Monday Morning Report

Partner for Families Initiative Featured at Child Abuse Prevention Seminar

How can we prevent abuse and neglect before children are harmed? That was the focus of a seminar with nearly 100 participants in Sherman Oaks last Thursday, sponsored by The Help Group, a First 5 LA grantee. First 5 LA's Dawn Kurtz, program officer and Antoinette Andrews, research analyst, presented details of First 5 LA's landmark Partnership for Families (PFF) initiative, which allocates $50 million over five years to create community-based models designed to fill gaps in the current child welfare system.

The initiative will invest in programs for pregnant women and families with young children who are identified as being at high risk for maltreatment.

Working closely with the LA County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), First 5 LA seeks to reduce the number of re-referrals to DCFS, and increase availability of comprehensive services and informal supports. The goal is build a localized safety net where prevention of child maltreatment is a community responsibility.

Also presenting at the seminar were First 5 LA Commissioner Deanne Tilton Durfee, executive director of the Los Angeles County Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect; Dr. David Sanders, DCFS director; Elena Brewer, director of Program Administration, The Help Group; and Sgt. Dan Scott, LA County Sheriff's Department, Special Victims Bureau.

Last year, 43,000 cases of suspected abuse or neglect of children five years old and younger were investigated by the LA County Department of Children and Family Services. But only 8,000 cases were opened.

Among the remaining 35,000 referrals whose investigations did not result in open cases, about 3,400 children were determined to be at high risk for maltreatment. The PFF initiative will be directed at preventing these children from becoming statistics in the future.

For information about PFF, click here.
April 7 deadline for June 29-July 1: Family Research Consortium IV 3rd Annual Summer Institute On the Move: Geographic Transitions and the Mental Health of Families, at The Davenport Hotel, Spokane WA 99201. For more information, click here.

April 10, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: Risks of Not Breastfeeding: Diabetes, Obesity and More - A Day with Marsha Walker, presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit www.breastfeedla.org.

April 12 & 26, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.: Gentle Transitions: Support, Establish and Protect Both Early Mother-Infant Attachment and Breastfeeding in the Hospital Setting, presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles at Harbor UCLA Medical Center, 1000 W. Carson St., Torrance 90502. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit www.breastfeedla.org.

April 19, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: Task Force Seminar: Applying New Evidence-Based Research to Lactation Care: From the Breast to the Baby or the Pump-A Day with Peter Hartman presented by the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles at Houssels Forum, Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, 2801 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach 90806. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit www.breastfeedla.org.

April 25, 9 a.m.-noon: Awakening the Advocate Within: Influencing Public Policy and Legislation, 2930 W. Imperial Hwy., 4th floor, Inglewood 90303. For information, call Karen Peters at (213) 596-5776 or visit www.breastfeedla.org.

April 30, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.: El Dia de Los Niños (Children’s Day) at East Los Angeles College, 1301 Avenida Cesar E. Chavez, Monterey Park 91754. For information, call Ancelma Sanchez at (323) 981-0028.

May 17 & 18, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.: Looking Back, Moving Forward: California REACH 2010 Conference, to address inequality in health among racial and ethnic communities, at the Wilshire Grand, 930 Wilshire Blvd., LA 90017. For information or to register, call Tamekia Mosley at (323) 757-7244 x281 or visit www.careach2010conference.org.

'Nature-Deficit Disorder' Linked to Childhood Obesity, Depression

"Nature-deficit disorder" is making children depressed, distracted, and overweight, according to Richard Louv, a child advocate and author of seven books, including Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder.

A columnist for the San Diego Tribune and a visiting scholar for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University, Louv will speak at 7 p.m., April 12 at Caltech's Ramo Auditorium in Pasadena.

Louv's lecture, which is free and open to the public, will highlight research and anecdotal evidence showing the link between nature deprivation and the rising frequency of obesity, depression, and attention disorders in the US.

"As we gain a deeper understanding of the importance of nature play to healthy child development, we can create safe zones for nature exploration," said Louv. "We can preserve the open space in our cities, and even design and build new kinds of communities, using the principles of green urbanism. We can weave nature therapy into our health-care system, nature experiences into our classrooms."

The lecture is cosponsored by Kidspace Children's Museum, The Chandler School, and Child Educational Center, a First 5 LA grantee. Due to limited seating, reservations are suggested. For information, call (626) 395-4652.

GRANTEE PROFILE

Northridge In-Home Instruction Program Gives Parents Help with Child-Rearing

Lupe Duran says she can't imagine how difficult it would have been to raise her five children during the last 10 years without the help she got from the Child and Family Guidance Center at Panthenia Park Complex, an apartment complex in Northridge.

Like many of the mothers in this low-income neighborhood, she didn't have much education herself and did not feel totally prepared for parenthood.

"The center's In-Home Instruction Program sent bilingual teachers out to give me tips on discipline and reading to my children," said Duran. "They also taught me to have lots of patience and where to find community resources."

The First 5 LA-funded program promotes parental involvement in child development by offering tools for teaching basic concepts such as colors, numbers, hygiene, and nutrition.

"By coming into homes, teachers can see first-hand what each family needs, and refer them to classes, agencies, and other resources," said Tami Granado.

EVIE'S DESK

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect is Everyone's Responsibility During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are reminded that keeping youngsters safe
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**Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect is Everyone's Responsibility**

During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are reminded that keeping youngsters safe is a community responsibility. Each of us has a role—parents, neighbors, relatives, teachers, health care providers, faith leaders, and policy makers. Here are some ways to become part of the solution:

**--Share the load.** Ask for help when you are overwhelmed and when you can, offer help, so others can get a break.

**--Get involved.** Ask community leaders, clergy, educators, and policy makers to develop services to meet family needs.

**--Volunteer to help.** For information, call (800) Children, or visit www.preventchildabuse.org

**--Report suspected abuse or neglect.** Call your local police department and the LA County Department of Children and Family Services at (800) 540-5400.

As First 5 LA launches its landmark Partnership for Families child abuse and neglect prevention initiative, we look forward to working with all of you to keep our children safe.

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**Evelyn V. Martinez**  
Executive Director  
First 5 LA

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**CHAMPION PROFILE**

**Harbor Interfaith’s Tahia Hayslet Works With Homeless Families in South Bay**

Champion Profile features individuals who exemplify First 5 LA’s tagline: “Champions for Our Children.”

Tahia Hayslet is executive director of Harbor Interfaith Services, Inc., a First 5 LA grantee that provides emergency shelter, child care, and other support services to the homeless and working poor of Los Angeles’ South Bay.

The founding director of the organization’s transitional housing program, Hayslet previously worked as a case management supervisor at Shields for Families, "The Ark."

A mother of two, she holds a B.A. in Criminal Justice and an M.S. in Behavioral Sciences from Cal State Dominguez Hills.

**What book has influenced your life the most?**  
I love books that keep me interested in figuring out what happened when, why and what's next.

**What makes you happy? Angry?**  
I am happy when someone's life has changed as a result of services they received. I'm angry when I see parents mistreating their children verbally and especially physically.

**Which historical figure do you admire most?**  
Harriet Tubman, whose life goal was to free people.

**Which living person do you most admire and why?**  
My mother, who struggled to provide for her children and ensure independence and opportunity for them.

**What is your motto?**  
"Teach, don't enable."