



# PEDIATRICS INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

March 11, 2003

Issue 12

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### TURN THE TIDE: DROWN OUT BIG TOBACCO

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is fighting to free America's youth from tobacco addiction and to reduce the death and disease cause by tobacco. **Kick Butts Day**, which is **April 2** this year, is an annual initiative that encourages activism and leadership among elementary, middle and high school students. It's the day America's kids stand up to tobacco and America's adults stand up for kids. Request your free Kick Butts Day activity guide by visiting the website <http://kickbuttsday.org>. More youth initiatives are online at <http://tobaccofreekids.org>.

**SOURCE: CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS**

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### SAVE THE DATE: CDF'S 30th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

New Voices New Choices! It's Time to Truly Leave No Child Behind®!  
Children's Defense Fund's 2003 National Conference  
April 8 - 11, 2003, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Come to Washington on April 9th to stand up for children as part of the Children's Defense Fund's National Conference. Come celebrate 30 years of success and struggle to Leave No Child Behind®. Your voice and witness of presence for children, for families, for the poor, for justice, and for peace are more crucial than ever. Children must be educated, healthy, and ready for school. Children must be safe and secure in their homes, schools, and communities.

Don't miss this opportunity to bring home new information and strategies for making our nation live up to its responsibility to Leave No Child Behind®. Exchange ideas and share best practices from around the country and the world. CDF's National Conference features a Capitol Hill Wednesday in Washington\* Rally and visits to your Senators and

Representatives to talk about the importance of making the right choices for children, a Presidential Candidates Forum, a special evening of original readings on childhood by leading American writers, and an array of exciting workshops and plenary sessions.

For more information or to register for the conference, please call 202 662-3646 or visit [http://www.childrensdefense.org/conference\\_2003/default.htm](http://www.childrensdefense.org/conference_2003/default.htm)

**SOURCE: CDF ACTION ALERT, MARCH 7, 2003**

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### **NETWORK SPONSORS FIRST PEDIATRICS MINI-TRACK AT NATIONAL HCH CONFERENCE**

The HCH Clinicians' Network is pleased to present a Pediatric Mini-Track during the 2003 conference. Two workshops, developed by the Pediatric Work Group and Education Committee, will focus on pediatric and adolescent issues:

#### **Impact of homelessness on the development of children and adolescents**

Friday, May 30, 8:30 A.M.

Designed to address issues from an interdisciplinary perspective, this workshop will review developmental stages of infants, children and adolescents with particular regard to the impact of homelessness on emotional health and development. Providers will gain an understanding of child development, factors important for optimal development and the long-term effects of homelessness on developmental outcomes and interventions. This workshop is highly recommended for conference participants who plan to attend the two-part intensive workshop, Trauma: Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of Homeless Children, Adolescents and Their Parents, which is scheduled for Friday, May 30, at 10:30 A.M. and 2 P.M.

**Presenter: Lenore Rubin, Ph.D.**

#### **Trauma: Addressing the mental health concerns of homeless children, adolescents, and their parents**

Friday, May 30, at 10:30 A.M. (Part I) and 2 P.M. (Part II)

This intensive workshop will focus on the extent and nature of victimization, post-trauma responses and specific shelter-based group interventions for homeless mothers, children and unattached youth. The workshop is divided into two parts: 1) the characteristics and needs of mothers, children and unattached youth who have been victimized and the nature of trauma-informed services; and 2) psychoeducational groups and parenting intervention for mothers and groups for younger children. The workshop will be useful for new and experienced providers as well as those who are interested in program design. Conference participants who plan to attend this two-part workshop are highly encouraged to attend the companion workshop, *Impact of Homelessness on the Development of Children and Adolescents*, which takes place on Friday, May 30 at 8:30 A.M.

**Presenters: Ellen L. Bassuk, M.D., and Phoebe Soares, M.S.W.**

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### **CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES FAIL MISSING AND RUNAWAY YOUTH**

A recent state review of a New Jersey child welfare office revealed numerous problems, including a case reduction policy that attaches a low priority to missing and runaway children and youth. The report was compiled after New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services was charged with mishandling the case of Faheem Williams, a 7-year-old found dead earlier this month.

According to Kevin Ryan, the governor's deputy chief of staff for operations, "In cases where

children cannot be located, the tendency in this office appears to be for staff to prioritize other cases rather than seek access to the children through extraordinary means."

Last summer, Florida's child welfare system received similar attention after a 5-year-old state ward was found missing. A review of the Department of Children and Families' records found that the agency took up to three months in reporting a missing child or youth to law enforcement agencies. Despite efforts to locate the missing children and youth in Florida, the department remains unable to account for 425 wards of the state.

Nationally, approximately 10,000 children and youth run away from the foster care system each year, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System Report. Of these 10,000 cases, almost 6,000 cases were permanently closed because the youth had reached the age of 18.

Where are these children and youth? Many of them end up in homeless shelters. Research demonstrates that there is a strong link between foster care and homelessness. Studies indicate that up to 25% of foster youth have been homeless. Up to 40% of the adult homeless population has been involved with child welfare agencies. Child welfare agencies can play a critical role in closing the front door to homelessness with improved case management for youth under their care.

**SOURCE: National Alliance to End Homelessness Online Newsletter January 31, 2003**

**###**

This Pediatrics Interest Group e-mail update is brought to you by the Health Care for the Homeless Clinicians' Network. We invite you to share your opinion on issues of concern to the pediatrics community. Plus, we welcome your feedback. If you have comments or suggestions for improvements to the newsletter, please send them to the Pediatrics Interest Group newsletter editor, Brenda Proffitt, at [bproffitt@nhchc.org](mailto:bproffitt@nhchc.org).

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Virtually yours,  
Brenda Proffitt