



NYSCA NEWS

Winter 2014/2015

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IN THIS ISSUE

Meet the 2015 NYSCA Board

To ensure equal representation statewide, the New York Children's Alliance Board of Directors has an elected Regional Representative from each of the 8 geographic regions of the state. These representatives hold regularly scheduled regional meetings to discuss issues impacting CACs and act as the liaison between NYSCA and the member centers.

Representing the **Capital Region** (which includes Columbia/Greene, Otsego, Rensselaer, Schenectady, and Schoharie) is **Renee Roman**, Executive Director of START Children's Center in Rensselaer.

The **Central Region** (which includes Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Onondaga and Tompkins) is represented by **Linda Cleary**, Executive Director of the McMahon/Ryan Child Advocacy Center.

The **Finger Lakes Region** (made up of Chemung, Livingston, Monroe and Ontario) is represented by **Mary Whittier**, Executive Director of the Bivona Child Advocacy Center.

The **Hudson Valley Region** (which includes Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester and Ulster) is represented by **Marla Behler**, Program Coordinator of The Child Advocacy Center of Putnam County.

The **Mohawk Valley Region** is represented by **Renee Smith-Rotundo**, Program Director

of the Madison County Children's Advocacy Center. This region includes Herkimer, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida and Oswego.

The **North Country Region**, represented by **John Kelly**, Law Enforcement Coordinator of the Harriet M. West Child Advocacy Center, covers Clinton, Fulton, Saratoga, and Warren/Washington.

The **Metropolitan Region** includes The Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Queens, Richmond and Suffolk and is represented by **Gena Diacomanolis**.

Representing the **Western Region** is **Karen Hill**, Director of the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center. This region covers Allegany/Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee and Niagara.

Additionally, **Christine Schoonmaker** serves as the representative of the Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center.

Renee Smith-Rotundo will begin her tenure as NYSCA Chair on January 1. Also serving on the Executive Committee are: Karen Hill as Past Chair, Gena Diacomanolis as Treasurer and Marla Behler as Secretary.

Be on the lookout for messages from your regional rep announcing important regional meetings in January and February to discuss the NYSCA strategic plan for 2015 and 2016!



Step up for Kids Run/Walk

Step Up for The Second Annual Step Up for Kids Run/Walk was held over the last 2 weekends in September 2014 in 8 locations throughout the state.

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Annual Membership Meeting

NYSCA hosted an Annual Membership Meeting on September 16th and 17th in Albany.

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Step Up for Kids

Step up for Kids 2014 took place over the last 2 weekends of September in 8 locations across the state. Over 600 participants came out to show their support for CACs

The events began in Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties on September 21st, and concluded on September 28th in Dutchess and Westchester Counties.

In addition to Family Fun Run, sites offered timed 5Ks, superhero themed races, Zumba, face-painting, balloon animals, demonstrations from local police K-9 units, raffles, auctions and musical entertainment. Venues ranged from city streets to local colleges.



A special thank you to all who organized Step Up for Kids!

-  **Bivona Child Advocacy Center**
-  **Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse**
-  **Child Advocacy Center of Northern New York**
-  **Child Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes**
-  **Children's Advocacy Center at the Westchester Institute for Human Development**
-  **Child Advocacy Program of Chautauqua County**
-  **McMahon Ryan Child Advocacy Center**
-  **Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center**



After 2 years of providing assistance to get Step Up for Kids events off the ground, the Board of Directors have decided to have NYSCA take a step back from the events in 2015.

Centers who wish to host Step Up for Kids events in 2015 and beyond are welcome to contact NYSCA Coordinator, Lisa Walker, for access to planning and marketing materials, however, NYSCA will no longer host the online event registration or provide insurance coverage for participating centers.

Thank you to all who have worked to make the first two years of Step up for Kids successful!

LEGISLATIVE AWARENESS



Washington, D.C. Hill Day 2014

The National Children's Alliance hosts the Leadership Conference at the Renaissance Hotel Downtown in Washington, DC every year during the first week of June. An annual meeting of the NCA Membership is held, trainings are provided on a wide range of topics (from interviewing minor victims of human trafficking to fund development) and time is allotted for Hill Day visits. During these visits, CAC representatives provide education about the work being done in centers across their state and across the country. This year, a group of representatives from New York (pictured above) met with staff members in Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand's offices to share information about New York's Child Advocacy Centers. For more information about what's going on in Washington from week to week, contact NCA Senior Government Affairs Officer Denise Edwards at dedwards@nca-online.org or 202-548-0090 ext. 103 or participate in the weekly Legislative Webinar on Monday afternoons at 4:00 PM.



*The New York State Capitol Building
Albany, New York*

2015 Legislative Awareness Day

This fall, NYSCA met with the Governor's Office to request that the \$2.57 million legislative add-on that was approved by the legislature this year be included in the Governor's 2015 Executive Budget. If that were to happen, it would add some much needed permanency to CAC state funding and obviate the need to annually ask the legislature for that additional funding. While our request was favorably received, there were no guarantees. We will not know if our efforts were successful until the Executive Budget is released, likely sometime in mid to late January.

Either way, our Legislative Awareness Day remains important and we are planning our 2015 Albany visit. However, its focus will depend on what happens with the Executive Budget:

1. If the Executive Budget includes the 2014 legislative add-on (\$7,799,900 total), then we would use Legislative Awareness Day to visit our legislators, thank them for their support and show them how the additional funds have helped our programs.
2. If the Executive Budget does not include the 2014 add-on (\$5,229,900 total), then we will continue to do what we have done the past three years: visit the legislature to thank them for the previous legislative add-ons (\$750,000 in 2012; \$750,000 in 2013 and especially the \$2.57 million in 2014), show them what those funds have allowed our programs to do and ask them to again provide funds in addition to those in the Governor's budget so that we can meet the service needs of the abused and neglected children of New York State.

Legislative Awareness Day will coincide with the Joint Budget Committee Hearing on Social Services so that NYSCA can testify at that hearing. We anticipate that hearing date to be either February 3 or February 10, based on prior years' scheduling, but will not know for sure until later in January. If you could keep those dates open, it would be greatly appreciated. Your participation in Legislative Awareness Day is directly related to its success.



2014 Legislative Awareness Day

For the past 3 years, NYSCA has organized a state version of NCA's Hill Day, called Legislative Awareness Day. Every February, NYSCA members are provided with information packets and talking points to use in meetings with their local State Legislators to provide information about the work being done in our 40 state recognized CACs. Legislative Awareness Day coincides with the Joint Budget Committee Hearing on Social Services, during which the NYSCA Chair provides testimony on behalf of the NYSCA membership. These outreach efforts have proven to be effective, resulting in legislative add-ons of \$750,000 in 2012 and 2013 and \$2,570,000 in 2014!

LESS IS MORE AND FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING

After the rollout of the Less is More and First Responder Training Curriculums at the 2013 Annual Membership Meeting in Albany, a follow up webinar was held in December to provide CAC Directors with information to share with their teams. Train the Trainer sessions were held in Batavia in February and in Oneonta in May with MDT Members from across the state in attendance. Attendees were provided with the tools they need to present the curriculums in their local community, including PowerPoint presentations and handouts. The curriculums have since been presented throughout New York. Trainers are asked to report back to the Less is More and First Responder Committees with feedback from their presentations, and the committees meet on quarterly basis to review and assess the need for any edits. The feedback thus far has been very positive.

The Less is More and First Responder curriculums go beyond what is covered in Mandated Reporter training, explaining the multidisciplinary team approach and information pertinent to the dynamics of child sex abuse. The goal is to focus on the safety and well-being of the child, minimize the trauma to the child during the investigation and to help support the sound investigation of cases.

For more information about how to bring these trainings to your community, contact Committee Chair, Karen Hill at khill@sthcs.org.



Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting of the New York State Children’s Alliance was held this year on September 16th and 17th at The Desmond Hotel in Albany, New York. Over the course of a day and half, participants were provided with training sessions, agency updates and networking opportunities.



This year’s topics included: Forensic Interviewing (*presented by Linda Cordisco Steele*), The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention: An Evidence-Based Brief Intervention for Child Victims in a Child Advocacy Setting (*presented by Carrie Epstein and Steven Maran*), Problematic Sexual Behavior in Youth: How CACs Can Be Champions of Treatment and Management of Youth, Victims, and their Families, (*presented by Jane Silovsky, Thomas Andriola, Debbie Benson and Karen Hill*), as well as updates from the Northeast Regional Children’s Advocacy Center, The Office of Children and Family Services and NYSCA.

*Thank you to our 2014 event sponsors:
 Child At Risk Response Team of Schoharie County
 Madison County Children’s Advocacy Center
 Northeast Regional Children’s Advocacy Center*

Early in 2015, NYSCA will distribute a training needs assessment to the membership to determine the topics for next year’s Annual Membership Meeting. Your participation and feedback are much appreciated!

OUTCOME MEASUREMENT SYSTEM



New York is one of 42 states currently participating in the Outcome Measurement System Project. Using OMS, centers survey non-offending caregivers at their initial visit to the CAC

and 60 days after their initial visit to gain feedback on the client experience. MDT members are also surveyed to provide feedback on how the team is functioning. Survey results are submitted every six months and compiled both statewide and nationally. The results have been overwhelmingly positive thus far. In the first half of 2013, 96 % of caregivers surveyed in NY indicated that they would recommend the CAC to someone in their situation and 99% of MDT members surveyed indicated that they felt the clients benefited from the team approach.

NCA recently hired an OMS Coordinator to oversee this project and to implement changes to the system based on feedback received from participating centers since the start of OMS in 2007. On July 1st, OMS is moved to a new online system that allows the option of distributing surveys via e-mail, QR code, from your center’s website, from a computer or tablet at your center, or through paper surveys. Once entered into the online system, the center’s survey results are automatically compiled and able to be generated into template reports, eliminating much of the need for data entry. Through this online system, centers are able to compare their results to other centers nationwide or centers of a similar size.

In addition to the creation of the online system, updates were made to the survey questions, including the ability for a caregiver to comment on a particular question. It is anticipated that the comments will give centers more meaningful feedback to work with including tangible suggestions for improvements.

OMS is a benefit of NYSCA Membership and is offered at no cost to centers. This valuable tool can be used for a variety of purposes, including use as a performance measure for grant reporting and demonstrating quality assurance to potential funders or Board Members.

96%

Percentage of non-offending caregivers who responded that they would recommend the CAC to someone else in their situation.

99%

Percentage of MDT Members who responded that they felt clients benefitted from the multidisciplinary team approach.

For more information on OMS, contact Chapter Coordinator, Lisa Walker at nysca.coordinator@gmail.com

Save the Date: 7th Annual Bivona Child Abuse Summit
April 30 - May 1, 2015
www.bivonasummit.org

Helpful Resources

The **National Children's Advocacy Center** hosts various trainings throughout the year on topics ranging from victim advocacy to CAC management. Training is offered on their campus in Huntsville, Alabama (you can also arrange to have training at your location). No funds left in your training line? Try one of their many free online trainings. For more information, visit their website: www.nationalcac.org

Another great resource available through NCAC is the **The Child Abuse Library Online (CALiO)** at www.calio.org. For assistance with accessing materials through CALiO, contact Muriel Wells, Research Librarian at mwells@nationalcac.org or library@nationalcac.org.

Are you a new CAC Director (or perhaps an experienced CAC Director always looking to learn)? The Western Regional Children's Advocacy Center created a CAC Director's Toolkit that gives a comprehensive overview of everything from starting a CAC to dealing with vicarious trauma. Access the toolkit here: www.wrcactoolkit.org.

The Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center provides extensive training (including training for Pediatric SANE Nurse examiners) and opportunities for peer review online at www.mrcac.org. The Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center offers technical assistance, trainings such as Team Week and the Team Facilitator Training and programs such as the Leadership Exchange and Coaching Project. For more information on their services visit: www.nrcac.com.

The New York State Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center (CARCC) provides Forensic Interviewing Best Practices Training and maintains a statewide listserv for the purpose of information sharing amongst Child Advocacy Centers. For more information on CARCC, visit their website at www.nyscarcc.org

For links to additional helpful resources, visit the New York State Children's Alliance website and look under "Information for Members": www.nyschildrensalliance.org.



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