

**HELPLINE**

Newsletter

Fall 2007

**1-800-CHILDREN**

### Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

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Phone: 404-870-6565  
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Visit our website:

[www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org)  
or [www.stopitnowga.org](http://www.stopitnowga.org)

### SALLY'S CORNER

As October rushes by, I'm sure we all are sharing one collective thought: "Will summer ever end?" Though the autumn days have been warmer than usual, there is still a feel of the changing seasons in the air. It is this time of year that we tend to reflect upon the previous year and give thanks for good fortune. I believe that the HELPLINE has much to be thankful for this year.

We continue to have an amazing and generous family of volunteers who are committed to providing much needed support to the children and families in Georgia. We also have the support of our Chartered Council network, which continues to provide their communities with the information needed to access the HELPLINE as a confidential resource.

In this issue of the 1-800-CHILDREN HELPLINE Newsletter, you will meet Margaret Weisser, who joins us this year as a Master's level intern. One of her projects is to research and develop a volunteer recruitment strategy for PCA Georgia. Building capacity for HELPLINE calls is a priority. We anticipate an increase in call volume in the coming year as a result of our increased efforts to promote the HELPLINE statewide through initiatives like the *BECAUSE Kids Count* project described in this newsletter.

As always, I appreciate your time and dedication to the HELPLINE and PCA Georgia. We could not provide this outstanding service without you.

Sincerely,

*Sally Thigpen*

Statewide Coordinator of **Stop it Now!** Georgia and HELPLINE

## BECAUSE Kids Count

Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia is one of eight state applicants to participate in a grant with Prevent Child Abuse America to build a culture of evaluation and evidence-based practice across the National Chapter Network. Through this project, PCA Georgia staff will work together with Chartered Council representatives. Our goal is to strengthen the internal capacity of the network and the individual councils to raise funds, provide support, and deliver effective prevention programs consistent with PCA Georgia's mission and priorities. The project begins specifically with the promotion and use of PCA Georgia's 1-800-CHILDREN HELPLINE and community-based prevention education. It is anticipated that through this project, HELPLINE call volume will increase by 30% in communities served by councils.

PCA Georgia staff members leading this project are **David Earnest**, Council Services Director; **Sally Thigpen**, Statewide Coordinator of Stop it Now! Georgia and HELPLINE; and, **Liz Ferguson**, Services Coordinator.

The Chartered Council Advisory Committee for the project includes: **Wendy Chitwood**, Hart County; **Lora Cooper**, Bulloch County; **Patty Eagar**, Bartow County; **Robin Jones**, Henry County; **Mary Smith**, Whitfield County; and, **Cyndi White**, Barrow County.

## HELPLINE 101: Who We Are

We often receive questions about the **1-800-CHILDREN HELPLINE** and the services we provide. In this portion of our newsletter, you'll find a brief overview of our services and the many ways we support families and communities throughout the state of Georgia.

### What the HELPLINE "IS"

HELPLINE is a toll-free, confidential support line for individuals to call if they have concerns, need information or referrals, want parenting support or when they just need someone to listen.

- Operates Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Dedicated team of staff and volunteers trained on a wide variety of issues
- Free call anywhere in Georgia by dialing 1-800-CHILDREN (Outside of Georgia, callers must dial 404-870-6580)
- Provides families and individuals with information, emotional support and access to viable community resources

### What the HELPLINE "IS NOT"

- Not a crisis or "hotline"
- Not a counseling or advice line
- Not a child abuse reporting line

### Purpose of the HELPLINE

The goal of the HELPLINE is to meet callers at the point of their need and to empower them to make individual choices. This is accomplished by allowing them to release their emotions in a safe and non-judging environment, and assisting them in finding viable solutions. Because our HELPLINE is anonymous, it opens the door for callers to share (often for the first time) feelings and sensitive issues.

### Who the HELPLINE Serves

HELPLINE is a universal "warm" line available to anyone of any age. It is a resource for all. Callers to the HELPLINE are seeking support, information or referrals for a variety of issues including, but not limited to, parenting support, counseling and support groups, child abuse and prevention information, referrals for legal needs, grandparent issues, resources for special needs children, personal and educational matters and community resources for emergency and financial assistance.

HELPLINE callers range in age from youth to senior citizens, and include parents, grandparents, friends, relatives, foster parents, youth, professionals, survivors of abuse, faith communities, crime victims, and individuals from all socio-economic levels living in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Because the HELPLINE is anonymous and confidential, it is often the first point of contact for individuals in need and callers unsure of where to turn for help. Providing a safe place for individuals to talk about sensitive issues is an important role of the HELPLINE. Callers are able to talk "live" to a trained individual who cares about the caller's well-being and genuinely wants to help them.

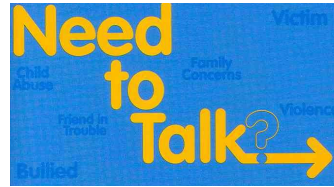
# HELPLINE 101: Raising Awareness of the HELPLINE

Some examples of how we reach communities about the HELPLINE include:



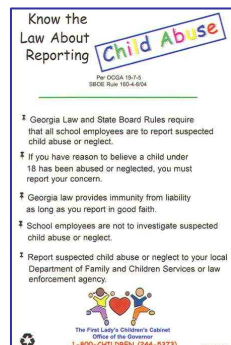
The *Need to Talk?* parent card can be provided through First Steps, Healthy Families, DFCS, faith communities, public

health, school systems and any family-serving agency or program around the state. HELPLINE provides a safe place for parents to find support, receive information and gain access to community resources.

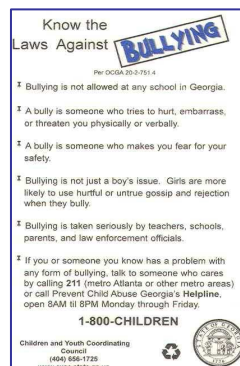


The *Need to Talk?* card for adolescents is given through school systems and other youth-serving groups such as Big

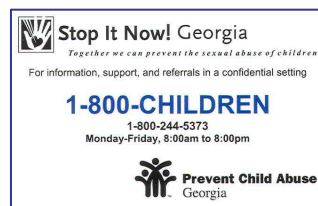
Brothers/Big Sisters, 4-H Clubs and faith organizations. HELPLINE supports youth to talk through their feelings, focus on positive problem-solving, and find appropriate supportive adults.



In collaboration with The First Lady's Children's Cabinet and the Georgia Department of Education, HELPLINE serves as a resource to school personnel with questions about mandated reporting or issues around child abuse including information about where and how to report child abuse, as well as ways to support families and prevent harm to children.

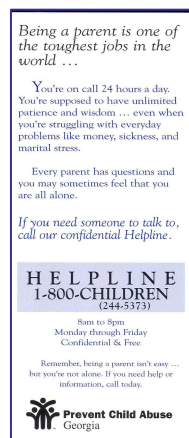


The Children & Youth Coordinating Council partners with the HELPLINE to provide information about bullying and how to respond and prevent it. HELPLINE listens to concerns, assists callers to develop safety plans and works with children and parents on potential solutions to their individual situations.



**Stop It Now!** Georgia is PCA Georgia's child sexual abuse prevention campaign. The

HELPLINE supports callers who have questions about child sexual abuse, healthy sexual development in children, and behaviors in adults and youth that may be harmful. Information and support is provided in a confidential and anonymous setting.



Our bookmark for parents is designed to reach them with the message that parenting is hard, and all parents need support at one time or another. HELPLINE staff and volunteers provide parents with vital and timely support, as well as information about community resources. The bookmarks are distributed in the same manner as the *Need to Talk?* parent cards.

For information about obtaining any of these HELPLINE resource materials, please call the HELPLINE at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

## Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's Referral Guide

By Shabnam Majidi, HELPLINE Program Specialist

Many of you may be unfamiliar with Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia's *Referral Guide for Abuse Treatment Services*. The *Referral Guide* is a listing of mental health clinicians throughout the state of Georgia who have specialized skills in treating children and adults impacted by abuse. The Guide includes treatment providers who work with victims of child abuse and child sexual abuse as well as those who have been or are at risk to sexually abuse.

You can find this listing on the PCA Georgia website ([www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org)). Information about the *Referral Guide* can also be obtained by calling the HELPLINE directly at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

The clinicians in the *Referral Guide* have completed an application process and their applications have been approved by the *Referral Guide's* Standards' Review Committee. The Standards' Review Committee includes clinicians who are leaders in the mental health community as providers of child abuse survivor and/or perpetrator treatment. Currently, these committee members are:

- **Dr. Nancy McGarrah**: Dr. McGarrah is a clinical psychologist in Atlanta, GA. She is a well-respected clinician for treating children, adolescents, and adults who are victims of emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Dr. McGarrah is also the recipient of the 2007 "Michael E. Axelrod Power of Prevention Award."
- **Stephanie Cruwys**: Stephanie is a clinical social worker in Brunswick, GA. She specializes in working with children, adolescents, and adults who are at risk of abusing or who have already sexually abused.
- **Geraldine (Jerry) Connor**: Jerry is a licensed professional counselor in Atlanta, GA. She has numerous years experience treating children, adolescents, and adults who are survivors of child abuse.
- **Dr. C. Curtis Holmes**: Dr. Holmes is a clinical psychologist in Warner Robins, GA. He treats both survivors and perpetrators of sexual abuse. Dr. Holmes works with children, adolescents, and adults.

Professionals interested in listing their professional practice in the *Referral Guide* can call the 1-800-CHILDREN HELPLINE or email [referralguide@pcageorgia.org](mailto:referralguide@pcageorgia.org) to request an application by mail or fax.

The screenshot shows the website interface. At the top, a navigation menu includes links for 'about abuse', 'prevention services & programs', 'how you can help', 'who we are', 'resources', 'media', and 'contact us'. The 'resources' link is circled in orange and labeled with a '1'. Below the menu is a banner with the text 'Call 1-800-CHILDREN ...You CAN Make A Difference.' and the PCA Georgia logo. Underneath the banner is a list of resources: 'Brochures and flyers online', 'Chartered Council Area', 'First Steps Coordinators Secure Area', 'Employment Materials or Form', 'Referral guide', 'Statistics', and 'What should I do if I suspect a child is being abused or neglected'. The 'Referral guide' link is circled in orange and labeled with a '2'.

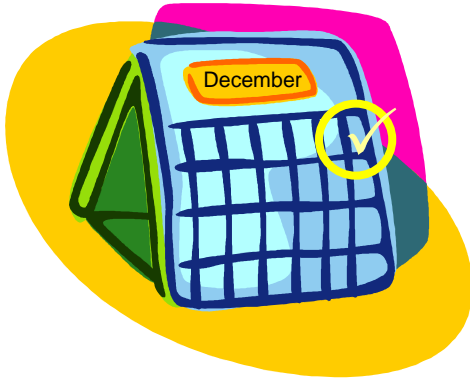
To view all clinicians throughout the state of Georgia listed in the PCA Georgia *Referral Guide*, go to [www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org).

1. Click on the "Resources" tab
2. Click on the link to "Referral Guide".

## Volunteer News: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### 2007 End-of-Year Training and Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

**Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>  
9:00 am until 1:00 pm**



Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend our end of the year Volunteer Training and Appreciation Luncheon.

This year's event will be hosted off-site and will include a catered lunch, as well as recognition awards for distinguished volunteer service. More details to follow!

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## Welcome to Margaret Weisser – Our New Intern!

Hello!

I am currently a student pursuing my Master of Social Work Degree at Georgia State University. Over the course of the school year I will be interning with PCA Georgia. I am excited to embark on my placement here, and believe I can learn a great deal from both staff and volunteers about prevention methods and community involvement with child welfare issues.

I grew up in Charleston, South Carolina, and obtained an undergraduate degree in English with a minor in Psychology from Clemson University. I then moved to Atlanta and began working with homeless legal services in the metro area as a paralegal/advocate. Through my work with homeless mothers I realized I

wanted to focus my career on improving the lives of children. I decided that furthering my education was the best way to accomplish my career objectives and enrolled in the MSW program.

I am a recipient of a Title IV-E training grant which supports the recruitment of social workers into the child welfare arena. Upon my graduation I will go to work for Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. I hope to bring along all the prevention information I will learn to help better serve the Georgia population. I look forward to meeting you all and experiencing all the great opportunities PCA Georgia has to offer.

*Margaret*

**Helpline Birthdays**

Carroll	8/29
Bill	9/12
Sonya	10/2
Donna	10/23
Lynnita	10/26
Elaine	11/12
Kasey	12/10

**Special Thanks to Our Generous HELPLINE Funding Sources**

- Georgia DHR
- 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
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1-800-CHILDREN

We're on the web!

Visit us at:

- [www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org)
- [www.stopitnowga.org](http://www.stopitnowga.org)

**Welcome To Our Newest HELPLINE Volunteers**

Since our last newsletter, HELPLINE has welcomed three new volunteers:

**Carrie  
Elaine  
Sheila**

Each of our new volunteers is progressing through their training. We hope they will soon take the official "HELPLINE Plunge"!

HELPLINE is continually looking for new volunteers. Upcoming 2007 volunteer orientation dates are posted on our website at [www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org). If you know anyone who is interested in becoming a HELPLINE volunteer, please call us at 404-870-6565 or send an email to [helpline@pcageorgia.org](mailto:helpline@pcageorgia.org).

**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 ensure that children grow up nurtured, safe and healthy. Preventing child abuse is the work of everyone, every day.

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Georgia

