AT 25

continued from Pg. 1.

Alcoholism" by Marc A. Schuckit, M.D., a member of NACoA's Board of Scientific Advisers, and a Research and Innovative/Educational Programs workshop on "Teaching Residents about Parental Alcoholism and Child Neglect Using a Standardized Case," by Celeste R. Wilson, M.D., of Boston Children's Hospital.

Mark J. Werner, M.D., C.P.E., Vice President for Medical Affairs and Director of Medical Education for Franklin Square Hospital Center in Baltimore MD, became AMERSA President during the conference's final business meeting. Dr. Werner is a NACoA Board member and has been part of the NACoA primary health care initiative's expert working group from its beginning in September, 1995.



RECOVERY LEADERS MEET

"Faces and Voices of Recovery," the first-ever national meeting of local recovery leaders, took place early in October in St. Paul, Minnesota. Organizers presented results of a national survey of people in recovery and their families, which is intended to help shape a planned media campaign directed to both the recovering community and the general public. The survey found that people affected by addiction believe the campaign should transmit positive messages, focusing on the fact that lives change for the better.

The meeting provided a forum for input into the media campaign, which will hopefully "create a broad base in the recovery community with the capability to organize and activate," according to David Mitchell, a partner in GMMB, the communications firm that will develop the campaign. "The second goal is to change public perceptions about addiction and recovery, and the third will be to create or change public policies," added Mitchell. To learn more about the developing recovery movements, visit www.recoveryadvocacy.org.

ANDREA BARTHWELL NOMINATED FOR ONDCP POSITION

The nomination of Andrea Barthwell, M.D., by President Bush to serve as Deputy Director for Demand Reduction at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy has been received with enthusiasm by the addiction treatment and prevention fields. Dr. Barthwell is President and CEO of BRASS Foundation, an addiction treatment center in Chicago, Illinois. She is also President of the Board of the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and serves on the boards of several alcohol and drug treatment and prevention organizations, including the American Methadone Treatment Association and the Legal Action Center.

TREATMENT FOR THE UNBORN

New findings could lead to a pharmaceutical treatment that could block the effects of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome for the unborn children of mothers who continue to drink during pregnancy.

"For more than 20 years, alcohol researchers have been working to unravel the mechanisms of fetal alcohol damage in order eventually to develop potent interventions. Today's report of a compound that can block fetal alcohol damage in mouse whole embryos suggests that the fetus is amenable to treatment," said Enoch Gordis, M.D., Director, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, on May 18.

The study was conducted by Shao-Yu Chen, Ph.D., and Kathleen K. Sulik, Ph.D., of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and Michael E. Charness, M.D. and Michael E. Wilkemyer, Ph.D., of Harvard Medical School.

NEW WEB SITE ADDRESSES CHILDREN AND ALCOHOL

www.alcoholfreechildren.org is dedicated to preventing the use of alcohol by children ages 9 to 15.



THE EFFECT OF TRAUMA ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS



By Tian Dayton

A family that contains trauma in the form of addiction or abuse produces relationship dynamics that perpetuate dysfunction. The impact of trauma on the family system has three main components. First is constriction, leading to enmeshment; second is avoidance, leading to disengagement, and third is impulsive behavior, leading to chaos. Let's examine those three more closely.

Constriction of emotional and psychological expression makes dissension and disagreement seem threatening. The underlying unconscious fear is that if everyone doesn't agree, there will be discord, which might explode into pain related to the trauma resurfacing and/or abandonment. Instead, relationships may become enmeshed. In the attempt not to feel isolated or risk abandonment, people may become fused in their identities.

Avoidance is the other side of the

coin, in which the unconscious fear is that somehow charged emotional pain related to relationship traumas will emerge if we allow ourselves to get too close or open with family members. In this case, family members imagine that by avoiding contact with each other or circumventing sharing painful emotional subjects, they will save themselves from pain. They see the solution for keeping pain from their inner worlds from erupting as avoiding subjects, people, places, and things that might trigger explosion that could lead to abandonment.

With impulsive behavior that leads to chaos, that inner world is being acted out. Painful feelings that are too frightening for family members to feel get externalized, exploding into the container of the family and

getting acted out instead of talked out. Blame, anger, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, yelling, and sexual promiscuity are

ways of expressing emotional and psychological pain in dysfunctional ways that lead to chaos.

All of these dynamics are attempts to avoid further pain. Family members who have experienced deep emotional wounding become very adept at colluding to avoid more pain from erupting and "rocking the boat" all over again.

Such a family becomes fertile ground for producing trauma-related symptoms in its members. When addiction is present the often strict taboos

against genuine and authentic expression of the emotional pain that family abuse engenders assure that pain does not get talked about. Consequently, it does not get processed, worked through and put into any context that might allow family members to move past it. Rather, it sits within the family system, a buried land mine waiting to explode when it gets stepped on. "No talk" rules and rigid expectations of "looking good" behavior drive pain downward into the container of the family.

Members who attempt to expose the family pathology, to announce to the world that the "Emperor has no clothes" may be cut off. Members who act out the underlying emotional climate in high risk behaviors may become scapegoats who provide the family with a distraction, giving parents and other siblings something else to be anxious about other than what is really going on.

It is no wonder that families such as these produce a range of symptoms in its members that can lead to problems later in life. This is how the mantle of dysfunction gets passed down through the generations.

Understanding what happened opens the door to healing. Pain, like fire, has the power to destroy or transform. Generally, a combination of treatment, group, and one-to-one therapy supported by twelve-step programs is comprehensive enough to promote and sustain healing. Recovery becomes the path for "growing soul."

Tian Dayton, PhD, is the Director of Program Development for Life-Services Caron Foundation, and the author of the book Trauma and Addiction.

**...STRICT TABOOS...
ASSURE THAT PAIN
DOES NOT GET
TALKED ABOUT.**

SOLUTIONS

The Archway Program: An Interview with Madeline Zevon, A.C.S.W., C.A.C.

By Stephanie Abbott



Madeline Zevon

Do you ever get the feeling that reading about COAs is just too sad? That nothing productive is being done about their situations? Then let me introduce you

to Madeline Zevon, a professional who has worked with these children for fifteen years. She says, "It's been so great—so much joy for me to see the changes in them."

The children's program she developed and now supervises is part of a comprehensive addiction treatment program at Archway, which is part of Yonkers General Hospital in New York. The children attend once a week, in their age groups, often for years. The groups are run by a social worker and social work intern, and use videotapes, puppets, and therapeutic games. There is always a snack, and birthdays are celebrated.

As Ms. Zevon points out, "The children wouldn't continue to come regularly if it didn't feel good to them, especially the teens. And certainly the parents or grandparents wouldn't send them if they didn't see an improvement in the children."

The program begins at intake, with the parent or grandparent present. Ms. Zevon says to each child, "We know this is secret, but here you can talk about it. Kids get sad sometimes and need a safe place to talk. The group is private, and it's no one else's business that you come to Archway.

Over time the staff sees less social

isolation, more self confidence, improved school performance and fewer behavior problems as the children learn to talk openly about painful issues. Though many adults drop out of treatment prematurely, this doesn't happen in the children's unit, and they get much needed long term help. About 25 percent receive mental health counseling in individual sessions elsewhere as well.

"Group is ideal for children," Zevon continues. "They enjoy being with their peers and there is a high comfort level."

The adults in the family are so pleased with the results that they often enroll other siblings when they see the progress of the first child.

I think you will agree with me that Madeline Zevon is a children's advocate who "lives in the solution, rather than the problem."

BOOK SHELF

By Stephanie Abbott

Cool Parents, Drug-Free Kids: A Family Survival Guide

by Robert Holman Coombs

"Research shows a generational continuity in drug use.... Children of alcoholics, for example, are at higher risk of becoming alcoholic themselves. Two explanations account for this continuity: parental modeling, and emotional pathology." *Cool Parents* covers this topic of parental influence in the chapter titled "Influence Through Example and Teaching."

It is strangely rare for books offering advice to parents to mention the touchy subject of parental drinking and use of illegal and prescription drugs. For that reason, if for nothing else, I am happy to recommend this book to parents and educators.

But there is more: Dr. Coombs covers the facts about the drugs themselves, about the rewards that motivate drug users, and about the drug-producing and the drug-glamorizing industries. The middle section covers effective parenting and community response, and the final section gives direction on getting the right help.

Dr. Coombs has spent 30 years in the chemical dependency field, and it shows. He also has a nice way with words. The book is published by Allyn and Bacon, which can be reached at www.ablongman.com



It Will Never Happen to Me!
by Claudia Black,
Ph.D., M.S.W.

At the recent celebration on Capitol Hill of Al-Anon's fiftieth birthday, Claudia Black was the

keynote speaker. Dr. Black challenged her listeners, many of whom were legislators, to pay attention to the needs of COAs. This pioneer has focused on these needs for decades, even back when addiction treatment professionals thought only the alcoholic in the family needed and deserved education and support. Her first book *It Will Never Happen To Me!* was first published in 1981, and has been a best-seller ever since.

Newly revised, it makes a wonderful Christmas gift for all those COAs of any age, and their parents, on your list. While you are at it, how about everyone who knows a child? Buy one for yourself, too. Order from MAC Publishing at 1-800-698-0148, at cblack@nwnlink.com, or www.claudiablack.com



Affiliate News

Three organizations—the Johnson Institute of St. Paul, Minnesota, the Lowe Family Foundation of Washington, DC, and White Bison, Inc. of Colorado Springs, Colorado—have just become NACoA affiliates. Each brings a new dimension to our activities on behalf of the children.



Organized in 1966, the Johnson Institute pioneered the treatment of alcoholism, and helped dispel the prevailing belief that the alcoholic must hit bottom before accepting help. This was done by adopting an early intervention concept, which became a national model.

Over the years, JI has sponsored research leading to clinical solutions to alcoholism, and has developed model recovery programs tailored to the needs of the alcoholic, the family, the school systems and the business community. It has also delivered training programs across the United States, and disseminated information via the full range of media.

Today, JI concentrates on special projects and collaborative efforts in the addiction field, focusing on programs addressing prevention, education, treatment, research, and recovery from alcohol and other drug dependencies. It sponsors local and national advocacy efforts and an annual national symposium to raise public awareness, and serves as a communication bridge between the alcohol treatment/research profession, allied fields, and the public.



Founded in 1997, the Lowe Family Foundation has its roots in the Lowe family's firsthand knowl-

edge of the devastation caused by alcoholism. Kathy Lowe Petersen, founder and NACoA Board member, describes the Foundation's purpose: "If we can help one family or one individual we will feel that our past has helped someone's future and our efforts will be worth the struggle."

The Foundation conducts public awareness and outreach activities at the community level, including a ready-to-print weekly Q & A series, a monthly series of interviews with experts, and a quarterly journal containing interviews, educational articles, and general information about alcoholism and its effect on families and individuals. Its "Family and Communities Together (FACT)" program now reaches over 250 schools and other organizations around the nation.



White Bison fosters the movement of American Indian commu-

nities into wellness and sober living. Its goal, according to its president Don Coyhis, is "95% Wellbriety by 2010." Wellbriety includes healthy lifestyles, recovery of Native spiritual traditions, and an end to domestic and family violence, alcoholism, and substance abuse as a way of life. It also includes the fostering of resilience and positive lifestyles among youth and adults both in urban and reservation settings.

White Bison programs are grounded in theories of applied behavioral sciences, teachings of the Native American Elders, and the 12 Step programs of Alcoholics Anonymous. For more information, see www.whitebison.org.



VOA of Alaska sponsors a year-round schedule of programs for COAs and their families. In addition, it works with the Anchorage schools to ensure that all children understand that addiction in the family is a serious problem, but that help is available.

Camp Hope brings together COAs from around the state for traditional camping and support group activities. The children, age 7 to 11, experience the joys of canoeing, fishing, and hiking, and learn how to cope with their family problems through support group activities. The staff-to-child ratio of about one-to-three, augmented by volunteers, gives each child plenty of individual attention.

Because some 35 percent of the children are being raised by their grandparents, the VOA also sponsors a winter family camp for grandparents raising COAs. Says Patricia Cochran, director of prevention services, "the grandparents get a respite from their parenting duties, and also enjoy the fellowship of other grandparents in similar situations." The "No Empty Nest" and "Strengthening of Grandfamilies" projects also offer telephonic and newsletter support, training, and scholarships to Camp Hope.

The 3-part "Classroom Prevention Exploration Series" introduces 5th to 8th graders to general principles of problem solving, tells the story of family alcoholism, and discusses ways to find a safe person who can support a child who struggles with family addiction.

For more information on these programs, contact VOA of Alaska at 907-279-9646.



EXCITEMENT RUNS HIGH FOR NACoA'S RUN FOR THE CHILDREN

By Julie Fisher Cummings

The excitement continues to build as members of TEAM NACoA from across the country increase their training. My energy and enthusiasm has grown even more from the thrill of knowing that NACoA founders Claudia Black and

Cathleen Brooks Weiss, Advisory Board member Jerry Moe, and Honorary Board member Gary Weiss will be running with us. Their commitment, and that of the 60 members of TEAM NACoA, encourages all of us to keep going—for the millions of children of alcoholics who still need us to be their voice and support.

Our pride also grows deep because of the honor bestowed on NACoA and its marathon effort by Mrs. Betty Ford, the Honorary Chair for the *NACoA Run for the Children* – and by members of the Honorary Committee – renowned AIDS/HIV advocate Mary Fisher, Michigan's First Lady Michele Engler, and noted author and television host Dennis Wholey.

The *Run for the Children* will be part of the Walt Disney World® Marathon and Half Marathon, in Orlando FL, January 6, 2002. Our special thanks go to the hundreds of generous donors who are supporting TEAM NACoA.

We invite and encourage NACoA friends, and all friends of vulnerable children, to help our runners and walkers keep training so they can cross the finish line on January 6 as a personal achievement and, most especially, as winners for the children.

You can be an official *Run for the Children* cheerleader by filling out the form below and mailing it with your tax-deductible donation to NACoA. Your gift will strengthen and energize all of us who are training for this great event— Claudia, Jerry, Cathleen and Gary, and all of TEAM NACoA.

Visit NACoA's Web site to see the inspirational messages TEAM NACoA has been receiving from Christina Pitts, our experienced and motivational marathoner (www.nacoa.org).

Julie Fisher Cummings is a NACoA Board member and Chair of the Run for the Children.

YES, I want to support TEAM NACoA members as they *Run for the Children* on January 6.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of \$_____ for NACoA

in support of: name(s) of runner(s) _____

in support of ____ TEAM NACoA

Name _____

Address _____

Mail to NACoA, 11426 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852.

Your runner(s) will be notified of your support.



DC STUDENTS RUN FOR NACoA

A class of hearing-impaired middle-schoolers at the Kendall Elementary School in Washington DC raised \$280 for NACoA by conducting a "walk/run rally" on October 18 as part of Red Ribbon Week. Kendall School is located on the campus of Gallaudet University and is a part of the Laurent Clark National Deaf Education Center.

They presented the award to Marion Torchia, NACoA's communications director, at an assembly of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Through sign interpreters, they carried on a lively conversation about the impact of addiction, following a viewing of the NACoA video "You're Not Alone."

The three students who raised the most funds are pictured with Marion in the photo. They are (left to right): Alexandria Hutchins (\$41.00), Vitali Goss-Jankowski (\$25.00), Marion, and Thomas Sseyuma (\$58.00).

STUDENT ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE IN APRIL

The 14th annual National Student Assistance Conference will be held April 11-14, 2002 in Dallas, Texas. The conference is sponsored by the *Student Assistance Journal* and the National Association of Student Assistance Professionals. Presenters will include Lloyd D. Johnson, Ph.D., distinguished scientist at the University of Michigan Institute of Social Research, and NACoA advisory board members Jerry Moe, M.A. and James F. Crowley, M.A. For more information, call 1-800-453-7733.



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Thank You for 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

CADCA HOLDS NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FORUM XII

Under the theme of *COALITIONS: Linking Science, Practice and Spirit to Build Healthy Communities*, the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) will hold its annual Leadership Forum December 12-14 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, in Washington, D.C.

CADCA's National Leadership Forum is the largest meeting of community coalition leaders in the country. Last year more than 1,500 participants gathered at the Forum to network and learn about the latest innovative programs working to reduce youth alcohol and drug use in communities across the country (www.cadca.org).