April is Child Abuse Prevention month. Those of us who work daily with abused children see this as an ‘opportunity’ to bring awareness to our community (personal and professional) of the tragic and extremely high number of abused and/or neglected children there are in our world, nation, communities, churches, and families.

Child abuse and neglect is all too common and prevalent in all communities. Annually, over three million child abuse reports are made in the United States alone. It is imperative that each of us do not naïvely think that child abuse is not prevalent with our clients/patients and with those whom we come in contact with socially.

Sadly, much of society, including health professionals, does not want to hear about child abuse and neglect. It is too hard to hear about children being abused/neglected. Even though more than 98 percent of Americans view child abuse as a serious social problem, our society has not yet seen an effective advocacy effort resulting in resources to protect children from abuse and neglect and strengthen family functioning. In fact, we spend billions of dollars each year for health care and shelter for children who have been harmed by their parents. Some argue that we are better at identifying and reporting abuse (a child is reported for abuse every five seconds in the U.S.), however, this has not been effective in reducing our child abuse mortality rate in the United States. Since 1998 death from child abuse have seen a fairly increase.

Currently, the rate of child mortality due to abuse is five deaths per day.

Compiled and edited by Christine Byrne, EdD

Continued on page 2
Child Abuse Prevention

What happens to children ought to concern each of us as a professional in health care and as private individuals and members of society. While I believe every adult has a responsibility to advocate for children (God has entrusted them to us) some of us may be more likely to spark into action. One factor for causing a move to action could be the economic cost of child abuse, particularly in health care.

Felletti, the principal investigator of the ACE study, offers that the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences are clearly a major determinant of the health and social well-being of the nation. One of the major conclusions of this study is that major diseases in adulthood are determined in childhood, not by disease but by the number of adverse experiences the adult had in childhood.

In addition to the billions spent in the childhood years, more and more information related to long-term health consequences due to child abuse has been evidenced. The literature in the past decade is replete with studies that document the deleterious long-term effects of adverse experiences in childhood. This timely and vital spotlight on the consequences of childhood experiences is due in large part to the results of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study. This is one of the largest scientific research studies addressing the relationship between multiple categories of childhood trauma with mental and physical health outcomes later in life. The ACE study has demonstrated the broad and profound long-term impact of childhood experiences on adult mental health, disease, obesity, risk behaviors, and addiction.

In fact the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) wanted to study the elderly population of persons with significant adverse childhood experiences and found it was not possible because this segment of adults died, on average, twenty years earlier than those who did not experience this level of adversity. This more than underscores the importance of understanding and preventing/addressing adverse childhood experiences in childhood. Further, as emphasized by Edwards, et. al., to ignore the presence of such indicators would constitute a serious deficiency in medical care. Is much more evidence necessary to compel us to make a commitment to identify children at risk and advocate and intervene on their behalf?

Those of us who work in the health profession are, I believe, uniquely called to this mission. We are on the frontlines. No matter what you do or where it is you are working, you may be the first to identify risk for neglect or maltreatment. Do not miss this opportunity. Too many children are a part of the mortality rate indicated above because professional caregivers have turned a ‘blind’ eye or have chosen ‘not to get involved’. Please be your brother’s keeper, or, in this case, a keeper of safety for our children.

Kitti Freier Randall, PhD, Pediatric Neurodevelopmental Psychologist, Consultant & Director of Pediatric Psychology Services, LLUHC, Department of Pediatrics.

References
2012 Teachers’ Convention

Sunday, August 5th thru Wednesday, August 8th

Moving Hearts and Minds Upward

The 2012 Teachers’ Convention is just around the corner! It will be held again at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tennessee. Start planning now to attend. There will be a designated track of training sessions specifically for early childhood educators. For additional information, contact your local conference office of education or union office of education early childhood liaison.

Progress!

Atlantic Union—Marlene Alvarez
malvarez@atlanticunion.org
Canada—Betty Bayer
bayer.betty@adventist.ca
Columbia Union—Evelyn Sullivan
esullivan@columbiaunion.net

Lake Union—Barbara Livesay
barbara.livesay@lucsda.org
MidAmerica Union—LouAnn Howard
lohoward@maucsa.org
North Pacific Union—Sue Patzer
sue.patzer@nw.npuc.org

Pacific Union—Christine Byrne
christine@puonline.org
Southern Union—Tamara Libonati
tlibonati@southernunion.com
Southwestern Union—Carolyn Early
cearly@swuc.org

The North American Division has reached a milestone in 2012! Years of discussion and planning has led to the creation of a position and funding for an ECE associate within the Office of Education.

From its inception, one of the purposes of ACCN has been "To advocate the hiring of EC specialists at all organizational levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." Currently, each union office of education within the NAD has an individual assigned to oversee ECEC needs. Local conferences are in the process of assigning the oversight of EC programs to particular individuals, but this will take a bit longer as conferences seek to find individuals capable of providing such oversight.

Please pray without ceasing as ACCN continues to work in your behalf.

The Purposes of ACCN:

1. To affirm, encourage and empower all engaged in the weekday ministry to children.
2. To provide opportunities for professional and spiritual growth.
3. To provide networking opportunities for Seventh-day Adventist Child Development Centers.
4. To set certification standards for child care providers.
5. To foster unity between all areas of child development within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
6. To encourage the incorporation of Early Childhood Education in the nurture and outreach programs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
7. To foster working relationships with the world church, unions, conferences, local churches, and schools.
8. To encourage surveys and research in the area of Child Development and Early Childhood Education in cooperation with the North American Division.
9. To counsel with the North American Division and General Conference in the development and review of programs and strategies for Child Development.
10. To provide guidance and resources to training organizations, colleges, and universities.
11. To advocate the hiring of Early Childhood specialists at all organizational levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
12. To develop working relationships with other Early Childhood Education organizations.
13. To encourage child care centers to obtain national accreditation.

Join ACCN

ACCN website
NAD Early Childhood Education Associate Director

From the moment I began my first part-time job as a teacher’s assistant in a church operated daycare center, I knew that I had a passion to work with young children. That job led me on a journey to study early childhood special education as an undergraduate at the University of Maryland, College Park and to then work as an early interventionist, working with children, birth—age three, who had varying disabilities for Prince Georges County Public Schools (MD). I absolutely loved empowering the families of these young children as well as working to assist each child meet developmentally appropriate milestones. Every day was an adventure as I coordinated parent support groups, toddler groups, assessed children, made home visits and assisted to transition children into school-based programs.

While I loved working directly with the children and their families, I also enjoyed serving as a mentor for new teachers as well as for pre-service teachers. This lead to my pursuit of obtaining a doctorate degree in early childhood special education; which then provided me the opportunity to work in higher education. I have worked at Bowie State University as well as Towson University where I served as an Assistant Professor in both special education and early childhood education. I taught classes, advised students, supervised interns, and published. In 2007, I joined the team at Washington Adventist University (formerly Columbia Union College), where I had the opportunity to serve as the Director of Field Experiences for one year and the Chair of the Education Department for 2 years. My colleagues and I experienced tremendous growth as we forged partnerships with local public school systems; enhanced our internship experiences within our Seventh-day Adventist partner schools; began to develop online education courses; and we also benefited from grant funding in excess of one million dollars for our early childhood education program. I also had the pleasure of serving as the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies (SGPS) for one year. I had the privilege of working to establish governing policies and procedures, developing an online campus, growing the school with the addition of new graduate programs, and creating and establishing a shared governance and collaboration amongst the academic and support departments across campus.

As I continue my work in the vineyard of education, it is my desire to maintain the awesome work on behalf of God’s children as I currently serve as the Associate Director of Early Childhood Education for the North American Division, Office of Education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

One of my favorite bible texts is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”. And it is with this promise that I face each day with excitement, expectancy, and hope. God has blessed me richly, professionally as well as personally, giving me a wonderful husband, Derrick, and two beautiful children, Jonathan and Morgan.

I believe that God has situated me “for such a time as this” to further make a difference in the lives of young children and I will continue to be His faithful and obedient servant, asking, like Samuel, “speak Lord, your servant hears”.

Adventist Child Care Connection
Volume 17 Number 2
Spring 2012

Adventist Child Care Network Board
Christine Gillan Byrne President & Editor
Vacant Past-President
Vernie Alexander Secretary
Rose Gamblin Reporting Treasurer

Board Members at Large
Anita Ahrens Juanita Marshall
Tina Miller Jana Wolverton
Julie Yamada Towanda White

The Adventist Child Care Network seeks to provide support and nurture for Seventh-day Adventist child care providers and to reach out with information and encouragement to churches and individuals who are starting a child care center.

Through this newsletter we seek to facilitate and develop a communication network among Seventh-day Adventist early childhood education and care professionals.

Published quarterly through the generosity of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists Office of Education.

For more information:
Phone: 805-413-7344
Fax: 805-413-7319
Website

Copyright 2012 Adventist Child Care Network