

The PREVENTION arm of SafePath Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention



OCTOBER, NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2009
NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: PENNY WARREN 678.331.3952
SAFEPath SUPPORT: CRYSTAL ROSSER 770.801.3465
DESIGN & LAYOUT : DANA DILLARD 404.320.6223

NEXT CCAP GENERAL MEETING WILL BE
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2009 AT SAFEPath.
LOCATED AT 736 WHITLOCK AVENUE AT 8:30AM

CCAP's

Mission:

We are dedicated to preventing child abuse & neglect in all forms. We are committed to providing education to the community in the prevention & elimination of child abuse & neglect. We are further dedicated to serving as the voice of those children unable to defend & protect themselves.



News from SafePath

On November 19, 2009 community and government organizations throughout the world will join together to commemorate World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse. World Day is a global call for action that aims to create a culture that supports prevention of child abuse by encouraging governments and communities to play more active roles in protecting children. In an effort to make child abuse prevention a top priority, World Day partners have committed to mark the day with activities and education surrounding child abuse.

In honor of World Day, Children's Advocacy Center of Georgia and Kennesaw State University will be hosting an entire day of complimentary workshops focused on child abuse prevention. The workshop will feature political reporter and author, Dominic Carter, who will share his story of surviving childhood sexual and physical abuse. The World Day events will be held at Kennesaw State University's Continuing Education building on Thursday, November 19, 2009. For more information regarding World Day and the upcoming World Day events visit www.cacga.org.



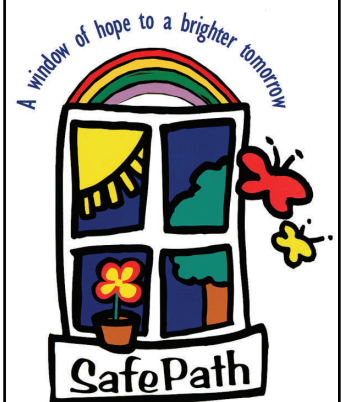
Mark Your Calendars...Upcoming CCAP events



- CCAP is hosting a Membership Drive at the Cobb Safety Village on Friday October 9th at 8:00am. New and current members are urged to come learn about the Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention, enjoy a continental breakfast and tour of the new Safety Village.
- CCAP has an upcoming conference on November 3, 2009 on Internet Safety, Cyber Bullying, and Sexting at Chattahoochee Tech. CEUs will be offered. For more information visit www.safepathtraining.org.
- CCAP is hosting their annual holiday breakfast Friday December 4th at 8:30am at SafePath Children's Advocacy Center. The "Crystal Gavel" and Prevention Award will be presented at this event.

Community News

"10 Women of Hope" is a new 501c(3) and a resource for the residents of Cobb County. Their commitment is to primarily assist single moms who, from time to time, struggle financially and to offer hope by helping meet a current financial need. Often times, it can mean the difference between missing work because of car trouble or a child not getting to participate in sports because of the financial hardship it places on the parent. This resource was born out of a conversation between three women at a local coffee shop in 2007. They accept applications from social workers-Cobb and Marietta school systems, Cobb Legal Aid, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center and Cobb Juvenile Court Drug Court participants. They have already granted approximately 12 requests and are excited about their continued impact on the community. For more information contact Penny Warren at (678) 331-3952 or Penny.Warren@cobbk12.org.



Bringing Awareness to Domestic Violence Month

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month. Nearly 25% of surveyed women and 8% of surveyed men said that they were raped and or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabitating partner, or date at some time in their lives. In addition, one in four adolescents also reports verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse each year. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. It occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can happen to intimate partners who are married, living together, or dating.

Domestic violence not only affects those who are abused, but also has a substantial effect on family members, friends, co-workers, other witnesses, and the community at large. Children, who grow up witnessing domestic violence, are among those seriously affected by this crime. Frequent exposure to violence in the home not only predisposes children to numerous social and physical problems, but also teaches them that violence is a normal way of life - therefore, increasing their risk of becoming society's next generation of victims and abusers. Working together, men, women, and teens can change attitudes and perceptions about domestic violence and dating violence. Collectively we can stop the cycle of violence. If someone you know is being abused, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE(7233) OR 800-787-3224. For more information regarding domestic violence issues visit the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women Web site at www.ovw.usdoj.gov.

Sources:: U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Center for Victims of Crime, and WomensLaw.org.

Charities Tackle Supply and Demand

Nonprofits are facing a "double-edged sword" as the recession drags on. While seeing significant slashes in funding, local groups are seeing a sharp increase of struggling families in need of their services. SafePath Children's Advocacy Center saw its number of physical abuse cases double from 2007 to 2008, said Jinger Robins, Executive Director of SafePath. "The most innocent, unfortunately, pay during hard economic times. All of these families are caught off-guard with how they are supposed to manage now. It can be stressful on a parent who has lost their job and has a family to feed and bills to pay. They find themselves behaving in a way they typically wouldn't," she said. "We've really seen the consequences of the economy when children are involved. As a community that wants to protect our children, we each play a part in it." While abuse cases rise, SafePath's state and federal grants have been cut by 30 percent over the last two years. By 2010, SafePath will see a 50 percent cut from the money available at state and government levels. The nonprofit's annual budget ranges from \$750,000 to \$850,000, Robins said. "We've got a double-edged sword here. The number of cases are going up because of the economy, and on the flip side the dollars available to serve these victims is decreasing," she said. "We must serve the victims who need us. At a time when we can't increase staff and must keep up with services, we have to get real creative and resourceful in how we're going to serve the population." "Every year, we have to raise about 40 percent of the annual budget. We need to raise more than that now though because when we lose the grants — we need to be able to fill the gap," Robins said. Like many nonprofits, SafePath is generating money through various fundraisers. Hearing Children's Voices, a gala and dinner to be held on Saturday, March 2010 benefits SafePath, and the child and families that they serve. *Featured in the Marietta Daily Journal August 28, 2009 by Talia Mollett*

Thoughts on How to Prevent Child Abuse in this Bleak Economic Time

"The School Social Workers are composing a list of resources for families which will include pharmacy discount sites, free clinics, hotlines/community websites and also some tips for saving money. We will distribute different ways at our schools. We also hope to develop more resources within the Social Work Department so we can meet the needs quicker." **-Penny Warren, Cobb County School Social Worker and Community Resource Specialist.**

"I think it is most important for people to not give in to the temptation to isolate. The more people get out and about, the more they see they are certainly not alone. There seem to be more and more networking support groups going on these days than ever, such as job support to financial aid. And despite the financial pressure people are under these days, a lot of people I am seeing seem to be happier with simplifying their lives, going back to basics, having the time to take better care of themselves, and having more time at home with their families." **-Dr. Sheri Siegel, Psychologist in Marietta**

"The economy and the stress of everyone's financial instability is a cause for concern right now. When you combine that with children who are always in need of something, especially attention, the stress is then doubled. It does not cost anything to give your kids attention and affection but it will cost a fortune later to ignore them and strike out against them. How you deal with stress now and deal with your kids will forever teach them how to handle situations in the future for them as well." **-Detective John McCraw, Special Victims Unit/Crimes Against Children Division, Cobb County Police Department**

Preventing Child Abuse in the 21st Century

Efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect have resulted in significant progress, reflecting the community-based child abuse prevention work, public awareness and advocacy for child well-being that has been developed around the country and here in Georgia. Early and proactive community response to vulnerable families and children is critical and must be strengthened. A growing body of data, research and experience is available to guide child welfare and child abuse prevention efforts now and for the future. We know that: Neglect is consistently the most prevalent form of substantiated abuse, accounting for 60% of child maltreatment nationally and 78% in Georgia in 2008. Young children are the most vulnerable to victimization. Nationally, 32% of child victims are aged birth to three years. In Georgia, 33% of child abuse victims are in this age range. Biological parents are the abusers in 80% of cases. Ninety-percent of abuse occurs in the victim's home. These protective factors are important to the health and safety of all children:

These protective factors are important to the health and safety of all children.

Nurturing and Attachment: Beginning at birth, children need to develop a bond with a caring adult.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: Parents need to understand how children grow and learn appropriate care, discipline and expectations based on the child's age and level of development.

Parental Resilience: Resilience is the ability to "bounce back" from the stressors and crises of everyday living.

Social Connections: The presence of trusted and caring family, friends, and community members provides encouragement and assistance to parents as they raise a family.

Concrete Supports: Parents and families need basic resources such as housing, food, transportation and access to services such as health care and childcare in order to ensure the well-being of their children.

Source: Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, August 2009 Newsletter

Prevention in the News.... "Sexting: Dangerous and Deadly"



Seventy-three percent of U.S. teens have a cell phone, and these days, texting is how they communicate. But now that phones come with cameras, there's a dangerous new fad-sexting. Nineteen percent of teens said they've sent nude or semi-nude pictures to someone in a text message. The consequences can be devastating. "Do you want me to tell you what she was called? Porn queen, slut, whore, pig." Cynthia Logan recalled to Ivanhoe about her daughter. The bullying drove Cynthia's 18 year old daughter Jessica to suicide. It started when a nude photo Jessica texted to just one boy was sent to hundreds of others. No one knew her pain until it was too late. "She came to me for so many things, but not this," Cynthia said. Sexting...it's texting gone too far. "A lot of people are sending pictures-either nude pictures or hallway clothed pictures or messages that insinuate something that shouldn't be insinuated," 17 year old Shelby Lynn said. A national survey found one in five teens has sent or posted nude or seminude pictures of themselves-usually to someone they know. "I've received messages from guys that described things that I did not need to read and I just kind of ignored it," said 17 year old Rachel Mock. "I've received maybe one and I did delete it because I don't want that," Lynn said. Best friends Lynn and Mock are all about sending text messages, but they say other teens are going to far. "Sex is meant to be personal, not via technology," Mock explained. Child psychiatrist Laurel Williams, D.O, says teens sext to be noticed and accepted but they don't realize what can happen. "Teenagers are not good at assessing long term," Dr. Williams, program director of the adolescent treatment program at The Menninger Clinic in Houston, explained. "That's what science is telling us about how teenagers' brains work. They don't make the connection between what they want to do know in this second and what might be the repercussions down the road." Fifty one percent of girls said they sent sexy pictures because of pressure from a boy. "I don't think hey understand what the people who are seeing the pictures are going to do with them and also I don't think they understand the long-term consequences," said 16 year old Alex. In case after case, sexting means criminal-even felony -charges. "When a teen sends a nude picture or takes a nude picture of themselves, they're actually producing child pornography and if they send it they're now distributing child pornography," Patti Agatston, Ph.D, a licensed professional counselor and cyber bullying expert in Atlanta, Georgia, explained. "This one girl did it at my school and it was a huge thing and the police ended up having to get involved," 15 year old Kaitlin recalled. All it takes is one explicit photo. "There was an episode at my daughter's high school where a teacher was involved in a sexting incident with a student, so that really brought it home," said Gayle Haskins, a mother of two teen girls. Dr. Agatston talks to kids as young as 13 about the dangers of sexting. She says parents should be proactive. Google your teen's name in quotes to find information about them on the internet. Make sure they keep their Facebook page private. "Another thing you can do is type in google.com/alerts," she said. Set a Google alert to notify you any time new information is posted. "If anything's posted about your daughter online it will email you," Dr. Agatston explained. With two teen girls, Lori Deforest says it's a huge wake up call. "Now I look at these cell phones and I'm like, 'Oh my gosh. This is like a mini problem that's going to explode and implode their lives if they're not careful.'" Deforest said. Talking to teens can help them protect themselves. "But then tell your child they're targeted with this kind of behavior that they should come to you and that they're not going to get in trouble," Dr. Agatston said. "You're going to try to help them anyway you can." For Jessica, it's too late. "It just tears my heart out," Cynthia said. She's working with lawmakers in her state of Ohio and at the national level to create new laws targeting teens who sext and setting up appropriate court-ordered punishment. The idea is to make teens accountable for sexting without treating them like adult sex offenders.

Featured on: Ivanhoe Newswire at www.ivanhoe.com