



Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic

Improving children's mental health since 1924

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Contact: Amanda Ray, (323) 766-2360
aray@lacgc.org

Standing Room Only at Early Intervention Mental Health Services Conference

Los Angeles, CA. January 27, 2005. With over 650 people in attendance, on January 27th the Clinic welcomed mental health professionals, child care and Head Start workers, child advocates, nurses, educators, parents, policy makers and public officials to *Because We Care: An Early Intervention Mental Health Services Conference*. The purpose of the day-long event was to reduce the impact of childhood trauma on children ages 0-5 by increasing participants' understanding, knowledge and skills as they relate to evidence-based practices in early intervention approaches, models and treatment strategies.

In partnership with the conference's local, state and national co-sponsors, we were honored to have Dr. David Satcher, the 16th Surgeon General of the United States, the current Director of the National Center for Primary Care at the Morehouse School of Medicine and the interim Dean of the Morehouse School of Medicine, deliver the keynote address, *Mental Health in Children – A Health Crisis*.

Additional plenary presentations were made by Dr. Joy Osofsky, Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Public Health at Louisiana State University and President of ZERO TO THREE on *The Impact of Trauma on 0-5 Year Olds*; and Dr. Susan McDonough, Associate Professor and Research Scientist in the School of Social Work at the University of Michigan on *Overburdened Families*.

The Clinic's commitment to the conference is rooted in the fact that intervening early in a child's life can prevent future emotional and behavioral problems, as well as greatly increase a child's school readiness. Therefore, the board of directors and staff of the Clinic were especially pleased to host an event which brought together key leaders in the field of children's mental health, providing training and leadership to individuals who are dedicated to improving the lives of children.

Nationally prominent author Bebe Moore Campbell spoke over lunch about her children's book that deals with a young girl and how she copes with being raised by her mentally ill mother. Ms. Campbell followed her presentation with a book signing of *Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry* (2003).

Afternoon workshops included presentations from 22 professionals with different areas of experience and expertise in the field of early intervention. Topics presented included: Behavioral Interventions in Preschool Settings, Male Caregivers, Home Visitation, Children in Foster Care, ADHD and Autism in Preschoolers, and Infant Mental Health. Participants were also offered the opportunity to receive continuing education certification for the day.

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As training mental health professionals and promoting innovative new approaches to treatment is part of the Clinic's mission, the Board of Directors provided the majority of underwriting support for the conference. The Board's support was augmented by generous grant funding from California Children and Families Commission, The Atlas Family Foundation, and The California Endowment.

Conference Co-Sponsors:

1. California Department of Developmental Services
2. California Department of Mental Health
3. Child & Family Guidance Center
4. LAUSD/Early Childhood Education Division
5. Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
6. Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
7. Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Burke
8. Mental Health Association in California
9. National Mental Health Association
10. Pacific Clinics
11. WestEd
12. ZERO TO THREE