



GUARDIAN AD LITEM NEWS

Serving New Hanover and Pender Counties
First Quarter 2005

Family Support Network of Southeastern North Carolina, Inc. is partnering with
New Hanover County Schools to present:



Coming Together Conference

Parsley Elementary School 3518 Masonboro Loop Road
Monday, February 14, 2005 7:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

The Family Support Network is offering a conference for parents, teachers and service providers of children with special needs. A few of the numerous workshops to participate in are *Working with Abusive and Neglectful Parents*, *the Empathetic Response*; *Legal Issues Surrounding Special Education Students and School Discipline*; *Multiple Response System*; and *Supporting Adoptions*. If you are interested in attending this conference, please contact either the GAL office or FSN for registration information and complete workshop descriptions.

Family Support Network of Southeastern NC 910-792-6133 www.supportfamilies.org

Susan Arnold, Victoria Chavez, Nina McGee, Barbara Mee, Laura Messick, Frances Parker, and Betsy Riviere are volunteers who spoke out for children and even spoke out in jail!



Thanks to them, time spent at the open house for the new detention facility on September 25, 2004, was a success in letting the public know about GAL. Outstanding production, Ladies!

Thank you for a job well done!!!

Shirley Hart Berry

Advocate Strategies & Tips

- ❖ Work as a team with family, foster parents, teachers, mental health providers and caseworkers to find ways to support and improve the child's self-esteem.
- ❖ Get foster parents access to resources if possible; encourage them to find ways to get support.
- ❖ Get support for yourself; find a therapist or mental health attorney willing to provide occasional consultations.
- ❖ Find out if mental health trainings are available in your area.
- ❖ Seek out community and online mental health resources.
- ❖ Advocate for mental health assessments whenever possible.
- ❖ Research the child's medication history—get second opinions if necessary.
- ❖ Watch for signs of major depression or other mental health issues.

REACTIVE ATTACHMENT DISORDER (RAD)

RAD is a disturbance of social interaction caused by neglect of social interaction caused by neglect of a child's basic physical and emotional needs, particularly during infancy. For more complete information, check these websites.

www.nim.nih.gov
www.radkids.org

Lists symptoms, causes and risk factors
RAD information, pointers on getting help and a list of related resources

A Big Welcome to Our New Guardian ad Litem!



Attorney Advocate Regina Davis, Laura Messick and husband, Victoria Chavez, Leslie Lemer, Beverly Foscolo, Jennifer Benton, Dan Cameron and Program Supervisor Leslie Wilder with Judge John W. Smith

GAL Attorney Advocate Regina Davis, Ryan Horne, Doris Walters, Annabelle Watson, Irma Howell, Cammie Bain, Ann King, Jean Loughlin, and District Administrator Liz Kachris-Jones with Judge Jay H. Corpening



Susan Long, Susan Blackburn, Karen Hellrich and Jennifer Bennett with Judge Jay H. Corpening.



The National CASA Evaluation Study—What We Have Learned

A recent study was conducted by CASA to evaluate the impact of its work. The study found, in summary:

- ❖ Judges tend to assign CASA volunteers to the most difficult cases. Children assigned to CASA volunteers are more likely to have multiple risk factors, to have previous involvement in the child protection system and are at more severe risks for future abuse than those not assigned a volunteer.
- ❖ Children with CASA volunteers were in the system about as long as those without representation.
- ❖ CASA volunteers are “highly effective” at making recommendations to the courts.
- ❖ CASA volunteers engaged in a variety of activities, but much of their time is spent in contact with the children.
- ❖ Children with CASA volunteers, as well as the children’s parents, receive more services such as health care or substance abuse treatment.

Not surprisingly, judges and lawyers were very satisfied with CASA’s work. Parents of abused and neglected children greatly appreciate the volunteers. The results indicate a need to continue examining critically what CASA does: Challenge itself and ask critical questions that help to constantly improve the work we do for children.



Denny Smith, GALA President, accepting the raffle proceeds from Dorothy Hodder, Cape Fear Crime Fest Board Member. The raffle proceeds totaled over \$1,700 this year! Many thanks to Dorothy and everyone who worked to make this such a successful year.

Child Abuse Awareness Test

Orange County, CA's Board Member of the Year for 2004, Fred Port, remembers with emotion an 11-year-old who scored minus 123 points on that County's Child Abuse Awareness Test (an informal tool that helps assess a child's extent of abuse and neglect). His challenge is to spread the word that child abuse occurs in *every community*. Do you know how "your children" would fare? Below is a sample of the original 40 questions.

For the first four questions, give yourself a maximum of 10 points each.

1. Number of times that you received a hug between the ages of 0 and 18.
2. Number of times that you celebrated a holiday with someone you cared for.
3. Number of times you laughed out loud for a long time.
4. Number of times you spent more than two hours with someone you trusted.

From that maximum of 40 points, subtract the following (no maximum).

1. Number of times you were physically abused between the ages of 0 and 18.
2. Number of times you were sexually abused.
3. Number of nights you spent alone.
4. Number of different places you lived (times two).

JANUARY

Helen Marotto 2nd
George Wyman 3rd
Rachel Kastner 6th
Ray Hughes 13th
Larry Stentzel 13th
Joyce Swift 22nd

FEBRUARY

Marian Connolly 6th
Anne Craven 9th
Irma Howell 10th
Mary Preston 10th
Jean Stacy 11th
Carole Jacobsen 17th
Doris Walters 24th
Katie Wilson 25th



*Wishing you all many blessings as you
celebrate your birthdays!*

MARCH

Sallie Austermann 2nd
Ryan Horne 4th
Alan Pratt 4th
Cammy Bain 5th
Tom Carnes 11th
Agnes Chamberlin 16th
Barbara Mee 16th
Dennis Smith 22nd
John Schenck 24th
Ed Goldman 25th
Susan Lewis 26th
Janet McGannon 27th

APRIL

Mary Ann Lewis 4th
Suzanne Barham 13th
Sue Burda 18th
Karen Hellrich 18th
Victoria Chavez 20th
Carlie Brady 22nd
Bill Lampe 25th
Gloria Fields 28th

A Family's Guide to the Child Welfare System

The Child Welfare League of America is pleased to share with you *A Family's Guide to the Child Welfare System*, a comprehensive resource that answers many of the questions families face when they become involved with the child welfare system. *Family's Guide* is meant to be a tool to help families learn about experiences other families have had with the child welfare system; child welfare laws and policies that influence the actions and decisions of child welfare workers and courts; people families will meet, the service systems they work in, and their roles with families; ways to advocate for their family's rights (their own and their children's); responsibilities of parents involved with the child welfare system; and practical tips from other parents.

A Family's Guide is available for downloading at: <http://cwla.org/childwelfare/familyguide.htm>

Resources for FOSTER YOUTH

Many children grow up being able to pore through scrapbooks and photo albums containing minute details of their early life. Now imagine the foster child whose early years are spent moving through numerous homes. Consider for a moment what it is like not to have your life story documented. www.Fosterclub.com provides 10 fill-in-the-blank forms to get youth started with their own life book. These forms can be downloaded, and you are encouraged to help foster youth start a life book of their own. Just a few of the topics covered in the forms:



Star Facts



Bio Family Tree



Foster Family



Teen Life



Good Stuff/
Bad Stuff



Day I Entered
Foster Care



Friends

A new edition of the foster care and adoption newsletter *Fostering Perspectives* is now available at www.fosteringperspectives.org. This publication is dedicated to making foster care and adoption in North Carolina the best they can be.

- Foster and adoptive parents will find it to be a resource and a place to share information, ideas, frustrations, and joys related to foster care and adoption.
- Foster children will find the *Kids' Pages*, a place where children who are or have been in foster care express themselves through words and pictures.

- Social workers will find *Fostering Perspectives* important for the way it gives voice to the concerns of the parents and children they work with every day.

Some of the articles you'll find in the current issue are: What Do Children Look for in a Social Worker; Scholarship Information for NC Teens in Foster Care; Advocating in School for the *Children in Your Care*; and *From Foster Care to Adoption*. New online issues of *Fostering Perspectives* appear in November and May every year. If you would like to be notified via e-mail when these issues are available, contact the editor at johnmcmahon@mindspring.com.

If you are a Food Lion shopper and have an MVP card, you can help the Guardian ad Litem Association earn funds. Just link your card to the Cape Fear Guardian ad Litem Association and a portion of each purchase will go to the Guardian ad Litem Association each quarter. You MUST re-link



your card each fall. To link your card, simply go to www.foodlion.com and follow the instructions. On the home page, click on "Community," then "Fundraising," then "Register," then "Select Organization," then "Add MVP Cards."

An easy way to support GALA!



COURT ROUNDUP

GAL Statistics **September to December 2004** *(Four-Month Period)*

New Hanover County:

- 50 new petitions representing 87 children, of these 35 have been assigned to volunteers.
- 1 petition on 1 child was dismissed.
- 34 cases closed representing 50 children.
- 12 TPR hearings representing 17 children were scheduled. 10 were completed.
- 12 TPR petitions were filed.
- 3 adoption petitions were filed for adoption of 6 children.
- 79 adjudications/ dispositions were scheduled; 56 were completed.
- 404 court hearings were scheduled, 338 were completed (~83%).
- 15 new volunteers were sworn in.

As December 31, 2004 there were 307 GAL cases representing 524 children. Of these, 200 cases representing 355 children are represented by volunteers.

Pender County:

- 13 new petitions representing 21 children, 6 cases have been assigned to volunteers.
- 1 petition was dismissed.
- 5 cases closed representing 11 children.
- 2 TPR hearings representing 2 children were scheduled, both were completed.
- 1 TPR petition was filed by GAL on 4 children.
- 0 adoption petitions were filed.
- 18 adjudications/ dispositions were scheduled; 12 were completed.
- 61 court hearings were scheduled, 52 were completed (~85%).
- 3 new volunteers were sworn in.

As of December 31, 2004 there were 47 GAL cases representing 87 children. 33 cases representing 60 children are represented by volunteers.

Please remember to inform the office if you change your email address. Staff emails are as follows:

Beverly beverly.b.foscolo@nccourts.org
Laura laura.wallace@nccourts.org
Liz liz.k.jones@nccourts.org

Shirley shb-gal@charter.net
Leslie leslie.wilder@nccourts.org

The GAL State Office has a newsletter online for everyone to read. Please take the time to do so:

www.nccourts.org/Citizens/GAL/LocalNews.asp

And while there, read up on what other districts are doing by reading their newsletters.

The North Carolina Council for Women and Domestic Violence Commission has published ***Children and Domestic Violence: An Information Packet***.
Copies are available at the GAL office.



Info on the Web

www.nationalcasa.org

National CASA

www.preventchildabusenc.org

Prevent Child Abuse NC
1-800-354-KIDS

www.casenet.org

Website for CASA and GAL network

www.childrensdefense.org

Children's Defense Fund

www.preventchildabuse.org

Prevent Child Abuse America

www.gocwi.org

Child Welfare Institute

Offers structured analysis of sample cases based on characteristics of fatality cases.

www.childadvocacy.org

National Association of Child Advocates

www.ncchild.org

NC Child Advocacy Institute

www.cwla.cn

Child Welfare League of America

www.nccovenant.org

Legislative lobbying for NC children

www.nccourts.org/citizens/GAL

GAL Home Page

Also case summaries can be located at the above address by clicking on the heading resources for attorneys

www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

www.adoptuskids.org

Website sponsored by National Adoption Center and US Department of Health and Human Services

www.nimh.nih.gov/council/advis.cfm

National Advisory Mental Health Council

www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/online_manuals_and_forms

DSS manuals and policies can be found on this NC Department of Health and Human Services website

www.aardvard.org

National website about domestic violence issues and services

www.fostercaremonth.org

Education about the foster care system

www.futureofchildren.org

Promotes effective policies & programs for children by providing policymakers, service providers, and the media

www.fosterperspectives.org

Offers NC's foster & adoptive parents, foster children & social workers a place to share info & ideas

www.connectforkids.org

Helps adults make communities better places for families and children, has bi-monthly online discussion.

www.youthlaw.org

Advocacy organization which uses law to protect children and adolescents from the harms caused by poverty and to improve the lives of children living in poverty

www.youthcomm.org

Helps teenagers develop skills in reading, writing, thinking, and reflection

www.supportfamilies.org

Promoting and providing support for families with children who have special needs

AGING OUT

A new PBS documentary *Aging Out* tells the intimate stories of three young people who "age out" of the foster care system and suddenly discover that they're on their own. It is due to be aired during the Spring of 2005. The film follows these young people as they become parents, battle drug addiction, face homelessness and even end up in jail. Despite their struggles, the film shows these youth using the resiliency they developed during their years "in the system" to overcome their challenges. For more information on this topic, check these websites:

www.jimcaseyouth.org

www.childtrends.org

www.kidsathome.org

www.orphan.org

Agency Rates, Type of Care and DSS Rate

Alliance (Mentor)	Regular foster care	\$109/day
	SEC authorized therapeutic care	Board rate
	Non-SEC authorized therapeutic care	\$98.61 + board rate/day
UCP	Regular IV-E	Board rate
	Therapeutic IV-E not authorized by SEC	Board rate
	Non IV-E regular care not SEC authorized	\$60-70/day
	Non IV-E therapeutic care not SEC authorized	\$65-70/day
	Therapeutic care authorized by SEC	Board rate
Methodist Home	Group/Shelter	N/A
	Regular foster care	\$750/month
	Therapeutic care authorized by SEC	Board rate
	Therapeutic care not authorized by SEC	\$97.92 + board rate/day
Boys and Girls Homes, Inc.	Regular foster care	Board rate
	Emergency shelter	Board rate + \$30/day
	Group home	Board rate
Yahweh	Regular foster care	Board rate
Children's Home Society	Regular foster care	Board rate
Omni	IV-E therapeutic care not SEC authorized	Board rate + \$2,754/month
	Non IV-E therapeutic care not SEC authorized	\$69/day
	Therapeutic care authorized by SEC	Board rate
New Horizons	Therapeutic care not authorized by SEC	\$97.92 + board rate/day
	Therapeutic care authorized by SEC	Board rate
SEC	Therapeutic care not authorized by SEC	Board rate
Woodbridge	Therapeutic foster care	\$0/day
Crisis Line	Emergency shelter	Board rate
Caring Family Network	Therapeutic care not authorized by SEC	\$102.24/day
	Non IV-E therapeutic care not SEC authorized	\$97.92/day
	IV-E therapeutic care SEC authorized	Board rate
	Non IV-E therapeutic care SEC authorized	Board rate
Lutheran Family Services	Regular foster care IV-E	Board rate
	Regular foster care non IV-E	\$1,050/month
Carolina Choice	Therapeutic	\$95/day
Group Homes	Authorized by SEC (depends on what state establishes as home's facility rate)	\$33 or \$43/day
	Not authorized by SEC (depends on what state establishes as home's facility rate)	\$235 or \$277/day

- ❖ Could you step in and speak up for a neglected or abused child in court?
- ❖ Could you spare a few hours a week to help build a child's future?

If so, you could become a Guardian ad Litem volunteer. This year in North Carolina an increasing number of children will need someone to give them a voice and see that their best interests are served. Because the number of cases has grown tremendously in recent years, *more volunteers are urgently needed.*

A Guardian ad Litem is appointed by the juvenile court and paired with an attorney to investigate the case and to make recommendations to the judge regarding a safe place or special services. You can champion an abused or neglected child and prevent them from suffering future harm.

The mission of the Guardian Ad Litem program is to provide trained independent advocates to represent and promote the best interest of abused, neglected or dependent children involved in the court and work toward a plan that ensures that these children are in a safe permanent home.

A Child's Advocate
In Court



Guardian ad Litem
316 Princess Street
Suite 122
Wilmington, NC 28401