



# PREVENTION PROGRESS

Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

*The Children's Trust Fund*

Winter 2016

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## Governor Bentley Meets with Leadership from the Governor's Task Force on Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children to Discuss Recommendations

**Governor Robert Bentley met Wednesday with State Representative Terri Collins who serves as Chairman and Tracy Plummer, Vice Chairman of the Governor's Task Force on Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children to discuss the task force's recommendations.**

**The 13 member task force was established following the passage of Erin's Law in the 2015 Regular Session. The first meeting of the task force was held in September and recommendations were finalized and submitted at the end of December.**

**The task force provided several recommendations for the Governor's consideration. Governor Bentley will review each recommendation in the report and determine the best practices moving forward.**



### April is Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

Now is the time to start planning your April activities to promote awareness across the state. We encourage every community to take action for children by encouraging businesses and schools throughout Alabama to place blue ribbons on their doors during the month of April. Pinwheels can also be displayed all over town. A Toolkit will be posted on our website soon to help with your events.

Please email your events to Dawn Miller at [dawn.miller@ctf.alabama.gov](mailto:dawn.miller@ctf.alabama.gov) so we can make plans to attend as many of your events as possible as well as post on our website's calendar.

Check Out our New Website!



## Montgomery Advertiser Editorial on December 18, 2015: Stiffen Child Abuse Penalty

Child abuse is always ugly, but a case now being investigated by 19th Judicial Circuit District Attorney Randall Houston is particularly horrific. As the *Montgomery Advertiser's* Marty Roney reported, Hallee Ann McLeod, 28, of Wetumpka, faces aggravated child abuse and chemical endangerment of a child charges in Elmore County.

McLeod's 4-year-old son was found unresponsive and injured in the back of the car of her boyfriend, Scott Hicks, in Panama City, Fla., in September. The boy was dehydrated and found to have bruises and injuries over his entire body, having been tortured, allegedly, by the adults who should have been protecting him. Houston, calling what happened to McLeod's son monstrous, is now pushing for legislative action next year to boost the penalty for aggravated child abuse in cases where victims are under the age of 6.

Currently, aggravated child abuse is a Class B felony, bringing two to 20 years in prison. Houston backs a bill that would make the charge a Class A felony with punishment ranging from 10 to 99 years, or life in prison. A number of other states treat aggravated child abuse as a Class A felony, and it certainly makes sense for the youngest victims, least able to evade violence inflicted upon them. Alabama lawmakers should approve the stiffer penalty in the February 2016 session.

But there is much more to be done to curb child abuse and protect potential victims. **More than 9,000 children are victims of child abuse and neglect around the state each year, according to a University of Alabama report released in April.** And the state invests too little in child maltreatment prevention, the report authors concluded. The overriding reason Alabama should bolster those efforts is obviously humanitarian – to safeguard vulnerable children. But damage to the state's economy also results when child abuse prevention is short-changed.

**The UA researchers pegged that price at \$2.3 billion in annual direct costs to the state.** And that's taking into consideration only the child victims, not economic harm to families or the greater community. All the more reason to hold the line on more budget cuts to Alabama's child welfare system, and restore as soon as possible funding lost in recent years to services such as child advocacy centers.

Gov. Robert Bentley's Alabama Human Resources Task Force is now reviewing the Department of Human Resources, the agency that investigates child abuse, looking for ways to improve delivery of services. It's a complicated process and the task force's deadline has been extended to January 2017, leaving uncertainty about how DHR's funding will be handled in budget proposals for the 2016 fiscal year.

We hope lawmakers don't use the delayed directive as an excuse to downsize child-abuse related programs, services or personnel. **Alabama's children deserve better.**



### Happy New Year and Greetings in 2016!

As we begin a new year it is fitting to look back at 2015 and take note of our accomplishments. Looking back offers a good map for future plans and goals. In 2015, our agency successfully released our first electronic grant application process which was met with many positive reviews, both from applicants and reviewers. The new system is very helpful to us in the office in tracking and pulling reports quickly and efficiently.



In April we released the results of the study we commissioned with the University of Alabama. “The Cost of Child Maltreatment to the Alabama Economy” was published through a collaboration with the College of Human Environmental Sciences and the Center for Business and Economic Research – Culverhouse College of Commerce. We featured the report to kick off Child Abuse Prevention Month in April and the results were staggering – the cost of child maltreatment to the Alabama economy in 2013 (most recent data available) conservatively estimated to be \$2.3 billion. The amount would be much larger if associated costs to families and communities had been included. The report received statewide recognition and was quoted recently in an editorial in the Montgomery Advertiser that called for stiffer penalties in child abuse cases.

We delivered a very successful two-day grantee training in August that featured numerous breakout sessions and stimulating keynote speeches. The training included sessions on advocacy, evaluation, internet safety, and awareness on human trafficking – to name a few. The grantee training helps our funded program staff have an opportunity to learn and network as we begin the new program year.

In October we learned that although our federal “Pathways to Responsible Fatherhood” program was not selected for a continuation grant, the Department of Human Resources reached out to extend the TANF funding to include our fatherhood grants. Training has been held in December to get all of our twenty TANF fatherhood (mothers are also included) programs underway and on track. Check out the ADCANP fatherhood video on our website that Auburn University developed in conjunction with our evaluation project with them!

Regional check presentations were very successful this year – elected officials, including state legislators, mayors, city council members and judges, were part of every event. Many thanks to our grantee district leaders for planning such meaningful events. It is so rewarding for me to hear firsthand about all the good programs and services we are providing for our communities’ families and children.

So, as we look back on a very productive 2015, please know that we are busily preparing for the New Year. Our Board of Directors will meet in early February to review our legislative agenda and to offer input on our spring Request for Proposal regional meetings. Thanks, again, for the commitment and dedication to preventing child maltreatment in our great state. Working together, 2016 promises to be even more rewarding.

Thanks for all you do!

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Senator Arthur Orr

Senator Orr was elected to the Alabama Senate on November 7, 2006. He was born in 1964 in Decatur. Senator Orr received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Wake Forest University and his J.D. from the University of Alabama's School of Law. He was a partner in one of the oldest and largest North Alabama law firms and is now General Counsel for Cook's Pest Control, Inc. Senator Orr is married to the former Amy Wallace Bethshares of Decatur. They are members of First Bible Church in Decatur and have one son, Jack.



A former U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal, Senator Orr also served as a new country developer (Bangladesh) and staff attorney for Habitat for Humanity International in the Asia/Pacific area for years. He has been active in the Decatur-Morgan County area serving as Chairman of the Calhoun College Foundation, Treasurer of the Chamber of Commerce, President of the Community Foundation, President of the Decatur Rotary Club, Chairman of the Volunteer Center, President of Main Street Decatur, Chairman of the City Beautification Board, and President of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. He helped start the Community Free Clinic for the working poor and serves on its board as well as several other non-profit boards throughout his district.

Senator Arthur Orr was appointed by past Governor Bob Riley to the Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention's Board of Directors in January 2010 and served through December 2015. He has served as a champion for our Department and the children of this state. We are so thankful for his service on the Board.

### **A Special Thank You to Legislators That Attended Check Presentations in their Districts**

Representative K. L. Brown  
 Representative Terri Collins  
 Representative Bob Fincher  
 Representative Mike Holmes  
 Representative Kelvin Lawrence  
 Representative Paul Lee  
 Representative Tim Melson  
 Representative Becky Nordgren  
 Representative Phillip Pettus  
 Representative Bill Poole

Representative Connie Rowe  
 Representative Tim Wadsworth  
 Representative Randy Wood  
 Senator Rusty Glover  
 Senator Tim Melson  
 Senator Greg Reed  
 Senator Larry Stutts  
 Senator Cam Ward  
 Senator Phil Williams



**The Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board of Directors will meet at ADCANP Headquarters located at 60 Commerce Street, Suite 1000, Montgomery, Alabama on February 4, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.**

## Meet Caroline Elliott—

Caroline Elliott is the founder of the family health awareness initiative, "Strong Families, Stronger Children, Strongest World". A junior at Auburn University pursuing concurrent degrees in Communication Disorders and French along with a minor in Human Development and Family Studies, she plans to attend graduate school to earn a Master's Degree in Speech and Language Pathology.



In January of 2015, she began competing in the Miss America Scholarship Pageant system, winning the title "Miss Auburn Opelika Area," along with scholarship money. She competed at the Miss Alabama Pageant in June of 2015, earning more scholarship money, and in August, she won the title of "Miss Chattahoochee Valley" to compete in the 2016 pageant. Part of competing in the Miss America system involves having a platform issue that contestants raise funds and awareness for.

Growing up, divorce strongly impacted Caroline's family and stepfamily, inspiring her passion for family health and leading her to start "Strong Families, Stronger Children, Strongest World". She enjoys giving her time to serving local family resource centers that are positively impacting Alabamians, such as Circle of Care in Valley, Alabama. This semester at Auburn, Caroline is participating in advanced undergraduate research on the Alabama Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Initiative (AHMREI) and the Children's Trust Fund of Alabama as well as a service learning through AHMREI which strives to instill "relationship smarts" in junior high school and high school students in Auburn and Opelika. She is also thrilled to be working with the Children's Trust Fund to empower men and women to build stronger families and prevent child abuse, creating stronger children for our strongest world.

## Alabama Children's Trust Fund Makes the National Alliance Newsletter Distributed to All 50 States



### What's Up At the Alliance? January 2016

"As we enter this new year, we have much exciting work taking place now and planned throughout 2016.

#### *On-line Training*

Yay Alabama! And I am not referring to the National Championship game. The Alabama Children's Trust Fund is working hard to strengthen families in Alabama through the training resources developed by the Alliance. Tish MacInnis, an Alliance Certified Trainer -- and staff member of one of the Alabama CTF's primary grantees, has been working with the Alabama Office of School Readiness First Class Pre-K and Home Visiting Programs to encourage all practitioners in these programs to approach their work with families through a different lens. As a result, all 1500 First Class Pre-K Classrooms and Home Visitors will be required to complete all seven courses of the Alliance's online protective factors training over the next six months. We are delighted to see the training put to such good use. Thanks to the Alabama CTF for your ongoing work to strengthen Alabama families!"



District 4—December 18, 2015

## TANF Training Highlights



"Understanding parental roles is key to building healthy relationships for children on solid foundations".

**"Great food, great company and great information!!"**

Jackie Baker, Program Coordinator  
CAA of Northwest Alabama

**"Incredibly helpful in understanding fathers."**

Dane Shaw, Project Director  
Dallas County Fatherhood Initiative

**"The training was extremely informative, interactive and engaging. It set the stage for this important Fatherhood Initiative and served as affirmation of the value for the services and outreach that is being provided at the community and state levels."**

Margaret Morton  
Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement, Inc.



Alfred Saliba Center Families' Muriel Goosby and Belinda Mitchell attended the 24/7Dad Curriculum Training.

## Request for Proposal Release

It's almost that time of year again when the Department releases the Request for Proposal's funding guidelines. This year, the Request for Proposal will be posted on our website along with a brief presentation to provide additional guidance on funding requirements. Application for funding will begin on April 1st and a link will be posted on our website along with instructions.

Funds will be awarded to eligible entities through a competitive grant application process for organizations seeking funding for prevention programs in your respective areas.

All interested applicants are encouraged to watch the presentation and direct any questions you may have to the appropriate staff listed below:

- Programmatic Questions—Jessica Jackson
- Financial Questions—Erin Cauthen

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention secures resources to fund evidence-based community programs committed to the prevention of child maltreatment; we advocate for children and the strengthening of families.

## Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### District One

Rev. Clinton L. Johnson

### District Two

**Anita L. Archie, Board Chair**

### District Three

Dr. Mitchell Brown

### District Four

Myron C. Gargis

### District Five

Senator Arthur Orr

### District Six

Senator Cam Ward

### District Seven

Nancy G. Sewell

### Members-At-Large

Margaret McKenzie Whatley

Mary Ashcraft

### Department of Education

Dr. Tommy Bice

Designee—Karen Porter

### Department of Mental Health

Commissioner Jim Perdue

Designee—Beverly Johnson (Acting)

### Department of Human Resources

Commissioner Nancy Buckner

Designee—Paul Butler

### Department of Public Health

Dr. Thomas M. Miller (Acting State Health Officer)

Designee—Jamey Durham

### Department of Public Safety

Colonel John E. Richardson

Designee—Capt. Keith Jackson

## FINANCIAL REPORTING DUE DATES

### New Programs (Required to Submit Quarterly Reports)

- November 16, 2015 (Period Covered: August 1 - October 31)
- February 16, 2016 (Period Covered: November 1 - January 31)
- May 16, 2016 (Period Covered: February 1 - April 30)
- August 15, 2016 (Period Covered: May 1 - July 31)

### Continued Programs (Required to Submit Semi-Annual Reports)

- February 16, 2016 (Period Covered: August 1 - January 31)
- August 15, 2016 (Period Covered: February 1 - July 31)

**TANF Programs are required to submit their financial report by the 7th of each month.**

\*\*\*\*\*As a reminder, all reports are to be completed through the online system located on our home page at [www.cfa.alabama.gov](http://www.cfa.alabama.gov).\*\*\*\*\*