



# THE EXCHANGE CLUB PARENTING SKILLS CENTER

141 Franklin Street, Stamford CT 203-327-9419

## Autumn 2011

Fall 2011 Edition

## A Note From The Executive Director

Donna L. Miller M.S

*Our mission is to stop the cycle of child abuse by providing remedial and preventative intervention to abused, neglected and/or "at risk" children and their families.*

*Founded in 1989, The Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse of Southern CT, Inc. (dba The Parenting Skills Center) provides the following Agency Services:*

- ◆ Family Enrichment Services
- ◆ Crisis Parent Aide and Hispanic Crisis Programs
- ◆ Kid's First Supervised Visitation
- ◆ The Parent Project
- ◆ Nurturing Parent Education, and Support Groups
- ◆ Substance Abuse Intervention/Parenting Support Group
- ◆ Co-operative Parenting through Divorce

*\*All services available in English, Spanish and Creole.*

### Children Need Affirmation

Emotional abuse of a child is typically the least reported type of child abuse, although experts agree that it occurs simultaneously with other forms of child abuse and neglect. Although the effects of emotional abuse may not be as visible, they create serious and long-lasting psychological challenges. The statistics cited are from the childwelfare.gov.

#### What is emotional abuse?

Emotional abuse is often referred to as psychological abuse and is generally defined as a pattern of behavior that impacts a child's social-emotional development and feelings of self-worth. It can involve words, action, or indifference. It may occur without other forms of child abuse and neglect, but there is often an overlap. In 2008, national statistics show that 7% of all child abuse reports were considered emotional or psychological abuse. The statistics do not reflect how often emotional abuse may have been associ-

ated with another issues such as physical abuse. Emotional abuse can begin very young with infants and can continue through adolescence.

#### How do you identify Emotional Abuse?

Emotional abuse is difficult to identify and to prove. The lack of physical injury or obvious mental trauma makes it challenging for protective service workers to intervene. Experts look at patterns of abusive behavior of the perpetrator such as continually shaming, humiliating or belittling a child; extreme criticism, terrorizing, exposing a child to family violence or the inability or unwillingness to provide affection and positive reinforcement. The child victims may exhibit a range of behavioral indicators such as compulsively seeking affection and attention, aggressive or antisocial behaviors, lack of self-confidence, inability to react with emotion or bond with others, or dramatic changes in behaviors.

#### Examples of Emotional Abuse:

- Failure to Thrive - involves infants and young children not meeting age appropriate physical, social and emotional development.
- Exposure to other forms of abuse or violence in the home.
- Rejection or ignoring a child.
- Blaming a child for problems of the family or home.
- Isolation - or keeping a child from normal daily activities or interaction with friends or peers.
- Excessively critical remarks creating feelings of worthlessness.

#### What are the effects of emotional abuse?

Research has shown that emotional abuse can create life-long feelings of poor self-esteem, worthlessness, anxiety and other forms of distress. As adults, many exhibit depression, a lack of empathy and inappropriate or troubled relationships.

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#### Center Staff:

Donna L. Miller M.S, Exec. Director  
Olympia Arnold M.S, Coordinator

#### Crisis Parent Aides/Family Enrichment Service Providers:

Lilia Angarita B.A  
Rebecca Campos M.S.W  
Marcia Campoverde B.A  
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#### Support Staff:

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Harry Adamakos, PhD, Consultant  
Kristin Matté, Finance & Development  
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# The Hispanic Parent Project

Lilia Angarita B.A, Parent Project® Facilitator

We have started a new program in collaboration with Bridgeport Child Guidance “Hispanic Parent Project”

The Hispanic Parent Project launched its first session on September 26, 2011 with parents of strong-willed or out-of-control adolescent children. The curriculum teaches concrete identification, prevention and intervention strategies for the most destructive adolescent behaviors. The parents attend a 3 hour class and follow along with an activity based workbook, “A Parent’s Guide to Chang-



ing Destructive Adolescent Behavior.”

Over 150,000 families have attended Parent Project classes nationwide. With a proven track record, the Parent Project reduced juvenile crime by 1/3, while significantly increasing both school attendance and performance. The Parent Project

was recognized by the American Bar Association as the strongest parent involvement program for adjudicated youth in the nation.

The class has been a huge success in conjunction with the Stamford Public Schools at 141 Franklin St, Stamford. Each parent has come with an open mind and is ready to learn new concrete techniques that they can administer at home immediately. The parents are very excited about this program because it is culturally competent.

## Internship Program

Olympia Arnold M.S. Counseling

Exciting News!!!! The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center is continuing to offer a great opportunity for interns from local universities to work with families and children who are at risk of abuse/neglect. The internship program welcomes students with a core concentration in administration, human services, social work and counseling at both undergraduate and master’s levels. Students will engage in the co-facilitation of groups,

case management within the homes of the families. Interns will also explore the administrative component of the agency policies and procedures as well as grant writing process. We are currently offering day and evening hours from 8:30am – 8:00pm Monday through Friday, late nights on Tuesday and Wednesday. The center will provide experienced Masters level supervision in compliance with the ACA and NASW.

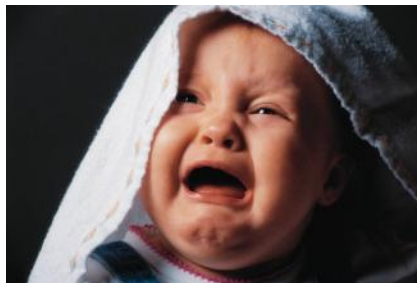


## Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Rebecca Compos M.S.W



The month of October is Domestic Violence Awareness month and agencies are seeing an increase of Domestic Violence victims. In our community the economy is making matters worse for many victims of this abuse. Also, a growing body of



research shows that domestic violence and child abuse occur in the same families.

Fortunately here at the Exchange Club we have tremendous success in working

with these families and getting them the help to overcome Domestic Violence. We work with these families one on one in a Home Visitation Model. We help them to promote safety in their home, identify the risk factors for violence, teach them the indicators of Domestic violence, and make them aware of the effects that Domestic Violence has on their children. Then, in alignment with our mission these families are taught positive parenting, replacing violent tendencies with nurturing and care.

# The Center Saves the Tax Payers Millions

Kristin Matté, Financial Manager

Child abuse and neglect has long term effects on the children, their families and society as a whole. Children who experience child abuse and neglect are 59% more likely to be arrested as a juvenile and 30% more likely to commit violent crime. The Federal government economic costs associated with child abuse and neglect is staggering, approximately 104 billion annually<sup>1</sup>.

- ◆ In our nation almost **five children die every day** as a result of child abuse. More than three out of four are under the age of 4. In addition, it is estimated that between 60-85% of child fatalities due to maltreatment are **not recorded** <sup>1</sup>.
- ◆ Child abuse and neglect is considered the nation's number one health crisis facing our children today,
- ◆ Over 40,000 cases of child abuse in Connecticut are reported to the Department of Children and Family Services every year,
- ◆ According to the National Memorandum, each year in our nation, more children die at the hands of their caregivers than of natural causes,

Staggering statistics such as these really show how imperative it is that

the Center continues it's great work. The Center celebrates with it's client families an 88% success ratio of meeting the goal of stopping or preventing child abuse and neglect from occurring. The Center focuses on strengthening the family unit through intervention and prevention programs and reduces the amount of children entering the foster care system.

The Center's work is valuable and cost effective. The Center has an average cost of \$2,500 for each family it helps. In comparison, the Federal & State government spends an average of \$40,000 per **child** in the Foster Care system per year <sup>2</sup>. The Center's services stop child abuse and violence in the lives of approximately 220 families annually, saving the US government, the state and it's tax payers millions!

The cases of "at risk" families have increased in this difficult economic time. The Center needs your help to continue it's work and meet the need in our community. Together we can save the lives of these precious children and strengthen families.

Large or small, all donations are

appreciated and can be mailed or delivered to The Exchange Club Parenting Skills Center, 141 Franklin Street in Stamford CT 06901.

A donation to the Parenting Skills Center will help prevent child abuse and neglect and save lives. By helping conserve state and federal resources it is also a smart investment in our future! For those of you who have already supported us, you have made an immense difference in countless children's lives.

Our Sincere Thanks!



*"Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime." ~ Herbert Ward*

## Fall is Here, Winter is Around the Corner

Marcia Compoverde B.A



Fall is here! There is beauty everywhere! There is strong desire to enjoy the outdoors in this brisk season, families begin to take walks and drives to enjoy the beauty of nature. The Center promotes fall activities by teaching parents to pause from their busy lives and to enjoy the wonder on their children's faces as they collect colored leaves and

pick pumpkins.

To find activities to do in Fairfield county for some family fall fun, go to [fairfieldcountyonline.com/events](http://fairfieldcountyonline.com/events) Nature walks, apple or pumpkin picking etc. Enjoy the fall, winter is around the corner.



<sup>1</sup>childhelp.org, <sup>2</sup>FCAA: The U.S. spends \$22 billion dollars (\$5 billion from the Federal government and the balance from state/county governments) to provide services for children and youth in foster care. This averages out to \$40,000 per child. .

# A Note From The Executive Director

Donna L. Miller M.S., Executive Director

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Emotional abuse may also lead to other self-destructive behaviors such as eating disorders, substance abuse and abusive relationships.

## • What can be done?

- Show love to your children every day!
- Be charitable with your choice of

words, especially when disciplining.

- Never speak in anger, cool down, and think of your goal for your child such as a healthy self image.

The longer abuse continues, the greater the potential for serious and long term emotional and psychological difficulties for the child. If you suspect a child is being abused, it should be reported to your local Child Protective Services Department (check your

local yellow pages under child abuse). If a child is in immediate danger, please call the police. For crisis counseling, call ChildHelp at 1-800-4-A-CHILD.

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## A Client's Story

By Emily

I am Emily, I am four years old. When Rebecca from the Exchange Club Center first came to my house, I was scared and I hid behind the chair. I used to always be scared. I was hit every day with a lamp cord, I am not bad Rebecca told me, but *I was told* he wished I was



never born. I want to thank you for bringing me and my family groceries and for our Christmas presents and the party, my mommy said she thanked God. My big sister said thank you for protecting us, and making us talk to each other, and play games. I say thank you, I am safe now and that person does not live here anymore. My mom, sister and I can smile again.



## Thank You for Your Support in 2010-2011

Kristin Matté, Financial Manager

- ◆ Andor Capital
- ◆ Bridgeport Child Guidance
- ◆ Community Fund of Darien
- ◆ CT Department of Children and Families
- ◆ Eric Gleacher Foundation
- ◆ Exchange Club of Durham-Middlefield
- ◆ Exchange Club of Easton
- ◆ Exchange Club of Huntington-Shelton
- ◆ Exchange Club of Madison
- ◆ Exchange Club of New Canaan
- ◆ Exchange Club of North Stamford
- ◆ Exchange Club of Norwalk
- ◆ Exchange Club of Stamford
- ◆ Exchange Club of Stratford
- ◆ Fairfield County Community Foundation
- ◆ First County Bank
- ◆ Hedge Funds Cares Inc.
- ◆ Hudson Valley Bank
- ◆ Klein Family Foundation
- ◆ New Canaan Community Foundation
- ◆ Perrin Family Foundation
- ◆ Second Congregational Church
- ◆ SERC
- ◆ Stamford Board of Education
- ◆ Stamford Exchange Club Golf Tournament
- ◆ United Way of Western CT Employees
- ◆ A Special thank you to our Board Members who give so generously to our Center.
- ◆ And last but not least a special thank you goes out to all individual who contributed in 2011.

Our great success could not have been possible without all your help!!  
On behalf of all the children, client families and Center staff our heartfelt Thanks to you!!



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