Most of you know that annually and nationally April is Prevent Child Abuse Month. You also may know that our Center for Healthy Development at GSU houses Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, a state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America. On April 16 GSU had a wonderful pinwheels garden event hosted by PCA Georgia that included several dignitaries (such as our delegation of SafeCare staff clad in our new t-shirts), including Georgia’s First Lady, Sandra Deal. The pinwheels symbolize hope for children to be able to grow up without the burden of being victims of child maltreatment. The event was held at GSU’s Child Care Center. The children put on a wonder-ful performance. Over the past 20 years, physical child abuse and sexual abuse have declined in the United States by over 50 percent. But, in 2011 there were still almost 700,000 substantiated cases which means that there were likely at least that number of incidents that went unreport-ed or substantiated.

There are a number of factors that are believed to be responsible for the decline in child maltreatment not the least of which are advocacy efforts such as Prevent Child Abuse America, policy changes, changes in social norms, better training of first responders, legal sanctions, and the emergence of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs such as SafeCare. But ONE case is one too many and neglect has barely declined in those 20 years. Thus, all of our efforts must be focused on how we can continue to evolve our practices to ensure that the decline continues and that we have a stronger impact on neglect.

John R. Lutzker, Ph.D.

(events cont. on page 2)
The Million March Against Child Abuse was held in Atlanta, GA. NSTRC faculty and staff got out to raise awareness about child abuse! According to a 2011 Congressional hearing, nearly 10 children die each day from abuse in the United States.

Hybrid Training Launch

NSTRC began its first pilot test of a new hybrid training model. In short, it was a smashing success! In the hybrid model, Home Visitor trainees first complete NSTRC’s new web-based training course, and then participate in an abbreviated two-day home visiting workshop. The pilot study collected data on trainee reactions to the web course, and their performance during role plays in the abbreviated workshop. Two trainees from Parent Aid in Tucson, Arizona were the first pilot subjects. They completed the 8-hour web course within a week prior to their two day workshop conducted by NSTRC. When interviewed, trainees indicated that the web-training was a wonderful precursor to the face-to-face training in that it provided the essential didactic information about the SafeCare curriculum itself and allowed for workshop training to focus on practicing and mastering skills through feedback from their Trainer. Trainees also noted that elements of the web-training, including video examples of home-visiting sessions and interactive Jot Box tools for note taking, was particularly engaging and user friendly. The performance during role plays was similar to that of other SafeCare trainees who complete the usual four-day workshop. We plan to conduct pilots at two additional locations (GA and NY), and seek further funding for a more rigorous test of the model.

The pilot test was funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as part of the Emory Injury Control Center.
Adventure in Belarus

It was exciting to return to Belarus for the next phase of their SafeCare implementation! Some of the previously trained Home Visitors reported great success with the families they worked with. Home Visitors were now ready to take on the task of training others in their communities, so more families would have the opportunity to learn the skills taught with SafeCare. Training with an interpreter was unique to say the least, and patience was required to make it fun and engaging. I delighted the participants by learning a few words and expressions in Russian/Belarusian. Of course they laughed at my poor pronunciations, but a connection was made. I am thrilled to be involved in supporting the beginnings of a shift in the child welfare system in Belarus - a country that not too long ago, relied on orphanages as a viable response to parents having difficulties with their children. My hosts were most gracious, and my trip culminated with a lovely evening at the ballet. I am always ready and eager to share SafeCare in all corners of the world.

SafeCare International Trainer,
Pauline McKenzie-Day, MS, LPC

Keeping Up With Dr. Lutzker

NSTRC was honored to have our very own John R. Lutzker, PhD, SafeCare Developer, deliver a plenary address at the Pew-sponsored National Summit on Quality in Home Visiting Programs in Washington DC in February 2013. John and Dr. Sharon Ramey presented as part of a sessions titled Emerging Knowledge to Inform the Field of Home Visiting. John’s presentation emphasized two main points: (1) the “fit” between evidence-based practices and family needs and the possibility to combine evidence-based practices to achieve best fit; (2) the importance of implementation science and the use of technology in implementation science. The conference was an outstanding opportunity to hear from visionaries like John, Sharon, and many others.

You can download John’s slides (and all presenters’ slides) here: Home Visiting Summit

Dr. Lutzker also made two invited presentations at the 4th International Symposium, Parenting and Child Wellbeing in Doha, Qatar. He found it to be one of the most fascinating cultural experiences of his many travels! His presentations included Evidence-based parent training programs: History, elements, future directions and An evidence-based widely disseminated parent training program to prevent child maltreatment.
I am a working mother that lives in Tucson, Arizona with my husband, 4-year old Boxer, 8-year old Pug, and WONDERFUL 6-year old son. I am very busy and have little to no time for any extra activities but I want to share what a gift SafeCare has been for my family.

My husband and I had our first and only child at age 40 and signed up for SafeCare to learn how to build a better relationship with our son. I would describe myself as a yeller and my husband as silently passive aggressive and I feared that this combination was not ideal for raising my son. My friend told me about the parenting program, SafeCare, and I signed up immediately so that I could be my best as a parent to my son. Nicole Perez from Parent Aid was assigned as my home visitor and proved to be an excellent teacher! Nicole is firm, knowledgeable, professional, funny, never judgmental, thoughtful about my personal situation and innovative! Although I have participated in parenting classes before, I always found it difficult to capture the essence of family dynamics when classes are structured outside of the home and do not involve other family members. That is why I love SafeCare! It is PROACTIVE and teaches preventative family maintenance and it takes place in my home where my issues occur. It has been an incredible blessing to have this training and coaching in my home.

My favorite SafeCare module is the Parent-Child Interaction module—it changed the face of my family! My son and I have virtually no issues with discipline or getting his chores or responsibilities accomplished because we’re on a level playing field now. He knows what I expect and I know how to work ‘kindly’ with him to get it done.

I ALWAYS advise parents to learn all that they can to be better parents. The act of learning is a very loving thing to do for your child. My son is happy knowing that Nicole is coming to our home every week because I want to be a better mom. Whether a family has issues or not, SafeCare helps to prevent frustration and other issues that occur in all families which can sometimes lean to behavior choices we regret.

I love SafeCare and am grateful to infinity and beyond for how it has helped by family become better!

Patrice Wilson

Welcome to NSTRC!

Theresa joins NSTRC as the Training Coordinator for Georgia. She received her undergraduate degree in Education from The University of Georgia in 2006 and her Masters of Science in Child and Family Development, also from UGA in 2008. Her thesis examined the quality of peer relationships in adolescents raised in households with same-sex parents. Prior to joining the Institute of Public Health, Theresa was a Family and Consumer Sciences and Language Arts teacher in Cherokee County, GA. In her first year at Woodstock Middle School, she received the New Teacher of the Year award and since has developed curriculum that is now used in FACS classrooms all over the state.

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