



HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES
Coalition of Georgia

HMHB Resource Watch

Improving the health status of Georgia's families.

Public Health News National Child Abuse Prevention Month

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INVISIBLE SCARS

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A middle-aged woman walked into my office, took a seat and asked, "Is it possible for me to have been a victim of child abuse if I was never beaten or molested? I responded, "yes" and asked why she asked. She described herself as being frequently depressed and unable to feel good about herself. She said that she felt that she did not know who she was, or what her purpose in life was. She said that her parents were good, strict parents and that, in all honesty, she had no right to feel badly about herself. "After all," she added, "worse things have happened to other people."

I thought that there had to be a reason for her asking her original question even though she insisted that she had a wonderful upbringing. I asked her what her parents' attitude had been like towards her. She said that in her home children were "seen and not heard." She recalled being the "good girl" in the family who always followed the rules. When I asked her what happened if she didn't follow the rules, she said that she never dared rebel but that she often saw her siblings publicly humiliated; they were frequently called "imbecile," "dummy," or "useless." She said that it made her feel afraid, even when she was not the one in trouble. When I asked her what she thought of this tactic, she stated that she knew that her parents did the best that they could. She said that her parents were simply trying to teach all the children the "ways of right and wrong" so that they would grow up to be "disciplined and successful adults." When I asked her if she felt angry about how she and her siblings were treated, she replied, "No, we weren't really allowed to get angry. Anger just makes things worse. Besides, I've always been much too sensitive about things."

It seemed to me that as the "good girl" she even felt guilty questioning her parents as she spoke to me. She spoke in a polite, soft tone, qualified nearly everything that she said, and reminded me several times about her parents' good intentions. When I gently suggested that it may be beneficial that she try to begin to look more at her past and how it may be keeping her from fulfilling her dreams in the present, she said that she was wrong for having come in and that blaming her parents was an ungrateful and disrespectful act. I explained that the goal of therapy is to understand what happened so that she could be as accepting of herself as she was of others. Therapy is never about blame. It's about understanding, healing and growing.*

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Public Health News **Invisible Scars Page 2**

This example illustrates one way in which psychological maltreatment had adversely impacted the life of a woman. There are many types of psychological maltreatment and just as many ways that it impacts the emotional, social, and intellectual development of individuals. In this case, although her parents had, perhaps, acted in ways that they felt would be in the best interest of their children, this woman had learned how to "be good" at the expense of learning who she was, what she wanted, and how to express her own feelings. Maybe she was depressed because she was too afraid to take chances and risk making an error; after all, in her family, making an error meant taking the chance of being devastated by humiliation and ridicule.

What is particularly insidious about this form of abuse is that the child victim and the adult survivor often have no idea "what hit them." There are no memories and no physical evidence of being beaten, molested, or abused because the bruises and scars are invisible. It is the soul that is injured.

Part of being a child is to naturally trust one's parents or caretakers and assume that if the adult says, "this is for your own good," it truly is. Even as adults, therefore, victims of psychological maltreatment often find it difficult to trust their own judgment since an integral part of the abuse was reinforcing that they didn't know what was best for them. Many children and adults simply accept the blame and think that they are the problem and are crazy, bad, or worthless. They discredit their own reactions and feelings so that their perceptions match what they are told to think or feel. They often conclude that had they been better, smarter, or more obedient, their parents would have been more loving, supportive, or proud of them. Unfortunately, depression and low self esteem are natural consequences of this process. The good news is: this is treatable. Therapy can bring relief and a new sense of purpose.

- *For confidentiality purposes, this is a composite of many clients.*

<http://www.yesican.org/articles/article1-1.html>



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HMHB would like to say thank you to all our

"Health: It's A Family Affair"

Expo Sponsors:
Amerigroup
Junior League of Atlanta
Savannah Chatham County Public School System
Wellcare Georgia
Youth Futures Authority

On March 28, 2009 HMHB hosted its 2nd Annual Health, It's A Family Affair Expo at Savannah High School. Sponsored by Wellcare of Georgia, Amerigroup, Youth Futures and Savannah Chatham County Public School System, the event was attended by over 300 attendees and approximately 35 exhibitors. The event gave families an opportunity to attend educational classes provided by Parent University. Some of the topics discussed included, helping your child succeed in school, positive discipline, and how your child's brain works. The crowd was screened for diabetes, high blood pressure and vision quality and they were also entertained by local youth groups such Abeni Cultural Arts (an African dance troupe) and Mr. Magic Marc.

This successful event would not have been possible without the support of the following planning committee members and sponsors:

Susan Milne, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
La Chane' Noel, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
Brandy Yancey, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
Para Malden, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia Savannah Intern
Tonya Greene, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
Kayla Holmes, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
Chiquetta Mitchell, Savannah Chatham County Public School System
Alicia Johnson, WellCare of Georgia
Donna Williams, Amerigroup
Latrina Johnson, Youth Futures Authority



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HMHB in the Community

Georgia State Campus-Atlanta, GA	April 3, 2009 Nonprofit Studies Program Roundtable 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Clayton County Board of Health - Jonesboro, GA	April 4, 2009 Clayton County Board of Health, Health Fair 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Savannah State University - Savannah, GA	April 22, 2009 Curtis V. Cooper Health Fair 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Pathways to Righteousness Church - Atlanta, GA	April 25, 2009 Hedge International's Annual Health Fair 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES
Coalition of Georgia

News From National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies— March 30, 2009

This Week:

- 1) US Breastfeeding Committee Responds to Atlantic Article
- 2) Pageant Winner Promotes PPD Education
- 3) Flu Free and a Mom to Be Program Receives Immunization Excellence Award
- 4) AAP Children's Art Contest
- 5) Free Spanish and Bilingual Resources
- 6) White House Council on Women and Girls

MATERNAL-INFANT HEALTH NEWS

1) **US BREASTFEEDING COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO ATLANTIC ARTICLE** The US Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) is encouraging supporters to respond to an article featured in the April 2009 issue of The Atlantic. According to the USBC, "The Case Against Breastfeeding" article by Hanna Rosin greatly misrepresented the medical research on breastfeeding. Rosin was also featured on the Today Show on March 16th. To read the article in The Atlantic, go to <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200904/case-against-breastfeeding>. To view the Today Show segment, go to <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/26184891/#29718430>. The USBC has sent a letter to the editor of The Atlantic in response to the article, stressing the importance of "ensuring that all women and families have the clear, balanced information about infant feeding choices to make informed decisions..." Supporters are also encouraged to write a letter to the editor, using the USBC's online tool and sample talking points, available at http://org2.democracynaction.org/o/5162/t/5508/letter/?letter_KEY=122.

2) **PAGEANT WINNER PROMOTES PPD EDUCATION** Rachel Roberts, Mrs. Tulsa International 2009 is spreading awareness about postpartum depression (PPD) as her pageant platform. She will compete for the title of Mrs. Oklahoma International in late April. Roberts experienced serious PPD after the 2006 birth of her daughter, and is hoping to educate others by sharing her story. A member of Postpartum Support International (PSI), Roberts devotes much of her Web site to resources about PPD. To access the Web site, go to <http://www.rachelrobertstulsa.com>. For more information about PSI, go to <http://postpartum.net/>.

CHILD, ADOLESCENT, FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH NEWS

3) **FLU FREE AND A-MOM-TO-BE PROGRAM RECEIVES IMMUNIZATION EXCELLENCE AWARD** The Flu Free and a Mom-to-Be campaign will receive the National Influenza Vaccine Summit Immunization Excellence Award -2008-2009 Corporate Campaign. The award recognizes individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions towards improved adult and/or child influenza vaccination rates within their communities. The Flu Free campaign was a collaborative effort between the National Women's Health Resource Center and the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses that was supported by an educational grant from CSL Biotherapies. It focuses on providing tips and information about the flu vaccine for women who are pregnant or planning to get pregnant during the flu season. For more information about the award, go to <http://www.healthywomen.org/newsroom/pressreleases/dbnwhrcnews/nationalwomenshealthresourcecenterhonoredwithinfluenzavaccinesummitimmunizationexcellenceaward>. To learn more about the Flu Free campaign, go to <http://www.healthywomen.org/healthcenters/pregnancyandparenting/flufreeandamomtobe>.

4) **AAP CHILDREN'S ART CONTEST**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is sponsoring its 5th annual national art contest for children. The contest is open to children in three groups, grades 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12 and the theme is "Protecting Children from Tobacco Smoke." Group winners and their parents will be invited to a presentation ceremony in Washington, DC at the 2009 AAP National Conference and Exhibition. Each of the three first-place winners will receive \$500 and up to \$1,000 for travel-related expenses. Entries in the contest must be postmarked by July 31, 2009. For more information, including an entry form and detailed rules and regulations for the contest, go to <http://aap.org/artcontest/>.

5) **FREE SPANISH AND BILINGUAL RESOURCES**

Migrant Health Promotion (MHP) has announced a new Spanish language "Materials and Tools" page on its Web site. MHP develops culturally and linguistically competent, easy-to-use materials specifically for farmworkers and their rural communities. All publications are reviewed by community members, health professionals, promotores and promotoras prior to their use and distribution. Materials are tested for literacy level and relevance to farmworkers and individuals living in border communities. To access the free resources online, go to http://migranthealth.org/materials_and_tools/.

6) **WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS** On March 11, 2009 the White House announced the creation of the White House Council on Women and Girls. The mission of the Council is "to provide a coordinated federal response to the challenges confronted by women and girls and to ensure that all Cabinet and Cabinet-level agencies consider how their policies and programs impact women and families." It is being created to ensure that all agencies across the federal government address the particular needs and concerns of women and girls. According to a White House press release, the Council will focus on a number of areas during its first year, including helping to build healthy families and improve women's health care. For more information, go to the White House Web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Announces-White-House-Council-on-Women-and-Girls/.

Sources:

- <http://aap.org/artcontest/>
- http://migranthealth.org/materials_and_tools/
- <http://postpartum.net/>
- <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/26184891/#29718430>
- http://org2.democracynaction.org/o/5162/t/5508/letter/?letter_KEY=122
- <http://www.familiesusa.org/assets/pdfs/chipra/chipra-101-overview.pdf>
- <http://www.familiesusa.org/issues/childrens-health/reauthorization/>
- <http://www.healthywomen.org/newsroom/pressreleases/dbnwhrcnews/nationalwomenshealthresourcecenterhonoredwithinfluenzavaccinesummitimmunizationexcellenceaward>
- <http://www.healthywomen.org/healthcenters/pregnancyandparenting/flufreeandamomtobe>
- <http://www.rachelrobertstulsa.com>
- <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200904/case-against-breastfeeding>

Information is reported as provided and does not necessarily represent the view of or the endorsement by the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition. A complete copy of HMHB's disclaimer is available on the HMHB Web site at <http://www.hmhb.org/disclaimer.html>



News From National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies— March 23, 2009

This Week:

- 1) Drop in Rates of Preterm Birth
- 2) Study: Periodontal Disease Treatment and Pregnancy
- 3) Preterm Birth and Neonatal Brain Hemorrhage: Effects at Age 12
- 4) Impact of Information Technology in Health Care
- 5) Public Support for Seat Belt Laws

MATERNAL-INFANT HEALTH NEWS

1) DROP IN RATES OF PRETERM BIRTH

The March of Dimes has announced that the preterm birth rate in the US declined slightly in 2007. In particular, rates declined for babies born at 34-36 weeks and among babies born to both African American and white women. Babies are considered preterm if they are born at less than 37 weeks gestation. According to preliminary data for 2007 released by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the rates of preterm birth dropped to 12.7 percent from 12.8 percent in 2006. This is a small but statistically significant decrease. For more information from the March of Dimes, go to http://www.marchofdimes.com/aboutus/22684_55313.asp. A chart detailing the state by state breakdown of the changes in preterm birth rates is available at <http://www.marchofdimes.com/files/pbr.pdf>. To access the NCHS report, "Births: Preliminary Data for 2007," go to <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2009/r090318.htm>.

2) STUDY: PERIODONTAL DISEASE TREATMENT AND PREGNANCY A study in the March 2009 edition of the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology examined the impact of treatment of periodontal disease in pregnant women. In "Effect of periodontal disease treatment during pregnancy on preterm birth incidence: meta-analysis of randomized trials," the study authors calculated odds ratios to estimate the relative risk of preterm birth, low birth weight and spontaneous abortion or stillbirth in women who received periodontal treatment during pregnancy compared with those who did not. They concluded that the incidence of preterm birth was significantly reduced and that low birth weight may be prevented when periodontal disease is treated in pregnant women. To access the study online, go to <http://www.ajog.org/article/PIIS0002937808010806/fulltext>.

3) PRETERM BIRTH AND NEONATAL BRAIN HEMORRHAGE: EFFECTS AT AGE 12 A study in the March 2009 edition of the journal Pediatrics investigated the long-term consequences of preterm birth and neonatal brain hemorrhage. In "Lasting Effects of Preterm Birth and Neonatal Brain Hemorrhage at 12 Years of Age" the study authors compared cognitive, language, behavioral and educational outcomes of preterm children with children born at term. They also evaluated the impact of neonatal brain injury and environmental risk factors on intellectual function at 12 years of age. The authors found that children born preterm (both with and without brain injury) required more school services, and support in reading, writing, and math compared with children in the control group. Preterm children also displayed more behavior problems than their counterparts who born at full term. In addition, severe neonatal brain injury was the strongest predictor of poor intelligence. To access the study online, go to <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/123/3/1037>.

CHILD, ADOLESCENT, FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH NEWS

4) IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN HEALTH CARE The benefits and challenges of using information technology in health care are the focus of the March-April 2009 issue of the journal Health Affairs. Articles address topics such as the potential of personal health records to promote better self-management of chronic conditions and the impact of electronic health records on patient safety. The issue also includes a profile of Kaiser Permanente's electronic health record system and online health care model. Health Affairs was produced with support from the Markle Foundation, the California HealthCare Foundation, and the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. To access the issue online, go to <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/vol28/issue2>.

ADVOCATES IN ACTION

5) PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SEAT BELT LAWS

There is widespread support for a primary seat belt law in the rural state of Montana, according to a new study published in the Journal of Safety Research. Primary seat belt laws allow police officers to ticket a driver for not wearing a seat belt, without any other traffic offense taking place. Secondary seat belt laws state that law enforcement officers may issue a ticket for not wearing a seat belt only when there is another citable traffic infraction. The report is significant because currently many state legislatures (including Montana) are debating whether to adopt primary seat belt laws, which are currently only enacted in 25 states and Washington, DC. In the study, "Attitudes toward a primary seat belt law among adults in a rural state with a secondary seat belt law" the authors used data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). They found that 61 percent of Montana residents surveyed said they would be in favor of a primary seat belt law. The study authors also point out that, "enforced primary seatbelt laws can reduce morbidity and mortality associated with motor-vehicle crashes." Information on state by state seat belt laws is available at http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/seatbelt_laws.html. To access the abstract for the study online, go to http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6V6F-4VJ4B7G-1&_user=10&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=d986a534189654fe7caf0e34366c0063.

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<http://stanmed.stanford.edu/2009spring/index.html>
http://www.vaccinateyourbaby.com/news/releases/2009/090305_stanford_vaccines.cfm

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Public Health Conferences and Events

- **8th International Symposium on Osteoporosis: Translating Research into Clinical Practice** - (National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF)) - April 1-5, 2009, Washington, DC
- **Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Annual Conference & Exhibition** - (Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS)) - April 4-8, 2009, Chicago, IL
- **Keeneland Conference** - (Center for Public Health Systems and Services Research (CPHSSR) U.S.) - April 7-9, 2009, Lexington, KY
- **Unite For Sight 6th Annual Global Health Conference** - (Unite for Sight) - April 18-19, 2009, New Haven, CT
- **58th Annual Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Conference** - (Epidemic Intelligence Service, CDC (EIS)) - April 20-24, 2009, Atlanta, GA
- **National Public Health Leadership Development Network Conference** - (National Public Health Leadership Development Network) - April 22-23, 2009, St. Louis, MO
- **Society of Behavioral Medicine 30th Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions** - (Society of Behavioral Medicine) - April 22-25, 2009, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April Health Observances

1-30

National Child Abuse Prevention Month
Child Welfare Information Gateway
www.childwelfare.gov/preventing

1-30

Alcohol Awareness Month
SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
www.ncadi.samhsa.gov

1-30

Cancer Control Month
American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

1-30

Cesarean Awareness Month
International Cesarean Awareness Network, Inc.
www.ican-online.org

1-30

National Minority Health Awareness Month
Office of Minority Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.omhrc.gov



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