

FOCUS ON CHILDREN

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ALLIANCE HOSTS TRAINING WITH DR. IRA CHASNOFF



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The Solano Children's Alliance dedicated their June 4, 2008 meeting to a four hour training featuring Dr. Ira Chasnoff. An enthusiastic audience of more than 130, representing parents, health and mental health, Child Protective Services, law enforcement, the courts, child care, education and others, attended the training. While Chasnoff has given presentations in Solano County in the past, this was the first time training has been available to the broader community.

Chasnoff is one of the nation's leading researchers in the field of maternal drug use during pregnancy and the effects of prenatal exposure on the newborn infant and child. Chasnoff provides training and technical assistance to assist in identifying and treating prenatal substance use and establishing comprehensive family intervention programs for children in communities, nationally. The Alliance has been interested in Chasnoff's "Model of Care for High Risk Children" and has supported the concept of adopting the model in Solano County in their strategic plan.

The training was a collaborative effort of the Children's Alliance, BabyFirst Solano, and the Solano Early Childhood Developmental Health Collaborative, and was funded by The Children's Network of Solano County, Children's Nurturing Project, First 5 Solano, Solano County Public Health Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Bureau, and Solano County.

Upcoming Events

Child Abuse Prevention Council

Solano County Government Center
675 Texas Street, Fairfield

July 21 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.
August 18 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.
September 22 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.

Integrated Family Support Initiative

Solano County Government Center
675 Texas Street, Fairfield

August 11 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
November 10 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Solano Children's Alliance

Joe Nelson Community Center
611 Village Drive, Suisun

July 2 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
August 6 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
September 3 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Family Resource Center Network

Children's Network
2320 Courage Dr. Ste 107, Fairfield

August 4 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
September 8 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Child Care Planning Council

Children's Network
2320 Courage Dr. Ste 107, Fairfield

July 28 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
August 25 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Parenting Partnership

Solano Children & Family Services
420 F Executive Ct. North, Fairfield

July 23 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

CHILDRENS NETWORK AND PARTNERS



More than 98 Solano County volunteers were honored for their contributions to Earn It! Keep It! Save It! (EKS), the Bay Area's largest free tax assistance program. Although final results are not yet in, the preliminary results look extremely promising. In Solano County this year, EKS coordinated 15 free tax assistance sites including

both VITA (volunteer income tax assistance) sites and AARP Tax-Aide sites, which helped 2,625 of Solano's neediest families claim \$1,602,585 in tax refunds and in many cases connect with asset-building resources.

	2005	2006	2007	2008
# of Sites	3	9	1	15
# of Volunteers	11	31	43	64
# of Returns Completed	107	550	736	2625
EITC \$ Captured	\$ 117,713	\$ 180,171	\$ 267,562	\$ 441,406
Total Refunds	\$ 443,435	\$ 583,842	\$ 890,420	\$ 1,602,585

Earned Income Tax Credit is the largest and most effective federal aid program for low-to moderate –income workers. For many eligible families, EITC can increase their annual income by as much as 15 percent. Recognizing EITC's potential economic benefit to both families and communities, The Children's Network has partnered with the United Way of the Bay Area and the Internal Revenue Service to conduct this campaign. The Children's Network coordinates marketing outreach, volunteer income tax assistance sites and provides on-going support services to the agencies that participate throughout Solano County.

CHILD PROTECTION PROFESSIONALS & VOLUNTEERS HONORED AT ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT

The accomplishments of outstanding Solano citizens who have helped to protect our children were celebrated by the Solano County Child Abuse Prevention Council on Tuesday, April 29, 2008 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at The Marriot Hotel in Fairfield. This event celebrates individuals in our community who have gone 'above and beyond' to support and protect children from abuse and neglect. Research shows that trauma and lack of nurturing early in life can have long-term negative consequences.

Two of the awards, the Mary Ellen and the Henry Bergh awards, are named after the victim and prosecutor in the first successful prosecution of a child abuse case in the United States. Henry Bergh, head of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in New York City of the 1860s, successfully pressed for a conviction in the case because there were laws protecting animals, but not children like the victim, Mary Ellen.

The Child Abuse Prevention Council was established in March, 1998, by the Solano County Board of Supervisors. In recent months, the Council sought nominations for the 2008 awards, and several were received in each of the categories. An excellent slate of honorees was selected from throughout Solano County for the Child Abuse Prevention Council Awards as follows:

Mary Ellen Award to the Children's Protective Services Worker of the Year: *Carl Fuller, Jr., Solano County Child Welfare Services*

Henry Bergh Award to the Practitioner of the Year: *Dr. Majid Yasaie and Tracy Blunt, Therapy Associates of Solano County (TASC)*

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year: *Detective Patrick Cowan, Vacaville Police Department*

Medical Practitioner of the Year: *Stacy Souza, PHN, Solano County Health & Social Services*

Educator of the Year: *Candace Dandini, Vacaville Unified School District, Learning Support*

Volunteer of the Year: *Brady & Kyle Baldwin, My Own Book*

Advocate of the Year: *Christina Arrostituto, First Five Solano Children and Families Commission*

Multicultural Achievement Award: *Lorraine Hargrave, Children in Need of Hugs*

Career Achievement Award: *Gloria Flores, LCSW, Dixon Family Services*



The Council also recognized and honorably mentioned:

Dr. Lorie Honda, Child Haven

Ana Isabele Montano, Vacaville Police Department/FIRST/FRC

Lissette Shepherd, Solano County Child Welfare Services

Lyna Sue Waters, Solano County Child Welfare Services

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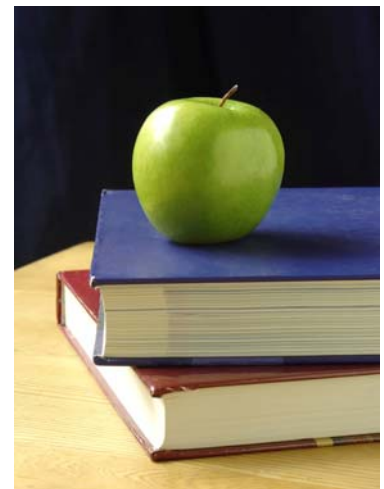
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SOLANO CARES REWARDS FOR QUALITY CHILDCARE ENDEAVORS

The Solano Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES)/Professional Development Program continues to support the professional development of the child care workforce in Solano County. CARES/Professional Development Programs, a project of the Solano County Child Care Planning Council and administered by the Children's Network, recognizes education and continuity of care as two factors that affect the quality of child care. Therefore, stipends are given as incentives to encourage Solano County's early childhood educators (ECE) staff to attend professional development training and to remain in the field. Additionally, free, specialized trainings are continually offered throughout the year. Please check the Children's Network website www.childnet.org and search under child care for upcoming trainings and dates.



Need Help Paying for Child Care?

The Solano County Centralized Eligibility List (SCEL) is designed to assist low income families with childcare costs. The Solano County Child Care Planning Council and Children's Network, in collaboration with Solano Family & Children's Services, makes it easier for families to apply for subsidized child care. SCEL allows a family to sign up for all child care subsidy programs at one time and in one place. By completing one application, a family can gain easy access to multiple subsidized child care programs improving the opportunity to find free or low-cost child care to eligible Solano County families. For further information, please contact Solano Family & Children's Services at (707) 864-4640 or the Childrens Network at (707) 421-7229.

SMART GROWTH INCLUDES QUALITY CHILD CARE FACILITIES

City and County planners are recognizing how essential child care facilities are to create communities that work for families. The March 2008 issue of *Livable Places Update*, a project of the Local Government Commission's Center for Livable Communities, includes an article titled "Child Care, A Key Ingredient of Smart Growth," co-authored by Gerry Raycraft, Children's Networks Child Care Facilities Coordinator.

In the article, Gerry and colleague Maria Raff with the Low Income Investment Fund, point out how important it is to carefully integrate child care into land use and transportation planning. "In livable, healthy communities, families can readily access resources and services such as grocery stores, public transportation, retail shopping, restaurants, schools and child care. The latter, child care, is an often forgotten but key ingredient for Smart Growth development, though rarely considered when livable communities are planned. However, the practice of including child care is catching on and successful developments offer models for future Smart Growth development and infill projects that include it."



The Fruitvale Transit Village, located at the Bay Area Rapid Transit District's Fruitvale Station in Oakland, is a great example of sustainable development that brings housing, child care and transit together along with retail and community services on a major commercial/residential/transportation corridor. A key element in the success of the Fruitvale Transit Village is the De Colores Child Development Center. Rather than being driven to child care, children can walk with their parents from their nearby homes to the transit station/child care facility and walk home again when Mom and Dad return from work. This increases physical activity for both parent and child and reduces the need for another car trip.

The Children's Network is partners with LIIF and Solano first 5 to support the planning, development and financing of child care facilities throughout Solano County. Solano is widely recognized as suffering from a serious shortage of well designed, well located child care facilities, so additional support and involvement by community members will be essential to the success of our efforts.

For additional information, contact Gerry Raycraft, Child Care Facilities Development Coordinator with the Children's Network (facilities@childnet.org/707-421-7229).

FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS STRATEGIES MOVING FORWARD



The Walter S. Johnson Foundation has recently recognized the work of the Childrens Network and the Family Resource Centers Network's efforts involving Family Economic Success. The Childrens Network was invited to submit a planning proposal to further develop county-wide efforts which are already significantly increasing the income of Solano County families. Under the proposed partnership, Families and Communities Together (FACT) and the Children's Network will increase the staffing capacity of the Family Resource Centers which are providing the family-income improvement services in three distinctly different communities, allowing them to reach more families with our successful model. We will also enhance the Children's Network staffing infrastructure so that adequate technical and evaluation support is available to coordinate the overall system.

The resources to increase the Family Resource Centers staffing capacity will be provided through the federally-supported AmeriCorps Program. United Way of the Bay Area has championed this effort by providing the required local match for new AmeriCorps members.

The Children's Network has also been awarded \$70,000.00 by the United Way of the Bay Area (UWBA) for funding to enhance the capacity of participating members of the Solano Family Resource Center Network in their Family Economic Success (FES) efforts. Specifically, this funding will be used to provide matching funds for three, 900 hr. AmeriCorps members in Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in Fairfield/Suisun, Vallejo, and Dixon for calendar year 2008.

In addition, UWBA has awarded the Children's Network a planning grant to expand the participating members of the EKS Coalition to include additional public/private agencies and local businesses that share a commitment to empower Solano's low to moderate income families and individuals. In collaboration with the leadership of the EKS Coalition, CN will develop an updated map of existing and potential FES resources. Based on the mapping results, the EKS Coalition will develop a plan which will articulate strategies to obtain resources for sustaining and expanding future FES effort. This will enable the Children's Network to present plan findings to local decision makers. In addition, this planning grant will identify and provide a paid internship to a college-level intern in the field of community development and facility planning, to develop agency specific facilities development plans for expansion of local Family Resource Centers. The intern will be supervised by current CN staff with expertise in this field.



FOOD STAMP OUTREACH PROPOSAL

The Children's Network has submitted a proposal to Solano County Health and Social Services on behalf of the Solano Family Resource Center Network to enhance Family Economic Success efforts by providing food stamp outreach to eligible families throughout Solano County. Specifically, this project will augment, and assure the sustainability of Family Economic Success efforts currently supported by the *Investing in Families* project. Through the project described in the proposal, members of the Solano Family Resource Center Network will conduct outreach, pre-screening, and application assistance for food stamps as outlined in the USDA Food and Nutrition Service Food Stamp Program State Outreach Plan.



The Children's Network would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous donors and supporters:

- Billing, Rebecca
- Bank of America United Way Campaign
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- First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission
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- United Way of the Tri State Area
- Walter S. Johnson Foundation

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Network**
for the children of Solano County

2320 Courage Drive
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Fax: 707-421-6495

Kim Thomas
Executive Director

Thank You First 5 Solano for Supporting Earn It! Keep It! Save It!

On March 18, 2008 First 5 Solano Children & Families Commission authorized the award of up to \$3,000 grant to three Solano County Family Resource Centers located in school readiness zones to hold a series of financial education trainings for families with children age 0-5 with support from the Children's Network. Dixon Family Center, Anna Kyle Elementary Healthy Start and Sereno Village Family Resource Center will hold financial education training sessions following the tax season for seventy-five (75) families who received tax preparation and EITC assistance. Experience in the field indicates that individuals respond more favorably to financial education classes that include a goal or incentive (as opposed to general financial education). As a result, each family will receive a "Financial Fun Kit" which will include: a personalized eco-friendly bag filled with financial literacy information, a Savings Add Up Calculator, A Parent's Guide to Raising Money Smart Kids, and Count Me in! My First Book of Saving (Educational Activities Book). The financial planning and education the families will receive as the result of this grant will help them to sustain themselves beyond the immediate impact of the Earned Income Tax Credit.



Meeting notices and other informational updates are available via email. If you wish to be informed on local issues concerning children and families, we invite you to subscribe to one of our email distribution lists. To do this, please visit <http://www.childnet.org/listserve>. Enter your name and email to receive monthly notices from our secure and restricted list serve. Your address will be used only for this purpose, and you may unsubscribe at any time. If you would like to be added to our postal mailing list instead, please call the Children's Network at 707-421-7229 to subscribe.