

HELPLINE**Newsletter**

Summer 2006

1-800-CHILDREN

**Prevent Child
Abuse Georgia**

1720 Peachtree St., Ste 600
Atlanta, GA 30309
Phone: 404-870-6565
Fax: 404-870-6541

Visit our website:

www.preventchildabusega.org
or www.stopitnowga.org

*"All that is necessary for
the triumph of evil is that
good men do nothing."*

Edmond Burke
Irish Philosopher

Message from Our Services Coordinator

Dear volunteers,

These last few months have been a time of change for the Helpline staff. We were all sad to say goodbye to Margaret, but I know you join Cheryl and me in wishing her well as she begins her life in New York. We are fortunate to have Najja Rivers join our Helpline team. She brings wonderful skills to our Helpline service, and I hope everyone has had a chance to meet her.

Over the last few months, we have written several grants and partnered with other organizations to enhance marketing and outreach of the Helpline. These efforts should increase our call volume. As a result, we will need to ensure accurate data collection of Helpline calls. For this reason, Helpline staff will carefully review entry of the calls into the system with you during your shift. In addition, to continue to build our skills to handle incoming calls, more in-service trainings for Helpline volunteers will be offered throughout the year. You are strongly encouraged to attend these trainings as this information benefits both you and the callers. A calendar of upcoming in-service trainings and continuing education is contained in this newsletter.

As always, I appreciate your time and dedication to the Helpline and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, Inc. We could not provide this outstanding service without you. If you have any questions or ideas for training topics, please let us know!

Sincerely,

Liz

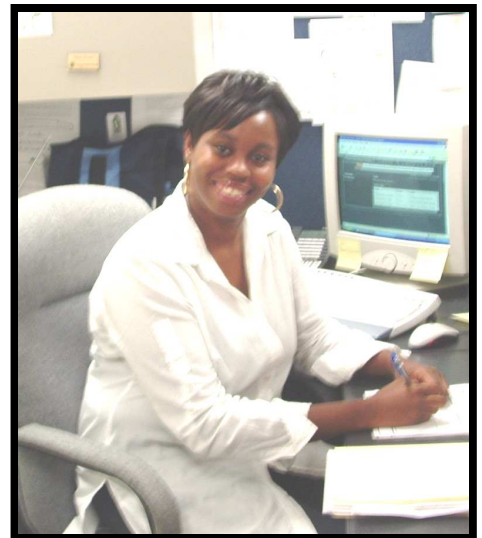
WELCOME NAJJA!

In May, we welcomed Najja Rivers to our Helpline team. Najja works the 12:00 to 8:00 pm shift and adapted easily to her new role on the Helpline.

Najja received her bachelor's degree in social work from Clark Atlanta University, and then went on to get her master's degree in social work from New York University. After living in Brooklyn, New York, for several years, she relocated to Atlanta in March of this year.

Najja brings a great deal of proficiency to the Helpline through her previous experience working with children and families. Her past professional roles include providing individual, group and family counseling for students in various public schools in New York City as a clinical social worker. Najja also developed and implemented focus groups with school personnel (i.e., teachers, guidance counselors, etc.) and parents. She also provided individual and group psychotherapy to adults in an outpatient mental health facility.

We are grateful to have Najja on our team! Welcome!



Najja Rivers, LMSW
Helpline Program Specialist

Celebrating Dads: A Story of Survival and Hope.

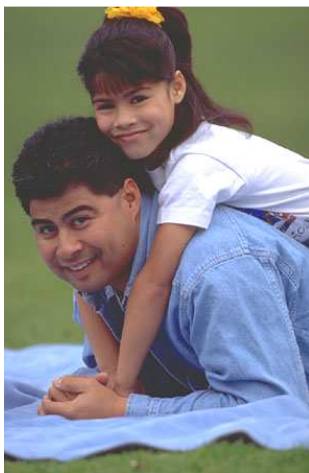
David's first call to the Helpline was emotional as he struggled to fight back tears. He shared his desperation in relating to his fiancée, the mother of his eight year old daughter, and described the emotional rollercoaster their relationship had been on for over ten years. David attributed many of their issues to the childhood sexual abuse his fiancée Trina had experienced. He had been trying since the birth of their daughter, Lisa, to convince Trina to talk to a professional. She always refused his suggestions. Today his call focused on what he could do to support her and still deal with his own feelings of rejection and frustration.

David was calling from Georgia but Trina and Lisa were still living in another state. He had recently taken a new job with the hope of getting a fresh start. He hoped that Trina would finally agree to marry him and that they could be a family at last. His plans for this new life, however, never came to fruition.

Weeks before Trina was to join him in Georgia, David discovered she was having second thoughts. He heard excuse after excuse as to why moving wouldn't work out. The more hesitant she became, the more distressed David became. His dreams were slowly unraveling and so was he.

The Helpline worker compassionately listened to David and offered resources relating to survivor support. He wanted to better understand what Trina might be feeling and how he might help her. He was also concerned about how Trina's way of life was affecting their daughter. He said that he had since found out that Trina was seeing another man and that her brother and uncle (both drug addicts) had moved in with Trina and Lisa. David had never approved of their lifestyle and didn't believe his daughter was living in the best environment.

He was deeply hurt by Trina's unfaithfulness, and greatly concerned about Lisa and her well-being. The Helpline associate assisted David in focusing on what he could control, letting him know that individuals will not seek counseling until they are ready. The associate knew that if David focused only on what he could not control, he would continue to feel helpless and hopeless. Helpline staff worked with David to divert his attention to his emotional well-being so he could be the father Lisa needed.



Over the course of six months, David called the Helpline to report his progress. He convinced Trina to allow Lisa to move to Georgia with him. He enrolled Lisa in school and both of them began seeing a counselor. Because Lisa enjoys ballet, he also got her involved with a dance group so she could meet new friends and stay involved in the activities she loves.

Helpline staff also encouraged David regarding his importance as Lisa's father. Together David and the Helpline associate focused on what he could do to create a stable home environment where Lisa could feel safe and nurtured. They also discussed the need for open communication and mutual respect between Lisa and David so their relationship could continue to grow and she would feel safe sharing her feelings.

To help himself emotionally, David has enrolled in a support group through his church. There he is able to bond with other single parents who face the same issues. He also has come to terms with the fact that he and Trina will likely never get married and is content with the life he and Lisa have built. David has even started his own side business helping low income families with their tax returns. Lisa is right by his side to support him.

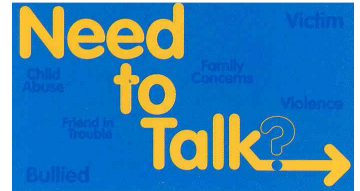
Today, Lisa is doing very well in her new home and school. It is difficult for her, however, because she misses her mom. David continues to support his daughter's relationship with Trina, paying for plane tickets for her to visit and arranging special phone time for them. He still hopes that one day Trina will finally get the help she needs to heal from her childhood abuse, but he knows that he can't do this for her. He has given her several numbers for counseling and support groups in her area. He has even provided our Helpline number, and we are happy to report that Trina has taken the first step to call us and seek support. She is realistic that she has a long road to recovery ahead of her.

This road to recovery continues for all of them, but we are optimistic about this special father who has made his daughter's well-being a priority. Now they are all reaping the benefits of his efforts.

.....
If you are a dad or know of a father in need of support, please contact our Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN. We're here to help!

Need to Talk? Goes “Back to School”

School is back in session for most counties and the Helpline is already receiving calls from youth! Several calls came the week prior to school starting from students who shared their apprehensions about going to high school. These students said that they originally got our *Need to Talk?* card while in middle school. For us, this is encouraging because it shows that kids value our Helpline as a safe and confidential place to call when they have concerns. This is the underlying reason for the *Need to Talk?* program of the Helpline, and we hope it continues to reach youth across Georgia.



During the first half of 2006 (January through June), the Helpline received 271 calls from youth in 21 different counties throughout Georgia. Adolescents represent approximately 20% of all calls to the Helpline. The majority (83%) of young callers were female, 61% were first-time callers and 83% were calling about issues that they were personally experiencing. The following is a breakdown of the top reasons why young people call our Helpline for support and provides information about how our staff and volunteers handle each type of call.

- **Bullying: (16%)** Bullying continues to be a top reason that adolescents call the Helpline. It includes intentional, repeated instances of verbal or physical mistreatment of a young person by another child or group of children. This does not include an argument among peers or a one-time physical fight. The majority (79%) of adolescents calling about bullying were first-time callers, with 81% being female. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the callers called the Helpline again to follow-up regarding their situation and seek additional support. Most (86%) of the callers were sharing a personal experience with bullying, and one call was from a child and his mother frustrated over the lack of school intervention. Child safety is our first priority for bullying-related calls, and Helpline staff and volunteers work with the children to build self-esteem and connect them to a responsible adult support system in their home communities.
- **Family Relationships: (13%)** Issues regarding family relationships continue to rank among the top reasons adolescents call the Helpline. These types of calls may include family members living in or out of the child's home and encompass a large range of concerns such as communicating with parents, sibling rivalry, blended family problems and parent dating relationships. One caller was also calling because she was concerned about her brother who was arrested for burglarizing school property. Our goal with these types of calls is to encourage healthy communication and positive relationships. The Helpline works with adolescents to effectively express their feelings and resolve issues through role playing on the call, journaling by the caller at home, and promoting empathy for others who are in their lives.
- **Prank Calls: (12%)** Unfortunately, the Helpline continues to receive numerous prank calls from adolescents. Often, the children will call in groups with more than one child on the line and will make repeated calls back-to-back. When staff and volunteers receive a prank call, the standard response is to treat it like a serious call (whenever possible) because often the children are making jokes about subjects they may be thinking about or facing in their own lives. The primary goal is to let them know the Helpline is a safe and caring place to call when they need to talk to someone.
- **Dating Issues/Relationships: (10%)** Most callers (93%) in this category were females between the ages of 12 and 16. Questions from callers related to how to tell someone that you want to date them, how to break up with someone, and how to resolve an argument. Several callers were also expressing concern that their partner might “like” someone else. The focus of these types of calls is to encourage open communication, as well as setting personal boundaries and developing safe and healthy relationships.
- **Peer Relationships: (9%)** Adolescence can be a difficult time and peers hold a great deal of influence and sense of identity for callers. Most children call to talk about an argument they are having with a friend or to express feelings about peer pressure. Helpline staff and volunteers talk with callers about what constitutes a healthy relationship and how to develop them, and will help callers identify what friendship really means to them. Important focuses for these calls are healthy self-esteem, open communication, strategies for problem-solving, and ways to express feelings.

Today's youth face a lot of issues and need a safe and confidential place to talk about their feelings. We are grateful for the dedicated individuals around the state who partner with us and diligently work to ensure that the youth in their communities have access to the Helpline. If you would like to get information on starting a *Need to Talk?* program in your area, please call us at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) or 404-870-6580.

HOT TOPICS: Georgia's New Sex Offender Law

With the latest debate over how to keep children safe from "sex offenders," Georgia has created a new state law. But can this law achieve such a goal? Sally Thigpen, state coordinator for *Stop It Now! Georgia*, a program of Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, offers the following information:


When considering prevention of child sexual abuse, we should look at policy and practice with one question in mind: 'Will this keep children safe?' In looking at Georgia's recently passed sex offender law the answer to this question is, 'probably not.' Recent news stories illustrate the compelling need for strengthening efforts to protect children beyond registries and background checks. For example, in the August 8, 2006 edition of *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC)*, none of the perpetrators mentioned in three separate stories about child sexual abuse are listed on Georgia's sex offender registry.

Let's look at the facts:

- Most children who are, or who will be, sexually abused will not be abused by someone on the sex offender registry. In fact, over 90% of child victims of sexual abuse will be abused by someone they know and trust - most likely someone within their own family.
- A vast majority – up to 88% - of child sexual abuse is never reported. While the registry provides communities with important information, it only includes those individuals who have been reported, prosecuted and convicted. It does not include most individuals who pose a risk for sexual abuse of children.
- The low rate of reporting leads to the conclusion that the approximately 265,000 registered sex offenders in the United States represent **less than 10%** of all sex offenders living in communities nationwide.

Trust your gut.
If you are concerned about someone's sexual behavior towards children

Call 1-800-CHILDREN



Stop It Now! Georgia
A program of
Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

Child sexual abuse is not inevitable. It's preventable.
www.stopitnowga.org

Should everyone who perpetrates sexually against a child be held accountable for their actions? Absolutely! Should we rely on Georgia's new law to insure that our children are protected from harm? Absolutely NOT!

Adults need information about how to recognize behaviors and situations that leave children vulnerable to harm. Family and community members must hold people they love and trust accountable for their inappropriate behaviors towards children and must do so BEFORE an incident occurs.

Learn more about how to recognize these behaviors and how you can prevent child sexual abuse. 1-800-CHILDREN is a toll-free, safe, and confidential resource available to everyone in Georgia. Adults who are serious about keeping children safe from sexual abuse must look beyond the sex offender registry as a solution. IT'S YOUR CALL.

For information about how to create a safety net around children at home and in communities, please call the Stop It Now! Georgia and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia HELPLINE at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) 8:00am-8:00pm, Monday through Friday, or go to www.stopitnowga.org.

Stop It Now! Georgia is a program of Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia and a member of the Stop It Now! Network. PCA Georgia is a statewide private nonprofit organization dedicated to child abuse prevention and relies on all members of Georgia's communities to assist in the effort to end child abuse in Georgia.

Congratulations to our Awesome Volunteers!

We've always known that our Helpline volunteers are unique, special and "Way Awesome," and now we can confirm it through their latest achievements. Three of our Helpline volunteers were nominated for the metro-Atlanta "2006 Power of Prevention Award."

1. **Bill Browning**, who has served on the Helpline for over three years, was **chosen** as the metro-Atlanta "Power of Prevention" award recipient for 2006. Bill, who works for Bank of America, led several collections at branches throughout Atlanta for our Healthy Families Georgia Dekalb site. He collected much needed items such as diapers, bottles, books, safety items, developmental toys, clothing and personal hygiene products which will be distributed among the seventy families served by the program.
2. **Lenore "Nonie" Satterfield** has been a Helpline volunteer since 1995 and was **nominated** this year for the "Power of Prevention" award because of her "extra" services around the office. Not only does Nonie attentively ensure that the resources in our Helpline database are up-to-date, but she also helps other PCA Georgia staff and program areas with special projects. Liz Ferguson nominated Nonie because of all of the administrative tasks she performs such as putting together First Steps bags for new parents at the hospitals; assembling Stop It Now! "Train the Trainer" manuals and presentation packets; assisting with agency mass mailings; and compiling participant packets for staff conducting Child Abuse 101 trainings. All of these projects are critical to the delivery and success of our programs.
3. **Karen "Kirby" Vanderyt** has served on the Helpline for more than three years and was **nominated** by staff for her outstanding contribution as a Helpline volunteer. Kirby is an empathetic and capable listener who is well-versed to handle a wide variety of calls. When callers reach Kirby on the Helpline, they are able to talk to someone who genuinely cares about their well-being and wants to help. Several callers have specifically noted on their customer satisfaction surveys that they found comfort in speaking with Kirby because she listened, provided appropriate resource referrals, and they believed she really cared. Because of Kirby's life experience, maturity and commitment, she serves as a peer mentor for new volunteers, helping to strengthen the stability and longevity of their service on the Helpline. We are all very grateful for her dedication week after week and are proud of her nomination.

Congratulations Bill, Nonie and Kirby! We are proud of each of you. You are all winners!

Congratulations, Helpline Dads!

Brian and Paul



Congratulations to Brian and Paul who recently became dads of beautiful baby girls. We hope to have pictures of these little angels and an update for our next Helpline newsletter. Stay tuned!

Congratulations, Dads and families!

Welcome New Volunteers!

Alina, Audrey, Debi and Michele

All four of these individuals completed the Helpline classroom sessions in June and are currently shadowing, learning our database system, and advancing in their training. We look forward to their continued growth as Helpline volunteers.

Our next volunteer training will be held in October. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Helpline volunteer, please contact us at 404-870-6565 or via email to helpline@pcageorgia.org.

Helpline Birthdays

Brian	05/05
Debi	06/23
Cheryl	07/02

Helpline services are made possible with funding support from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Cobb County Board of Commissioners
- Criminal Justice Coord. Council – Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA)
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta
- Fulton County Department of Human Services
- Georgia DHR: Promoting Safe and Stable Families

1-800-CHILDREN

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.preventchildabusega.org
www.stopitnowga.org

VOLUNTEERS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

New volunteer training and continuing education classes for Helpline and First Steps volunteers are coming this fall. Please make your plans to attend:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • August 26 th (9:00-3:00 pm) | First Steps New Volunteer Training |
| • September 16 (9:00-11:00 am) | Child Custody and Emancipation |
| • October 14, 17 & 19 | Helpline New Volunteer Training |
| • October 28 (9:00–3:00 pm) | First Steps New Volunteer Training |
| • November 14 (6:00-8:00 pm) | Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) |

To sign up for the training, please notify Helpline (Cheryl or Najja) or First Steps (Lisa or Courtney) staff by calling 404-870-6566 or sending an email to helpline@preventchildabusega.org.

	<p>THANKS TO OUR NEWEST HELPLINE SUPPORTER:</p> <p><u>John Wieland Homes</u></p> <p>We Appreciate Your Support!</p>
---	--

About Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

Headquartered in Atlanta, Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia is a statewide, private, non-profit organization dedicated to preventing child abuse. PCA Georgia leads, supports and coordinates citizens and professionals in a comprehensive effort to end child abuse.

Preventing child abuse means strengthening the ability of parents and communities to care for their children's health and well-being. Each of us has opportunities to help insure that children grow up nurtured, safe and healthy. Preventing child abuse is the work of everyone, every day.

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE GEORGIA

1720 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 600
Atlanta, GA 30309

