

# Congregations & Early Childhood

*From the Early Childhood Faith Initiative, a collaboration between Durham's Partnership for Children & End Poverty Durham*

Year 2, Edition 2

September & October 2011

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### SECTION 1: FAITH COORDINATOR NEWS

Join us for a Lunch & Learn on Tuesday, October 11, 2011 on the topic of: **"How Trauma Impacts Early Child Development"** presented by **George (Tripp) Ake, PhD**, Assistant Training Director, Duke Center for Child and Family Health. This presentation will highlight some of the types of traumatic experiences children experience, the impact of these experiences on their development, and what community members need to know about resources for child trauma victims and their families. The time is **11:30am - 1:00pm at the Soul Cafe**, Duke Memorial UMC, 504 W. Chapel Hill Street. Beverages will be provided. RSVPs are strongly encouraged: [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com).

A community **Interfaith Children's Sabbath service will be held on Sunday, Oct 23, 2011 at 4 pm** at the Greater Emmanuel Temple of Grace, located on 2722 E. Main Street in East Durham. Rev. Laura J. S. Benson, Executive Director of Durham's Partnership for Children, will deliver the main message with a team of diverse faith representatives presenting other parts of the service. A highlight will be a performance by KidZnotes. Don't miss a wonderful event to focus on the children of our congregations & communities, coordinated jointly by Durham's Partnership for Children, End Poverty Durham, & Durham Congregations in Action.

Attached is an **insert for Children's Sabbath**. Please let me know if you are including Children's Sabbath this month at your congregation. You can use it anytime this month!

**Contact me, Winnie Morgan at 732-1524 or at [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com) to speak to your congregation or to join my planning committee.**

### SECTION 2: RESOURCES & MATERIALS

**Safe Faith Environments:** At a recent workshop, Catherine Devins, Interim Church Educator at White Memorial Presbyterian Church (Raleigh) shared her presentation on "A Safe Sanctuary Policy for your Congregation", including various congregation policies, articles, and resources. She gave permission to share this CD with others. One of her key messages: separate the **what** (policy) from the **how** (guidelines/procedures on how to interpret the policy). If you would like a copy, please contact me at [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com).

The United Methodist Church began their Safe Sanctuaries program in 1996. They have very helpful resources at: [http://www.gbod.org/site/c.nhLRJ2PMKsG/b.5598111/k.A248/Safe Sanctuaries.htm](http://www.gbod.org/site/c.nhLRJ2PMKsG/b.5598111/k.A248/Safe_Sanctuaries.htm)

### SECTION 3: QUOTES – Child Abuse

**Child abuse does not go away but 90% of child abuse is preventable.** *Karen Adams*

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

**Child abuse is a problem no one really talks about. Abuse & neglect is the #1 cause of injury to children in this country. More children die of abuse or neglect than of natural causes.**

*Donna Miller*

**Each day of our lives, we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.** *Charles R. Swindoll*

### SECTION 4: SHARING IDEAS – Myths on Child Abuse

As a provider of programming for young children, your faith center can play a critical role in protecting the lives of children by implementing a comprehensive child protection program and training your staff, child care workers, and adult volunteers. Ask any congregation that has experienced a case of sexual abuse and they will tell you that knowing what they know now, there is NO amount of time that would have been too great for prevention and educating their members. Create policies & procedures to protect children in your congregation.

#### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ON CHILD ABUSE:

- 1. Only People That We Know and Trust Are Allowed to Work With Our Children.** 90% of children are abused by someone that they know and trust. Perpetrators go out of their way to earn the trust of their peers, parents, and children. They are often the model employee or volunteer, perhaps even considered "the best." We cannot assume that someone's role in the congregation will make them a safe caretaker.
- 2. We Do Background Checks.** A strong child protection program should include background checks for all employees and volunteers. Unfortunately, most children who are abused don't tell. That means perpetrators could move from congregation to congregation without an arrest showing up on a background check. A background check is part of a child protection program, but it cannot be relied on as the only method of keeping children safe.
- 3. We've Never Had an Issue.** Don't wait until it's too late. Congregations without child protection policies and procedures are easy targets for potential abusers. Today is the time to put actions behind your intention of keeping the children you serve safe.
- 4. That Couldn't Happen Here, We Would Know.** The statistics show that most incidences of abuse go undetected. Most abusers get away with this horrific crime and most children never tell. Adults need to be armed with the tools and knowledge to detect signs of sexual abuse.
- 5. We Teach Our Children the Difference Between Right and Wrong.** While it is very important to instill strong values and virtues in children, their safety ultimately lies in the hands of adults. Adults cannot expect children to protect themselves against unfamiliar, uncomfortable advances from older, stronger, trusted individuals. When a child is being abused, the lines between right and wrong are blurred.

Taken from **Darkness to Light** (<http://www.d2l.org>). A great resource!

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx](http://www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx); [www.endpovertydurham.org](http://www.endpovertydurham.org);

Sign-up for e-news from Durham's Partnership for Children, follow the **Partnership Blog** and join us on facebook !

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