



## The Children's Advocate

### Fall 2021 Newsletter

[www.lachildabusecouncils.org](http://www.lachildabusecouncils.org)

#### Welcome readers and fellow child advocates!

It is with great pleasure that the Los Angeles County Child Abuse Prevention Councils (LAC-CAPCs) release our Fall 2021 Newsletter! This year has been filled with extraordinary challenges and changes for so many in our communities, yet tremendous perseverance and resilience has also been demonstrated by innumerable children and families in Los Angeles County. We hope our newsletter brings you helpful information regarding the work of the LAC-CAPCs, along with resources you can use and spread. Additionally, you'll find information on community-based trainings and activities in this edition, along with upcoming events that promote primary prevention and capacity building within the field.

Please feel free to contact myself, Catherine Rose and/or your Council of interest for more information and to get involved.

Warmest Regards,

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## Council News & Updates



#### Advocacy Council for Abused Deaf Children (ACADC)

On June 21, 2021, the ACADC held a virtual training event for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HoH) clinicians to help educate the group on how to identify signs of child abuse in a virtual setting. The event was hosted on Zoom with Amanda G. Somdal, a Deaf licensed clinical social worker with decades of experience in the field. Within the webinar, participants were engaged and those who attended received handouts and material to complement the presentation. The ACADC received positive feedback from those who completed the survey and participated in the chat. The second annual project of the ACADC was to continue distributing resource bags to positively impact families with Deaf and HoH children directly. The resource bags were a success with many parents expressing gratitude and excitement to play with their children. One child said, "A(n) ASL dictionary! Look mom now I can learn to sign to you more." The dictionaries have been important to improve communication between parents and their children.

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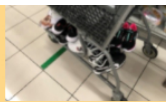


**AFFIRM AV - Assisting Families to Find Information & Resources Mindfully**

(Antelope Valley Child Abuse Prevention Council)

In 2020-21 contract year, the AFFIRM AV Council had to postpone the annual writing contest due to a lack of student participation. In its place, AFFIRM partnered with Pueblo y Salud Palmdale to work on a spoken word project set for fall 2021. Thus far, the Antelope Valley Union High School District has identified four schools and is allowing students to receive spoken word training, also known as "Poetry Slam," and then host an event highlighting the student's creations in 2022. The focus of this project will be substance abuse prevention for teens and adults. As you know, substance





prevention for teens and adults. As we know, substance abuse adversely affects the well-being of all children when parents are using mind altering substances as well as youth when they abuse drugs/alcohol to numb pain and try to forget about their troubles for a while. AFFIRM AV hopes to host the training in person, depending on COVID-19 challenges and health guidelines.

In place of the writing contest, AFFIRM AV chose to take part in a shoe giveaway project for children in need. The Council was provided a list from four different elementary schools (in the areas of highest need), and each school identified students that would receive the shoes. AFFIRM was given a list of shoe sizes, students that were in-person at school were issued the shoes. At first the children were confused, then they jumped up and down with joy. AFFIRM also donated approximately one hundred pairs of kids shoes to the local domestic violence shelter which was also in great need.

Another successful project held by the Council in 2020-21 was "Stand for Kids." This project aimed to welcome commuters home at various freeway off ramps in the AV to provide positive messaging to hopefully uplift the spirits of parents going home to their children. AFFIRM invited community and local agencies. The following agencies participated: Strength Based Community Change (SBCC), Lancaster and Palmdale Best Start, The Neighborhood Action Councils of Antelope Valley, Children's Bureau, and the Bikers Against Child Abuse AV chapter as well as the community at large. AFFIRM hosted the "Stand for Kids" efforts in Palmdale and Lancaster as a kick-off for child abuse awareness month in April. It was wonderful to see so much support from different partners and the community members.

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#### **Eastside Child Abuse Prevention Council (El Monte)**

The Eastside CAPC completed the following activities for FY 2020-21:

- 1) Council Promotional Material: The purchase of a tablecloth with Council logo, two display roll ups for promotional purposes (one small and one large), and Polo shirts with the logo for members.
- 2) Eastside Council Mission Statement. This Fall, the Council plans to hire a graphic artist to develop a one-page informational flyer focused on its mission, goals, and contact information.
- 3) Virtual Parent Workshops: During April, Child Abuse Prevention month, the Council organized and presented a virtual 2-hour workshop for parents regarding COVID and the mental health impacts on parenting, both in English and Spanish. Funds were utilized for three raffle items as an incentive for participants. The results of this workshop exceeded expectations, yielding two events vs solely one.
- 4) Conference Attendance/Member Capacity Building: Four Eastside members attending the ICAN Grief and Loss conference in 2021.
- 5) Community Support Boxes: Eastside purchased items that are needed by the community such as hygiene items, school supplies, and parent/child activities. Additionally, the Council partnered with the DCFS Prevention and Aftercare Program to include food items in the support boxes. A total of 78 boxes were distributed.
- 6) Body Safety Coloring Books: Eastside purchase coloring books for children with the theme of body safety to provide at outreach events. This goal was achieved with 150 coloring books purchased.
- 7) Call Service: Eastside purchase minutes for a call service and used it to remind the workshop/webinar registrants of these events.
- 8) Recognition Luncheon: The Eastside Council purchased 11 Grub Hub cards for members to have a meal for the end of the fiscal year meeting in an effort to recognize and appreciate their support and contributions. The group also began to plan for the next contract year.

The most successful part of the Eastside Councils work was the group capacity building with regard to the use of technology to reach out and engage the community. In the beginning, there was fear in attempting to reach out to the community virtually. However, the Council had one specific member who was comfortable and tech savvy to guide the group through the process. An additional success was the development and adoption of a new mission statement for the Eastside Council.

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#### **End Abuse Long Beach (EALB)**

Starting in April 2020, the EALB Council pivoted from in-person trainings to a virtual format (Zoom) to comply with local health orders and to ensure members' safety while maintaining our consistency and fulfilling our mission. This year EALB held



11 trainings, including a special Child Abuse Prevention month training and awards ceremony in November - each time with 35-50 people joining. The group was also able to continue to offer CEUs to members and provide a space for networking prior to meetings. EALB offered CEU evaluations, the universal survey and other feedback options via our website and in the chat sessions of the meetings. In addition, the Council collaborated on two special joint training events with Jewish Family and Children's Service and the Community Roundtable. Dr. Beliz from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Emergency Outreach and Triage Division School Threat Assessment and Response Team provided a training on de-escalation strategies and another on School Threat Assessment (each 3 hours with 50-75 participants).

Despite the pandemic and changing health orders, the Council achieved the goal of hosting 11 monthly training events virtually on topics that aimed to address all 5 protective factors, as well as ensuring the topics were timely and current. Some of the training topics included: Intentional Program Engagement and Retention of Fathers; Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Prevention Education; Collective Impact During a Pandemic; Addressing the needs of Latinx undocumented immigrants impacted by Covid-19; Immigration Enforcement; Tips to enhance telehealth encounters; Grief & Loss Strategies during COVID 19; Understanding and Navigating the Child Welfare System; and Domestic Violence and Child Abuse During COVID-19.

Additionally, EALB provided training tools to assist providers in shifting to telehealth models. All of the Council meetings/trainings were open to everyone in the community and are free to everyone who does not require CE Units. The audience included parents, new and retired professionals, interns, students, case managers, shelter workers, DCFS employees, police, etc.

By offering a monthly forum for networking, resource sharing and shared learning, EALB has been able to maintain connectivity in the community. With LAC-CAPC support, the Council was pleased to be an inaugural partner in the Long Beach Community Internship Project (LBCIP) through Cal State University for the Spring and Summer 2021 which allowed the first EALB interns to come aboard. COVID-19 has changed the way the Council has done things, but has also afforded opportunities to expand membership and participation since the trainings are virtual and travel and proximity are no longer a factor. The Council is currently seeking feedback from members and guests to help inform re-opening strategies.

Consistency and training content has proven to be the greatest success of EALB both pre-pandemic and during these extraordinary times. Several testimonials from training attendees are provided below.

- "So glad End Abuse kept the trainings going, my agency relies on this for comprehensive, high quality, free training of staff and interns, thanks for being so flexible."
- "A virtual or hybrid option has allowed people to attend who are not able to make it in person. It has also allowed speakers who are not in the Long Beach area. Thank you all for allowing us to still meet."
- "Great info, the panel presentation was comprehensive and increased my knowledge to support families in the DCFS system."
- "Excellent, thank you for keeping this so current/trends oriented"

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**LGBT Child Abuse Prevention Council**

In 2020 and 2021, the LGBT Council was unable to support the in-person EDGY Conference due to COVID but is rescheduled for May 2022. In place of the in-person conference, a compelling shortened **EDGY virtual workshop will be on November 10, 2021** focused on "Intersecting Identities" (<https://edgyconference.com/>).



This project, in collaboration with Penny Lane, includes the planning and development of (and professional scholarships to) the 11th Annual Embracing Diversity of GLBTQ Youth (E.D.G.Y.) Conference now scheduled for May 2022. As a result, the Council focused on the production of a new set of social marketing materials (Family Acceptance Project Posters), the redesign of our logo/brand, and supporting DCFS Champions in several offices.

The DCFS LGBTQ+ Program was established in February 2020 with their kick-off event the following February 2021. Jamie Estrada, Program Manager of the DCFS LGBTQ+ Program, requested support from the Council to help the newly formed DCFS Office of Equity recognize and support DCFS employees who would act as "Champions" in their regional offices. He requested we fund a variety of LGBTQ+ pins, flags, and pronoun buttons to be given to and utilized by the Champions in each of their regional offices and programs. The LGBTQ+ Champions are being used as subject matter experts, and having visuals to help people know who they are was important. Additionally, the Champions signify acceptance and affirmation to youth, and improve their engagement with



acceptance and affirmation to youth, and improve their engagement with youth, allowing them to feel safe and comfortable in sharing who they are. Materials were purchased and distributed to DCFS staff.

The Council did not have a current logo/brand that accurately represented the work of the group on behalf of LGBTQ+ children, youth, and families in Los Angeles County. Thus, a new logo was created and approved by the Council. The poster project was most successful since it caused the Council to connect to a national effort, led by Dr. Caitlan Ryan.

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#### **LAC-Family, Children, Community Advisory Council (African American Council)**

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the LAC-FCCAC agreed to continue a low contact engagement activity of providing books for babies & new moms/families, provide support to Elevate Your GAME for students to be mentored virtually, and conduct one training via Zoom. This year LAC-FCCAC also continued to provide emotional support to members and community partners. Optimistic attitudes and prayers kept everybody fully functioning.

Originally, LAC-FCCAC's goal was to distribute 200 children's books on African American historical figures. However, the group transitioned and decided instead to provide books to new moms from the Black Infant Health Program in LA County. The purpose of the book distribution was to encourage new moms and family members to read to their babies as soon as possible. This reading will encourage bonding and the beginning of language skills for the babies. With additional grant funds, the LAC-FCCAC was able to buy 350 books through their long-standing partnership with Eso Won Bookstore in Leimert Park and their community partnership programs (Black Infant Health Pasadena and Antelope Valley, and The Children's Collective Inc.).

Additionally, LAC-FCCAC conducted a training on Financial Literacy as a Strength of African American Families with speaker de Winter Stewart, CFP, CLTC, MBA, Financial Advisor at Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company. Mr. Stewart was calm, compassionate, and complete. The evaluations from the training were 100% satisfaction with the presentation.

Furthermore, LAC-FCCAC continued to support Elevate Your GAME Mentoring through music and videos as a learning tool for adolescents. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, none of the students were able to participate in any internships, so Elevate Your Game conducted the internships via Zoom and students were able to incorporate the internships on their college applications.

The most successful aspect of the year was receiving many comments from Elevate Your Game mentoring students:

#### How Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Mentoring Helped Me Deal With COVID-19:

Many of the students' comments were focused on motivation, connecting with others, and how they were supported during the pandemic.

- "It helped me because the sessions taught me to have a positive mindset."
- "Kept me inspired in wanting to achieve something this year regardless of COVID-19."
- "Yes, I feel they have helped me during COVID-19, because I feel that it has showed me that even though we are not in school, we have other ways to communicate with one another, share out your ideas, and still stay in touch with your friends."
- "It (the program) is also helping me cope with the pandemic."
- "They've helped me deal with the circumstances of COVID-19, because I get to talk to them about how I feel, personally. This doesn't seem just like a classroom... it also makes you feel like you could connect with your mentors in a deeper level."
- "I am motivated to get work done after the sessions."

#### The Impact that Elevate Your G.A.M.E. Has Had On My Life:

- "It helps me stay on top of my game. It keeps me focused on what I need to do and where I need to go and what things I need to do."
- "The positivity of the program rubs off on you and you learn to become optimistic if you weren't previously."
- "I've grown more comfortable with talking to other students and teachers. I no longer feel anxious when having to ask for help."
- "I feel like ever since I started this program. I've become more independent and responsible in a way. I feel like in a way this program has made me feel more of an adult..."
- "I've developed a better understanding of not looking at just my problems but being able to see other people's struggles. I've also learned to be more patient, better at listening."
- "I learned to never give up and nothing is impossible."

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**Council for Child Abuse Prevention Serving  
the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valley  
(SPA 2)**





Council For  
Child Abuse  
Prevention  
San Fernando &  
Santa Clarita Valley

Originally, the Council had planned to provide a series of three virtual parent & child bonding activities. However, as the SPA 2 Council entered into the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became apparent that families, parents and children were experiencing overwhelming feelings

with so much online activity. In addition, child welfare workers, frontline staff, and other professionals were expressing similar feelings as well as burnout after a year of having to change and adapt services and activities for families and children. These service providers have had to juggle working from home while parenting, navigating their own family changes and losses, etc. Although there was much success in moving to virtual and telehealth formats, it took some time to recognize the impact of this change and a new way of engaging with families.

Utilizing monthly board and collaborative meetings, the SPA 2 Council conducted an informal poll as to what was most needed in the community. Support for overwhelmed helpers working with families rose to the top. With that in mind, the group amended the April event in order to provide a special training for child welfare professionals and community leaders on "Navigating Overwhelm: Caring for Self While Caring for Others During the Time of COVID." Presented by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky with the Trauma Stewardship Institute, this training addressed the vicarious trauma, stress and burnout that many social services professionals have experienced over the past year due to the pandemic and its impact on how we work. Adjusting to working remotely via virtual platforms or telehealth, on-going stress related to exposure to a potentially deadly virus, often working from home while home-schooling our own children, loss of employment or reduction of hours are only some of the stressors impacting the traditional helping professionals in our communities. This interactive training was provided virtually through the ZOOM platform and 174 professionals attended. Self-care is critical to successfully handling the challenges of parenting, and self-care is critical for those who provide education, treatment and support for parents in order to reduce and/or eliminate child abuse and neglect. Often people in this field are at risk for burn-out which makes them less effective when working with children and families. The Council feels confident that this training provided support to the child welfare community, and since then, had reports that attendees shared the tools and ideas from the training with other colleagues and families with whom they work.

Additional projects for the year included a continuation of the provision of Council grocery bags, filled with food items, educational supplies, personal hygiene items, parenting and child abuse prevention materials, and other much needed supplies for families in the SPA 2 communities.

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#### **San Gabriel Valley Child Abuse Prevention Council**

All SGV Council programs were done virtually this year, with the exception of a drive-through resource event. The Council's goals were to reach families and participants virtually through Zoom. SGV provided a virtual 5K, a drive-through resource fair, a training on "Resilience in Times of Uncertainty" via zoom, and a Youth Summit. Although goals were met this year, the group was disappointed by low attendance for the April training.

The most successful aspect of the year was the *drive-through resource fair*. There were 159 parents, 44 professionals, 63 children (0-3 years old), and 316 children (3-22 years old).  
*\*Special needs population goes to 22 years old.*

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Asian & Pacific Islander –  
Children, Youth and Family Council  
Member Council of the Los Angeles Child Abuse Councils Coordination Project

**Asian and Pacific  
Islander Children  
Youth and Family  
Council (API-CYFC)**

Starting in the Fall of 2020, the API-CYFC considered several projects, and with public safety considerations in mind, the member agencies unanimously voted for an outdoor family portrait project to provide a safe, positive, and meaningful activity for our countywide families experiencing significant challenges throughout the pandemic. From winter 2020 to spring 2021, the API-CYFC had continuous communication with member organizations and Las Fotos (the vendor) to plan an outdoor event with public health information and mandates in mind. API-CYFC also received feedback from families to gauge their comfort level with participating in the event. In order to accommodate for social distancing and quality portrait sessions, the Council staggered appointment times and increased the session time for each family.

Throughout the year, API-CYFC member agencies increased engagement and cross-learning with other partner organizations and with the larger API-CYFC Council, as well as enhanced communication and coordination skills in implementing this project. API-CYFC wanted to support other nonprofits and expand network capacity through a new partnership with Las Fotos Project. API-CYFC and Las Fotos met several times throughout the course of the project to navigate logistics (ideal dates, meeting county/city safety guidelines, locations, accommodations for families, session sign-up processes) which solidified a wonderful new partnership ([www.lasfotosproject.org](http://www.lasfotosproject.org)).



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#### **Westside Anti-Violence Authority**

The WAVA Council had to pivot on both projects this year due to COVID-19. The first project was commissioning a curriculum on preventing technology abuse from EndTab. Prior to COVID-19, WAVA expected to reach a wider audience with these complete workshops. However, with the pandemic, virtual workshops were conducted, and the Council used elements of the curriculum in nine virtual workshops, reaching 385 teenagers and 12 adults. Similarly, the in-person WAVA Council re-launch was affected by COVID-19 protocols. Instead of an in-person meeting and lunch, the group hosted a virtual meeting and provided attendees with gift cards for food delivery so a meal could still be "shared."

WAVA's goals for digital safety workshops were to: 1) Empower parents to learn more about the technology that their children are using and have conversations with them about online safety; 2) Demystify common misconceptions about technology; 3) Inform and empower teens on the technology that they use that could be utilized for harm. These goals were met within the eight workshops completed with teens and the one workshop completed with parents that included elements of the digital safety training. WAVA hopes to expand these trainings and thus the success of these goals further in the upcoming year.

For the WAVA relaunch event, the goal was to reinvigorate the Westside coalition, by re-establishing WAVA as a community-wide anti-violence coalition, encouraging former members to rejoin and outreaching to new community partners. The kick-off meeting was successful in introducing the Westside Anti-Violence Authority to potential members, as well as identifying returning members who understood the value of the coalition's violence prevention efforts. At the relaunch meeting, the members agreed to keep the mission of the group the same: prevention of child abuse, domestic violence (IPV) and sexual violence in our communities. Participants in this first meeting expressed they felt very appreciated and indicated that they were excited to participate in the relaunched WAVA meetings.

Members who participated in the WAVA relaunch also expressed excitement for next steps and upcoming WAVA meetings. Plans include developing a training/presentation schedule of relevant violence prevention topics, and solidifying the infrastructure for the monthly meetings. In follow up emails, two participants commented: "The WAVA meeting was fantastic. Thank you for all of the coordination and providing lunch!" and "Great meeting! And your generosity with all the gift cards is AWESOME....I'm truly appreciative."

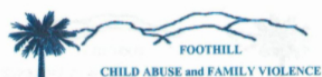
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#### **SPA 7 Child Abuse Prevention Council**

The COVID-19 pandemic did not disrupt direct services connected to the SPA 7 Council, however, it has changed the way our group delivers services. For many, the impact on health and income has been devastating, especially for vulnerable families and their children with no financial buffers. Although the Council continued to provide services, all activities occurred virtually via Zoom. Both the Choices Conferences for youth (75 attendees), as well as the parent conference (98 attendees) were successful due to high attendance and engaged participation.

Additionally, the SPA 7 Council had great collaboration with community partners which allowed for increased leveraging of resources. These successful partnerships include: Rio Hondo College, Hispanic Outreach Task Force, local high schools, Human Services Association, East Los Angeles Women's Center, the Boys and Girls Club, and Penny Lane.

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**Foothill Child Abuse  
and Family Violence  
Prevention Council**



The Foothill Council held virtual board meetings in 2020-21 and managed all communication via email, meetings, and telephone. Members made safe arrangements to meet and exchange distribution materials, while wearing masks and maintaining COVID safety protocols. The Council had a goal to implement trainings and events in April and May, however due to challenges from the pandemic, Foothill was not able to fully implement until June 2021. The Council's goals of providing distribution materials to assist children and families in transitioning back to school, assisting food insecure families, and distributing prevention & education materials were met.

A success for the Foothill Council this year was a strong partnership with World Central Kitchen, where 150 meals were provided to families in need across Los Angeles County.

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### **Resources to Help Families & Community**

- **CA Training Institute (CalTrin) Trainings for Family Strengthening**
- **The Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training Project** is a free virtual and self-paced training for professionals who are required by law to report suspected or known child abuse and neglect
- **DCFS Videos to Encourage Child Abuse Reporting**
  - English Video
  - Spanish Video
- **Teaching Young Children About Bias, Diversity, and Social Justice**



### **Help Us Spread The Word!** **Report Card Insert Project**

The Los Angeles County Child Abuse Prevention Councils (LAC-CAPCs) are pleased to partner with local schools and district offices once again in the 2021-22 school year to request your help and participation with the "Report Card Insert Project." As you may know, occurrences of physical and emotional abuse increase when children bring home report cards that are viewed by caregivers as unsatisfactory. **Now in our 23rd year of the insert project, we truly believe incidences of child abuse related to report card time have been diminished by providing strength-based educational information to parents and caregivers.**

The Child Abuse Prevention Councils, funded through the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and supported by the Children's Bureau of Southern California, have designed a brief and simple one-page communication insert to be sent home, emailed or given to parents with report cards. This insert presents several constructive and positive ways to respond to a child's school performance without abuse. It is available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese, Vietnamese, Armenian, Korean, Thai, and Khmer. It is up to your school or district to decide how and when to give it to parents, but some suggested times might be: Back to School Night, emailed one week prior to report cards going home, or even included in the envelope with the report card. Some schools and districts choose to include it in their newsletters or on their website. We encourage you to use the report card inserts at subsequent report card times throughout the year. Each year we hear from parents and teachers that the inserts are effective in raising awareness and helpful in promoting non-abusive coping behaviors.

### ***Want more information about a Council or interested in joining? Contact Us!***

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**In memory of Marjorie Gins, Champion for Children**