

# M.C.A.C. NEWS

METROPOLITAN CHILD ADVOCACY COALITION



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## SOCIAL NETWORKING (BLOGGING) IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR YOUTH

*Presented by: Sgt. Scott Christensen, Computer Crimes/Internet Crimes Against Children Unit with the Nebraska State Patrol*

*Sgt. Christensen's unit is responsible for the investigation and forensic analysis of computer related crimes in the state. The primary area of investigations involves the online exploitation of children through child pornography and on-line enticement by adults. During this presentation, Sgt. Christensen will show participants how to discover on-line social networking sites, how to access them, how they are used and who uses them. Recognize how social networking is impacting and harming children and youth today. Discover what can be done to protect children and what to do if crimes are uncovered on one of these on-line "relationships."*

**FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2007**

8:30—9:00 a.m.—Networking and Business Meeting

9:00—10:30 a.m.—Program

Program will take place at:

Omaha Home for Boys

4343 N 52nd Street

Wurdeman Learning Center

(South Entrance)

For questions about this free program, please contact April Anderson at 595-1326 or [aanderson@projectharmony.com](mailto:aanderson@projectharmony.com)

**Continuing Education:**

*This program meets the criteria of an approved continuing education for Social Work, Mental Health Practitioners, and Marriage and Family Therapists for 1.5 contact hours.*

*You must be an MCAC member to receive continuing education credit for this program.*

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**Someone's  
sitting in the  
shade today  
because some-  
one planted a  
tree a long  
time ago**

**-Warren Buffet**

## From the Chair...

April is upon us and it's time to bring Child Abuse Prevention to the forefront. **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month** and a time to recognize the efforts put forth to prevent child abuse and neglect as well as look forward at what we can do to continue these efforts.

Nebraska is conducting a campaign titled "Winds of Change" put forth to encourage Nebraskans to make positive choices to support families in their communities. Everyday we are faced with choices which affect the children in our community and it is our mission to make choices which support families and children as well as provide them with resources and education. While each person alone cannot do it all, with a collective effort from all those in the community, we can provide a positive influence in the life of a child. You can continue your support by encouraging policymakers to support children and families, make sure children in your home and community receive love and nurturing, be a role model for children demonstrating how conflicts can be resolved without hitting or yelling, and be an advocate for prevention programs in our community. Every one of you has made a difference in the life of a child and for that I THANK YOU! The time and effort you put into supporting our children is priceless!

During the month of April, in support of "Winds of Change" there will be pinwheels displayed, each representing 10 births in Douglas County. Let's continue to support Nebraska's children and families!

Sincerely,

*Shelli Wolverton*

MCAC Chairperson

## Internet Safety Resources

[www.BlogSafety.com](http://www.BlogSafety.com)  
[www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com)  
[www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org)  
[www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com)  
[www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)  
[www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org)  
[www.nap.edu/netsafekids](http://www.nap.edu/netsafekids)  
[www.copacommission.org](http://www.copacommission.org)  
[www.haltabuse.org/resources/laws](http://www.haltabuse.org/resources/laws)  
[www.netrcimes.net](http://www.netrcimes.net)  
[www.familytechtalk.com](http://www.familytechtalk.com)  
[www.stopcyberbullying.org](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org)  
[www.microsoft.com/athome/security/children](http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/children)  
[www.netfamilynews.org/index/shtml](http://www.netfamilynews.org/index/shtml)

## WINDS OF CHANGE

Help support Nebraska children and families! Keep an eye out for hundreds of pinwheels in April! Contact the Prevention Committee if you would like to be part of this Important project!



## Depression & Self-Mutilation Program Review

March's program featured Dr. Sharon Cannon from Children's Hospital presenting on Depression and Self-Mutilation. We had a record crowd of nearly 90 participants eager to learn more about understanding depression and self-mutilation and finding techniques for working with children. Dr. Cannon explained how to recognize symptoms of depression such as weight, sleep, appetite and mood changes. She went on to discuss the theories of what causes depression

(i.e. biological, psychological and genetic contributions). Dr. Cannon explained the various types of self-harm, the signs & symptoms of self-harming behaviors as well as reasons for self-harm. Dr. Cannon ended with discussing treatment for depression & self-harm such as counseling, psychotherapy and medications.



## Keeping Kids Safe Online

1. Don't forbid Internet use; In all probability, kids will defy the ban on the sly.
2. Filtering software won't block all dangers kids face on the Web, but it's a good start. Also visit sites with kids whenever possible.
3. Understand the technologies; Take a class, check out Web resources, try the sites yourself. The more you know about the internet, the better you can talk to kids about it.
4. Place the computer in a common area of the home; kids won't expect as much privacy there.
5. Talk to the parents of children's friends; most kids use computers at friends' homes.
6. Teach kids the "embarrassment rule": They should never post anything they wouldn't want everyone to read.
7. Tell them to be careful about what they post regarding other people. Predator-friendly information is often left by friends posting comments.
8. Let children know that it's important to tell you if he or she is ever approached online or receives inappropriate content.
9. Look for red flags that the child is in danger, such as minimizing a browser when you enter the room and getting phone calls from people you don't know.
10. If you think there may be a problem, report it to the authorities and also your internet service provider.

Alan, C. (2006). Do you know where your kids are clicking? *PC Magazine*, 25, 88-96.

# The Sexual Abuse Case Consultation (SACC) Lunch

May 4, 2007 12:00-1:30

**Topic: Risk Assessments for Youth with Sexualized Behaviors and Transitions of Care**

**NEW FORMAT!** All meetings will have a one-hour educational component (12:00-1:00) with case consultation during the last half hour (1:00-1:30).

Meetings are held at **Project Harmony** in the upstairs conference room from **12:00-1:30**.

Although there is a facilitator for the meetings, all in attendance are invited to offer feedback on cases presented. CEU's are available and, of course, you are welcome to bring your lunch.

Please e-mail **Carole Nelson** at [cnelson@childsaving.org](mailto:cnelson@childsaving.org) regarding your plans to attend and to staff a case at a SACC Lunch. Staffing is not required; you are welcome to come and listen! Although priority is given to cases involving sexual abuse issues, participants are also welcome to present any case to the facilitator and the team of professionals in attendance.

Professionals of all disciplines (no foster or adoptive parents, please) are invited to attend—it is often helpful to have therapeutic, educational, and legal perspectives available. Please plan to attend the full hour and a half.

See you there!

MCAC sponsors this peer consultation group that is **free of charge** to MCAC members and employees of member agencies. Non-members are charged a \$5 admission fee.



## Social Networking

Social Networking is and has been on the rise for adolescents. Adults are having a difficult time keeping up and understanding the technology and issues our youth are facing. More and more youth use “blogging” to communicate with each other. A blog is user-generated where entries are made in a journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order (Wikipedia.org). “Youth say things they would never tell their parents. The irony is that although their parents may not know about any of this, online predators, who tend to target the most vulnerable kids, now do” (Cohen, 2006).



## ADOLESCENT ONLINE VICTIMIZATION

Online victimization occurs when adolescents encounter intimidating and inappropriate sexual content, solicitation, or harassment. A study conducted (Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2006) of 1,500 children from 10 to 17 years of age revealed that 91% of the adolescents had access to the Internet at home, 90% at school, 69% at a friend's house, and 43% at another location, such as a library. During an average week, 49% used the Internet five to seven days a week. Wolak et al. (2006) separated online victimization into four specific categories. An overriding majority of the online victimization occurred at home: 79% of sexual solicitation, 79% of aggressive sexual solicitation, 79% of unwanted exposure to sexual material, and 85% of harassment.

All ages and sexes are exposed to online victimization dangers. However, some individuals are more prone than others to becoming an online victim such as:

- ◆ Age: 14-17 years of age
- ◆ Gender: Girls are more likely to be sexually solicited and harassed and boys are slightly more likely than girls to receive unwanted sexual content.
- ◆ Other Characteristics: share personal information, exchange pictures online, gay/questioning, lonely/depressed or have poor relationships with their parents.

Prevention strategies include scrutinizing youth online, not relying on online blockers and educating youth about online predators. Young (2007) encourages having honest discussions with youth, helping youth to understand the consequences of their actions and teaching youth to extract themselves from potentially dangerous situations and take immediate action with the appropriate authorities.

Wolak, J., Finkelhor, D., & Mitchell, J.J. (2004). Internet-initiated sex crimes against minors: Implications for prevention based on findings from a national study. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 35*, 424-434.

Young, A.D., Young, A. & Fullwood, H. (2007). Adolescent online victimization. *The Prevention Researcher, 14*, 8-9.



→ DON'T FORGET!

The next Board Meetings will be held;

Tuesday, April 17, 2007 &  
May 15, 2007  
From 11:45-1:00 at  
Project Harmony  
(7110 F Street)



# MCAC Board Member Spotlight

## Carolyn Thiele—Prevention Committee Chair

**Agency:** Heartland Family Service

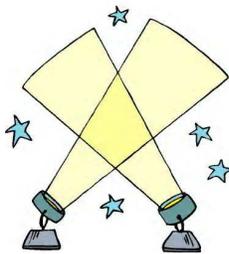
**Position:** Vice President Nebraska Professional Services

**What I do:** Provide administrative oversight of Heartland Family Service's Nebraska outpatient mental health and substance abuse services, community based evaluation services for juveniles, substance abuse prevention services, senior services, community education, and the agency's centralized intake and quality assurance program.



**Educational/Career Background:** Started my career as an Income Maintenance Worker for Douglas County Social Services (showing my age). Worked for Douglas County Social Services and then Nebraska Department of Social Services for 25 years in various positions assisting families and adults, then as a supervisor and administrator. I was the Vice President of Program for Lutheran Family Services for 5 years and have been in my current position at Heartland Family Services for the past 4 years.

**Family/Pets:** Harry and I have been married for 33 years. Harry started the school at Uta Halee, worked at Father Flannigan High School for many years and currently is the technology coordinator at the Girls and Boys Town schools. We have a daughter and son who are young adults. Our two German Wirehaired Pointers enjoy much TLC now that we have an "empty nest".



**Most Memorable Accomplishment:** Obtaining grants to start new programs.

**Favorite Vacation Destination:** Rocky Mountain campsites at the end of dirt roads close to trout streams.

**Favorite Quote:** *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.* Margaret Mead



## Extra! Extra!

Child Protective Services received 70 Pack 'n Plays that can be given to needy mothers younger than 21 when they put their babies to bed. The initiative is meant to reduce the risk of death among children younger than two. Special thanks goes to the **National Council of Jewish Women and Target** for their generous donation. Families eligible for the Pack 'n Plays are identified through the Child Protective Services hotline, 800-652-1999.



# AGENCY SPOTLIGHT



The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation’s mission is: *Bringing people together to achieve the best results for children and families.* In 1997, Nebraska Children was created at the recommendation of a task force of citizens to unite Nebraska communities and government agencies in the mission of protecting our children and preserving their families. Across our state, communities had fought valiantly to aid children and families, but in some areas resources simply weren't available. In other regions, services were fragmented and fell short of meeting the urgent needs of some families.

To date, Nebraska Children has awarded nearly \$7 million in grants to Nebraska communities and Native American tribes. Besides awarding grants to communities statewide, Nebraska Children continues to reach more people every year through a series of family-focused initiatives.

Nebraska Children goes far beyond providing financial support, and offers various kinds of assistance that help communities organize and manage their resources to help families. Their technical assistance can include training and education, program planning, marketing and fundraising instruction, management advice and technological expertise. Visit [www.pcanebbraska.org](http://www.pcanebbraska.org) for more information about this wonderful resource!

<b>Social Networking Sites</b>	<b>Safe Sites &amp; Searches</b>	<b>Filters</b>	
MySpace.com	Clubpenguin.com	SurfWatch	KidDesk
Facebook.com	Tweenland.com	JuniorNet	KiddoNet
Zanga.com	Imbee.com	SurfMonkey	NetNanny
Friendster.com	Neopets.com	CyberPatrol	CyberSitter
Flicker.com	Whyville.net	FamilyClick	IShield
Hi5.com	Toontown.com	PCModerator	SafeEyes
Orkut.com	Yahooligans	ContentProtect	
Blitz.com	SafetyNet		
	Ask Jeeves for kids		

## **WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN?**

MCAC is looking for motivated volunteers to help in the advocacy efforts for children and families. There are several committees who need your help, so now's the time to become an active member of our team. If you are interested in helping out contact the MCAC Chair, Shelli Wolverton at shelliw@omahahomeforboys.org or check out our website at [www.mcacomaha.org](http://www.mcacomaha.org) and contact us at [mcacomaha@gmail.com](mailto:mcacomaha@gmail.com).



### **What is the Metropolitan Child Advocacy Coalition?**

The Metropolitan Child Advocacy Coalition was formed in 1990 as a result of a merger between three groups of similar purposes: The Child Abuse Council of Omaha, The Child Sexual Abuse Network of Omaha, and the Sarpy County Child Abuse and Neglect Council.

Area professionals, understanding the importance of networking, created MCAC as a form for examining ways in which child abuse and neglect are dealt with across the metropolitan area, AND when necessary, organizing for change. In addition, MCAC has evolved into a vehicle for providing accessible professional education, promoting new programs, and publicizing current thinking and system changes.

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

We're on the Web!

Metropolitan Child Advocacy Coalition  
PO Box 6646, Elmwood Station  
Omaha, NE 68106

