

SOLANO CARES FOR KIDS

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CHILDREN'S NETWORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Dickey
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 Mental Health Services Manager,
 Solano County Mental
 Health Services

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES HONORS SOLANO WITH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

On May 23, the Children's Network was given the distinguished honor of presenting the National Association of Counties (NACo) "Counties Care for Kids Award" to the Solano County Board of Supervisors in recognition of Solano's Integrated Family Support Initiative (IFSI).

Solano County is one of just two counties nationwide to receive this year's award, presented to counties who demonstrate exemplary support of children and families. The award highlights the critical role that Solano County plays in early childhood development, child protection, and school readiness, provided by the efforts of IFSI, the broad based multidisciplinary collaborative funded by First 5 Solano and coordinated by the Children's Network.

This collaborative began in 2001, and in its first five years of operation served 4,320 families with 9,832 children, linking them with the right help at the right time. Positive outcomes for children and families have increased significantly with IFSI's highly collaborative approach, even those families in very challenging circumstances.

For families in crisis served by the collaborative:

- 93 percent improved their knowledge of community resources, reducing their isolation,
- 83 percent improved their conflict

resolution skills,

- 79 percent reported improved relationships with neighbors, and
- 50 percent with substance abuse issues reported an improvement in those problems.

One of the great strengths of the Solano County community is its natural tendency to work collaboratively. Currently, there are over thirty local agencies actively participating in IFSI, including city and county government, school districts, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, family resource centers, health care providers, Head Start and others.

All active IFSI partners are committed to one goal: that all children are safe, healthy, and being raised in nurturing environments. IFSI partners believe this is best accomplished through family-centered, relationship-based approaches, an emphasis on the developmental needs of children, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

In her presentation to the Board, Mary Dickey, Children's Network Board President, recognized the efforts of certain individuals as "the true visionaries who saw the possibilities and held fast to making the dream come true." First, to Supervisor



Mary Dickey, Children's Network Board of Directors President (left) presents NACo award to Solano County Board of Supervisors Member, Barbara Kondylis

(Story and photos continued at bottom of Page 2)

CARING FOR OUR CHILDRENS' HEALTH: SOLANO ASTHMA COALITION HOSTS CHALLENGE AWARDS

Every year, on World Asthma Day, Solano Asthma Coalition (SAC) hosts the *Asthma Challenge Awards*, a dynamic program that recognizes community and individual achievements in asthma-related issues.

This year's awards ceremony was held on May 2 at The Opera House in Vacaville, and recognized the following individuals and organizations in the areas of Environment, Education, Public Communication, and Leadership:

- **Vacaville Unified School District**, for its nursing commitment to asthma.
- **Solano County Board of Supervisors**, for passing the Wood Burning Ordinance on December 13, 2005, helping to improve outdoor air quality.
- **Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District** was awarded funding for diesel particulate matter control devices for six school buses. The District has been awarded funds over the last few years, which it used to retrofit 30 school buses.
- **Solano County Tobacco Education Coalition** spearheaded the comprehensive effort to enact the City of Vacaville's Smoking Restrictions in Parks policy. This law protects everyone's health from the harmful health effects of second-hand smoke. Second-hand smoke is especially dangerous for

children and adults with asthma or other chronic illnesses. This group is currently focusing their efforts on the Solano County Smoke-Free Parks Ordinance.

- **Nor-Cal Waste Systems** received funding from the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District to retrofit 24 refuse trucks (Vacaville Sanitary Service and Dixon Sanitary Service). In their 2005-2006 application, they expressed their desire to be an example to other fleets.
- **Ben Edokpayi, Editor, Vacaville Reporter**, played an important role in educating Solano County through coverage of the issues and work relating to asthma.
- **Valerie A. Ansley, Leadership Award**, (SAC Program Director, 2001-2005) for her leadership efforts to reduce problems associated with asthma in Solano County.

Each *Asthma Challenge Award* not only recognizes past efforts but educates, inspires, trains, and directly leads to progress and participation the following year. The program also helps to further SAC's long-range objectives, such as the passage of wood burning ordinance in all Solano County's cities and the implementation of EPA Tools for Success in Solano's school districts.

(NACo Award, continued from page 1)

Barbara Kondylis who "insisted we keep the needs of children in mind, and whose advocacy brought the first pilot-project version of IFSI to Solano," and to Supervisor John Vasquez "for noticing this worthy work, and prompting us all to pull together and submit the IFSI project for consideration for the award."

Dickey also thanked Chris Linville and the First 5 Commission for seeing the potential in IFSI's approach and funding a major portion of the work, Kim Thomas, Executive Director of the Children's Network for her leadership in developing and sustaining the IFSI approach, and three women who designed the IFSI collaborative and "spent many long hours planning, evaluating, modifying, writing grants and just generally keeping the faith": Jenny Ocon, formerly with the Children's Network, Debbi Davis, formerly with Child Haven, and Ana Dineen with the Fairfield Suisun FRC/Healthy Start.



Pictured left to right: Kim Thomas, Chris Linville, Ana Dineen, Mary Dickey, Barbara Kondylis, Jenny Ocon, Debbi Davis; back row: Board of Supervisors John Silva, John Vasquez, Duane Kromm, Michael Reagan

SOLANO LAUNCHES CULTURE-BASED PARENTING PROGRAM



Four local professionals will implement the research-based Effective Black Parenting Program (EBP), which provides culturally-based parenting support for African American families. The Solano Parenting Partnership, with funding from First 5 Solano Children & Families Commission, provided scholarships to the four EBP Instructors, who form a multidisciplinary team with expertise in mental health, substance abuse, early childhood education, family support, curriculum design, and child abuse prevention. Together, they will implement the Effective Black Parenting Program in Solano County. This collaboration is made possible by the support of their respective agencies: Child Welfare Services, Fighting Back Partnership, Tradewinds Child Care Center, and Youth and Family Services.

The Effective Black Parenting Program will begin with a one-day seminar for African American families, to be held on Saturday, July 22, 2006, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Union Baptist Church in Vallejo. The seminar will be followed by a 15-week Effective Black Parenting class beginning Wednesday, August 16, 2006. To register for either program, contact Arthelle Porter-Davis at Fighting Back Partnership at 648-5230 or arthelle@fight-back.org. For more information about the Solano Parenting Partnership, contact Nicole Bandy at 421-7229 x102.

PROPOSITION 82 DEFEATED

Prop. 82 lost statewide 39 percent (yes) to 61 percent (no) on the recent June ballot. The proposition would have provided voluntary preschool opportunities for the California's four-year olds. Reflecting the statewide vote in Solano County, 41 percent voted to support the initiative while 59 percent voted no.

Quality preschool opportunities in Solano County, as elsewhere in California, are in short supply. Federal and state preschool programs for low-income children have long waiting lists. Middle-class parents have too much income to qualify for

public preschool but often cannot afford private programs, which can cost as much as college tuition.

The Solano County Child Care Planning Council will continue to work with local partners and community stakeholders to create more quality, affordable child care and development (including preschool) options for families in Solano County.

If you are interested in participating on the Council, please contact the Children's Network.

Upcoming Events

CARES

Stipends Disbursement

June 29 and 30, 2006
Solano Family & Children's Services
421 Executive Court North
Fairfield

General Meetings:

Parenting Partnership

August 23 - 10:00 a.m. to noon
Solano Family & Children's Services
421 Executive Court North,
Fairfield

Child Abuse Prevention Council

July 17 - 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.
September 18 - 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.
675 Texas Street, Fairfield

Solano Children's Alliance

August 2 - 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
September 6 - 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
611 Village Drive, Suisun City

Child Care Planning Council

July 24 - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
August 28 - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
September 25 - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
2320 Courage Drive, Suite 107,
Fairfield

Constructing Connections

July 28 - 11:00 to 1:00 p.m.
Solano Family & Children's Services
421 Executive Court North,
Fairfield

Family Resource Center Network

July 17 - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
August 7 - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
2320 Courage Drive, Suite 107,
Fairfield

CHILDREN'S NETWORK WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS TO OUR TEAM

Rhonda Smith, MAED, MPA — Rhonda has recently been appointed as Community Programs Manager. She will oversee and manage the countywide, community-based family support initiatives serving families and children through the Family Resource Center Network.

Gerry Raycraft — Gerry serves as the Child Care Facilities Development Coordinator with the Constructing Connections Program. Gerry has held a number of positions in several jurisdictions in the Bay Area and Central Valley in the areas of community development and local government.

Maria Cedeño — Maria is a volunteer for AmeriCorps and serves as the Program Coordinator. She supports other AmeriCorps volunteers, and coordinates volunteer trainings and local child abuse awareness events.

Paola Latorre-Rey — Paula joined the Solano CARES Program as the Outreach Specialist in September 2005. Her responsibilities include planning, organizing, and participating in activities in the community to help increase public awareness of the CARES program, and to support and assist the Early Childhood Field with up-to-date information on education opportunities and trainings going on in the field.

Amy Powell — Amy also recently joined the Solano CARES Program staff as the Eligibility Specialist. Amy assists with screening applications for the CARES Program, communicates with child care providers, and maintains the program's database and informational reports.

A Special Message From Our Staff...

Many of you will remember our much loved former receptionist, Karna Clark. We are sad to report that Karna's husband passed away suddenly earlier this year, only six months after their daughter's birth. The Children's Network has set up a trust account for the education of Karna's daughters. We invite you to make your own contributions to this account.

*To make a contribution, mail your check (payable to **College America**) to the Children's Network, 2320 Courage Drive, Suite 107, Fairfield, CA 94533.*

Please include the following account numbers in the memo section of your check: Acct. #75849562 and #75849599. You may also contribute directly online at www.americafunds.com.

Thank you.

DO YOU NEED HELP PAYING FOR CHILD CARE SERVICES?

Finding quality, affordable child care can be challenging. The Solano Centralized Eligibility List (SCEL) is a system created to provide families with greater access to these services. Families who qualify may sign up for all subsidized child care programs at one time and in one place. When a program has an opening, they can offer that opening to the most eligible family in Solano County based on the SCEL.

The SCEL also plays an important role in obtaining a more accurate count of how many families are eligible and waiting for services. This information is shared with programs, policy makers and public administrators to advocate for more subsidized child care services.

To find out if you are eligible or to obtain the most current list of participating programs, contact:

- **Solano Family & Children's Services** at (707) 863-3950
- Visit the **Children's Network website, www.childnet.org**, to download and print an application and learn more about other community resources that may benefit you.

The SCEL is a project of the Solano County Child Care Planning Council, administered by the Children's Network of Solano County. The SCEL is supported by funds from the California Department of Education (CDE). This information does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of CDE.

PROGRAMS AIM TO RAISE CHILD CARE STANDARDS

For the sixth year, the **Solano CARES** (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) program is offering financial incentives ranging from \$800-\$2,000 to child care providers who continue in the field and commit to additional training and education, thus improving the quality of child care and development services in the community. Well over 600 members of the workforce have participated to date.

Participants are placed in one of five "tracks" based upon their education level. To be eligible, providers must have cared for a child, age birth to five, who is not their own; all providers (except those in the Family, Friends and Neighbor Track) must provide care to children 20 hours per week for 9 months during the past year.

Annual participation requirements vary for each track. For more details and application information, please visit us online at www.childnet.org or call CARES at (707) 438-1709.

Constructing Connections hosted a Financial Summit on March 30, 2006 to engage banks and lending institutions in a dialogue about child care

as a viable lending opportunity. Presentations were made by Children's Network staff, a financial expert from the Low Income Investment Fund and by the manager of the Solano Small Business Development Center on the opportunities for lending for development of child care services and facilities. Five lending institutions indicated a willingness to explore the potential to create loan products for child care and two representatives indicated a willingness to participate personally in the Constructing Connections Collaborative.



If you are interested in participating on the Collaborative or opening a child care center, please contact the Children's Network.

Children's Network

A united voice for the children of Solano County

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COUNCIL MEMBERS

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Children's Alliance

Sal Alcalá, President
Jeff Knight, First VP
Michael Jereb, Second VP

Child Abuse Prevention Council

Dottie Fair, Chair
Susan Dolan, Vice Chair
Louise Harris, Secretary

Child Care Planning Council

Gail Jack, Chair
Alan Tornay, Vice Chair (as of July 1, 2006)

CHILDREN'S NETWORK

Kim Thomas, Executive Director

NEWSLETTER

Mary LeCompte, Editor

Solano Children's Alliance

(formerly known as The Children's Network Council)

Sal Alcalá	Jeffrey Knight	Pam Posehn
Dorothy Bryant Steel	Leatrice Knox	Sam Peterson
Kay Bosick	Kathy Lago	Gayla Reiter
Nancy Calvo	John Lawson*	Rosalind Reid
Debbi Davis	Bruce Lillis	Charlie Spruill III
Ana Dineen	Irene Lopez-Tauriac	Pelton Stewart
Lissette Estrella-Henderson	Jacque McLaughlin	Michael Stover
Wanda Farnsworth	Sonja New	
Michael Jereb	David Paulson	*Participating with Membership Appointment Pending

Solano County Child Abuse Prevention Council

Linda Ashcraft	Susan Dolan	Gene Horst
Rey Bernardes	Chris Erbe	Phillip Martin
Dorothy Bryant Steel	Dottie Fair	Denise McBride-Delgado
Lori Cohee	Marie Fortier	Maria Moses
Debbi Davis	Rev. Willie Graham	Pat Nicodemus
Mary Dickey	Bill Haden	Linda Orrante
Kathy Dineen	Louise Harris	JoAnn Parker
Pamela Dixon	William Hausler	David Paulson

Solano County Child Care Planning Council

April Adams	Gail Lyon
Suzanne Greene	Eloisa Mercado
Gail Jack	Valerie Powell
Leatrice Knox	Karen Sanchez
Kathy Lago	Alan Tornay
Lisa Lee	