

# Community Champions Network

## Celebrating Our First Year!

Since June 2006 the Community Champions Network project has been moving forward in eight sites around North America. We have persevered through site changes, leadership changes, agency and legislative climate shifts and still are growing in numbers and activity. Many thanks and kudos to all the CCN partners that have made this such an exciting year!



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convenient and time saving. This is also a great way to get other folks involved in the CCN project locally. Ask them to go to the site and register. Christina and Kim will send updated information and any history that they ask for. One thing to remember - the more we all use the list serves, the more effective they will be.

## Our Sponsor



Thanks go to *Jockey Being Family*™, the corporate citizenship initiative of Jockey International. We are now in our second year of funding for the

Community Champions Network program.

Please check their site at

[www.jockeybeingfamily.com](http://www.jockeybeingfamily.com)

## List Serve News

Over the years, parent-driven NACAC projects have benefitted greatly through the use of list serves. These handy e-tools allow us to tap into each other as resources in a quick and efficient manner. For your convenience, Christina Romo has created a total of nine list serves. They are:

<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-all@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-all@communityforum.net</a>	All Sites
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-on@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-on@communityforum.net</a>	Ontario
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-ri@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-ri@communityforum.net</a>	Rhode Is
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-ke-mo@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-ke-mo@communityforum.net</a>	Missouri
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-orlando@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-orlando@communityforum.net</a>	Orlando
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-dc@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-dc@communityforum.net</a>	Wash, D.C.
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-la-cty@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-la-cty@communityforum.net</a>	L.A. County
<a href="mailto:nacac-ccn-wi@communityforum.net">nacac-ccn-wi@communityforum.net</a>	Wisconsin

Please give them a try - sharing encouragement, information, and resources this way is

## Site Updates

So, you're asking yourselves, what's happening across North America at the various sites? Glad you asked! Here's a quick update...

### Eau Claire, Wisconsin

In Wisconsin there is a good statewide post-adoption support system already in place. For foster and adopted youth aged 18 and over however, the adult mental health system is not user-friendly. CCN advocates have been meeting regularly since last year and hosted a youth/adult training in March to launch a regional youth advocacy group. This growing group of young people is partnering with adults to raise

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public awareness and push for system improvement.

## **Kansas City, Missouri**

The Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association was a force to be reckoned with long before CCN partnered with them. Having successfully preserved adoption subsidy last year (with St. Louis partners, Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition, and the assistance of NACAC's subsidy staff), MFCAA is now awaiting allocation of a legislative award for creating a Post-Adoption Resource Center. The PARC will provide family based services, including parent liaisons, training and more.

## **Los Angeles County**

L.A. is another site that has established adoption support and preservation services, but can see a need for great parent involvement and leadership. Parent liaisons, adoption competency training for parents and professionals, and reform to the MediCal system are the top three priorities here. In partnering with two statewide advocacy coalitions, the CCN coalition hopes to see a system change this legislative session.

## **North Carolina**

The latest community to join the CCN project, North Carolina kicked off the partnership by asking NACAC staff to present at the annual North Carolina Foster and Adoptive Parent Association conference. During the general session, over 500 attendees were invited to join the CCN coalition and on May 8th the post adoption support conversation was highlighted at the annual NCFAPA legislative day.

## **Ontario**

Sometimes the stars are aligned just right - that's the way it happens with Ontario, Canada! The provincial Ministry was in the process of several legislative changes that supported adoption and

adoptive families at the same time that we were launching our coalition there. Because of this - and the fact that the 2008 NACAC Conference will be held in Ottawa - we have been able to accomplish much in a short time. More than ten forums and stakeholder meetings took place, staff presented at the Adoption Resource Exchange conference, and a Parent Leadership Training this June will prepare parents from across Ontario and the rest of Canada for continued and expanded leadership roles. Other plans include web based supports and a parent liaison model.

## **Orlando, Florida**

As the only completely privatized system included in the CCN project, Orlando has been challenged with the dual tasks of building a grassroots coalition and forging a cooperative relationship with the private agency. The commitment of the staff at Heritage Family Preservation, as well as that of Family Services of Metro Orlando has moved the effort forward. Beginning with a day-long training in November 2006, and continuing with monthly meetings for families and community members, this site has continued to raise the issues and push for improved post adoption supports. Advocacy priorities include parent liaison model, adoption competency training and medicaid reform.

## **Rhode Island**

Though a small state, Rhode Island has taken on a large task. Spearheaded by Adoptive Families in Action (AFiA), the CCN effort here has been kicked off with a survey of all adoptive families and DCFS staff, to be followed by a series of forums throughout the community. Plans for Kids & Judges Day(s) in September are aimed at improving communication and understanding between the court system and those young people whose lives are effected by the decisions handed down.

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## Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. has a strong local network that has been very effective in advocacy work. It includes parents, providers, public and private agencies, and community leaders. The D.C. group has held two community forums. Their Number one priority is to establish a multi-year contract for the post-adoption service agency, therefore creating more seamless and consistent access to support services for children and families.



## Notable Programs

One of the most gratifying and inspiring benefits of staffing the Community Champions Network project has been traveling to each of the sites and hearing about the great work that is happening across the continent. Clearly, there are folks in every community that know what children and families need and know how to best partner with them for service and support delivery. The real challenge is finding the resources and the will to expand and duplicate these successful models.

Below is just a short list of some of the amazing work being done in our adoption community. More will be featured in future issues. Please drop in and visit these sites; contact one another for guidance and support in “stealing shamelessly”!

## Kansas City, Missouri

Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association is only six years old, but has created a support system that includes legislative advocacy, training, food pantry, clothes closet,

support group meetings and more.

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

## Ontario

The Adoption Council of Ontario is the one-stop site for information, referral, training, advocacy, recruitment, and more. See both sites: [www.adoption.on.ca](http://www.adoption.on.ca) and [www.adoptontario.ca](http://www.adoptontario.ca).

## Orlando, Florida

Heritage Family Preservation has been THE place for foster and adoptive family supports in Orlando since 1995. This community-based non-profit has a gift for collaborating and offers clinical and support services, education and training, grassroots building, and violence prevention services.

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

## Other Resources:

Two models that have been identified by several sites for duplication are MN ASAP's Parent Liaison model ([www.mnasap.org](http://www.mnasap.org)) and the web based information and referral site at [www.taplink.org](http://www.taplink.org).



## Training for Managers Parent Liaison Model

Minnesota - June 13-14, 2007  
Please call or email Kim Stevens for  
information and to register.

