

# SafeCare Shines

October 2011



NATIONAL SAFECARE  
TRAINING AND  
RESEARCH CENTER

Angela Montesanti/Daniel Whitaker Co-Editors

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY • VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

## OK Results **Show SafeCare Really Works!**

By Dan Whitaker

Since 2002, a large randomized comparative outcome trial of SafeCare has been ongoing in the state of Oklahoma. Ten years, and 2200 families later, the results are in and will be published in the journal *Pediatrics* later this year. The bottom line: adding SafeCare to an in-home service program reduced child welfare reports for neglect and abuse by about 26% compared to the same in-home services with SafeCare. When asked to comment on the study findings, SafeCare developer John Lutzker replied simply, “BOOYAH!”

The study began in 2002, when a research team led by Dr. Mark Chaffin collaborated with the state DHS to design an implementation of SafeCare that could be rigorously evaluated. The team randomized

the six service regions in OK to incorporate SafeCare or to continue to implement their existing intensive home based services program. (Note that all regions were bolstered with training in motivational interviewing and domestic violence training.) Chaffin’s team worked with John Lutzker and several of his colleagues (e.g., Kathy Bigelow, Randy Campbell) to train over 200 community based providers to adopt SafeCare.

A total of 2175 families were included in the study. The majority of parent participants were women (91%). About two-thirds were white, 16% American Indian, 9% African American, and 5% Latino. Eighty two percent lived below the poverty line. Families in the study had many prior encounters with child protective services, averaging almost 5 prior referrals. Over 90% of referrals included child neglect (70% were uniquely child neglect). Although in OK, SafeCare is delivered to families with children 0-12, here we’ll tell you about the findings pertaining to the usual SafeCare target population, families with children ages 0-5.

Families were followed on average for about 6 years following services in order to (continued on pg. 2)

### in this issue:

OK Results Show SafeCare Really Works

page 2

GSU Center for Healthy Development  
Welcomes Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

page 2

SafeCare Site Shout Outs

page 3

Meet Our New NSTRC Staff

Page 4



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

# OK Results Show SafeCare Really Works!

(Continued from pg. 1)



examine whether they had future CPS contact. Overall, 69% of families had one or more future CPS reports; 37% had three or more reports. Using advanced statistical modeling, Chaffin and his team found that after about six years of follow up, families who received SafeCare were about 21% - 26% less likely to experience CPS reports than families receiving the same home visiting services but without SafeCare.. To quote the authors, “a home-based service system treating 1,000 cases would prevent [between] 64 – 104 estimated first year recurrences by adopting SC” (this assumes the same re-referral rate as experienced in OK, 45%). Booyah indeed, Dr. Lutzker.

These findings are remarkable in sev-

eral ways. First, this is perhaps the largest randomized trial of a child welfare population ever conducted. Second, to our knowledge, this is one of only a few randomized trials to show an impact on child neglect. Although the study did not specifically analyze neglect versus abuse, over 90% of the cases in OK included child neglect. Last, this study is the first large scale randomized field trial of SafeCare, and the findings are extremely positive. In fact, we believe this may be the first large scale trial of any program within a child welfare system to show a positive impact on child maltreatment recidivism. Our hope is that these results will spur even more service systems to adopt evidence-based practices like SafeCare.



## GSU Center for Healthy Development Welcomes Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

By Carol Neal Rossi and John R. Lutzker



Prevent Child Abuse America, founded in 1972, focuses on changing the way our nation thinks about prevention, focusing on community activities and public policies that prioritize prevention from the start to make sure child abuse and neglect never occur. PCA America works with 48 state chapters to ensure the healthy development of children nationwide.

Georgia State University, Center for Healthy Development, directed by Dr. John R. Lutzker, now houses Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, a provisional state chapter of PCA America. The organization start-up is partially funded by a grant from the Governor’s Office for Children and Families. PCA GA is directed by Carol Neal Rossi who has worked with PCA chapters in other states since 1998. She also consulted with the CDC on the translation and dissemination of research on child abuse and neglect prevention strategies to professionals in the field.

It takes many people, organizations, and disciplines working together to prevent child abuse and neglect. PCA Georgia will bring together representatives from various child advocacy and service organizations throughout the state for collaboration with PCA’s national and statewide activities. PCA Georgia will provide a statewide direction to promote healthy children and develop strong families through community resources, public awareness activities, prevention programs, research, and advocacy activities.

Please join them in their efforts to protect Georgia’s children. Anything you do to support kids and parents can help reduce the stress that often leads to abuse and neglect. For more information, contact: Carol Neal Rossi, Director, PCA Georgia at [cnealrossi@gsu.edu](mailto:cnealrossi@gsu.edu)



Prevent Child Abuse  
America



# SafeCare Site Shout Outs!

## Family Success Stories from OK

One of our SafeCare Trainers, Stayce Williams, has emailed NSTRC with a couple of great SafeCare success stories sent in by Home Visitors providing SafeCare services with *Family & Children Services, Inc.* in Tulsa, OK. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to all SafeCare families!

### Family #1:

Services began very slowly, as both parents were initially resistant to change. Although the father was quickly on board with the PAT steps, the mother was quite resistant to attempt them.

During much of the services the family was homeless, and each member had a high level of stress to cope with. Through much determination and perseverance, the family obtained their own apartment! After that, a huge shift in the mother's attitude towards SafeCare began to take place. One day she pulled out all of the articles and SafeCare materials. She showed me her notes and how she could incorporate PAT into routines at home. She had worked

on all the "homework" I had assigned her over the last several months (even after moving many times) and was so proud to show me that even though it had taken her a while, she trusted me enough to try the steps. She showed me rules and expectations she had in the home and even wrote out things she loved about her children and being a mother. Shortly after this meeting, the father shyly handed me handwritten notes he had made about PAT steps, how he interpreted the steps and how he was using them in the home. It was beyond joyful to see this family who had so many basic needs obstacles in their way overcome and embrace the spirit of their child!

### Family #2:

I had a client tell me that she has been using the Health Recording Charts and took some she had filled out to her child's doctor appointment. The doctor loved it and said that he wished all parents used them! She also said it was very helpful to have all the information already filled out on a sheet.

## Holiday Greetings from our SafeCare Providers in Riverside Co., CA!

Our newest ADAPTS SafeCare site in Riverside County, CA sent in this photo of their SafeCare Holiday Party. The site's SafeCare providers consist of 12 Public Health Nurses, who were trained in November 2011.



### ATTENTION SAFECARE PROVIDERS:

Would you like to be mentioned in our quarterly newsletter? We encourage SafeCare providers and affiliates to send in stories, comments, questions and photos to be addressed in our next newsletter! Please send them to [safecare@gsu.edu](mailto:safecare@gsu.edu).

Still want to win a \$50 Amazon gift card? We're giving you ONE LAST chance to fill out our SafeCare provider survey by February 10th to enter to win. Click [here!](#)

# Meet Our New NSTRC Staff



Hilda Whitmire is joining the NSTRC team as a Georgia Training Specialist. She has a Master's degree in Health Promotion & Behavior with a concentration in Community Health from the University of Georgia. Hilda has worked with a variety of organizations, including: University of Georgia, Fulton County Cooperative Extension, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Partnership Against Domestic Violence, and Girls and Boys Town. As a Health Educator, Hilda enjoys educating others on ways to improve their overall wellbeing.



Akilah Thomas is joining NSTRC as a Georgia Training Specialist. She holds a Masters of Public Health in Behavioral Sciences and Health Education from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health. Akilah is a proud mother of four, ages 16-3 years old and is committed to serving the community and educating and training families through the SafeCare program.



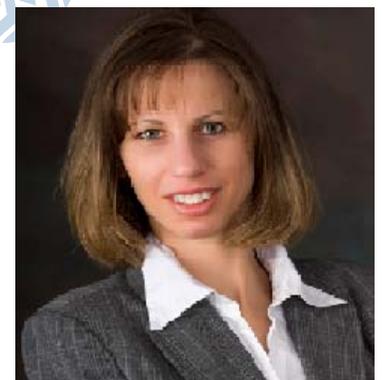
a  
er



Beth Meister is joining NSTRC as a SafeCare Training Specialist for national and international sites. She has a M.S. in Counseling. A council member of the Georgia College Counseling Association, she was awarded the President's Grant from GCCA in January 2011. With additional training in play and expressive therapies and traumatology, and many years working with children and families as a caregiver, she is committed to child maltreatment prevention and thrilled to be a part of the NSRTC as a training specialist.



Juarndai Lei Gagnon has joined the NSTRC as a Project Coordinator, where she manages grants awarded to NSTRC. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Finance from Lourdes University in 2005, with a minor in accounting. In January 2008, Juarndai Lei founded Superior Community Professionals, Inc., where she contracted with small businesses to provide guidance and implement solutions for success during a difficult economy. Juarndai Lei has more than 10 years of accounting and human resources experience with government, nonprofit, private and corporate sectors.



If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please send requests to [safecare@gsu.edu](mailto:safecare@gsu.edu).

