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# FACILITATION FOCUS

*A Newsletter for Facilitators of Child and Family Team Meetings in North Carolina*

Center for Family and Community Engagement, North Carolina State University

<http://www.cfface.org>

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## **Children and Families of the North Carolina National Guard Symposium**

**Ashley Duncan**

*The Center for Family and Community Engagement*

The ***Children and Families of the NC National Guard Symposium*** was held Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh. Nearly 250 people, including social workers, educators, and other service providers attended the conference which was hosted by the NC State University Department of Social Work and Center for Family and Community Engagement.

Speakers included **Mary Easley**, wife of Governor Mike Easley; **Major General Bill Ingram**, commander of North Carolina's Army and Air National Guard, and his wife **Lil Ingram**; **Major General Elder Granger**, head of the military health care system; **Dempsey Benton**, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services; **J.B. Buxton**, Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction; **Ramon Rojano**, Director of Wake County Human Services; and **Diane Coffill**, Director of the NC National Guard's Family Readiness Program.

Symposium participants also attended breakout sessions. Topics included: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury, School and Community Support, Higher Education's Response to Veterans with Disabilities, and Family Assistance Centers.

The purpose of the symposium was to provide resources and to raise awareness of the challenges faced by children and families of the National Guard before, during, and after combat deployments. ♦

## **Facilitator Spotlight:**

*Meet Valerie Grady, Facilitator for Alamance County Division of Social Services!*

Valerie Grady has been facilitating Child and Family Teams in Alamance County since October of 2005. However, she is hardly new to family-centered work! With extensive experience as a CPS investigator and supervisor, an in-home worker, an Intensive Family Preservation counselor, a coordinator for a DJJDP intensive community mentoring program, and a Qualified Professional for a local mental health provider, she has dedicated her career to supporting children and families. When asked what she likes best about facilitating CFTs, Valerie states that CFTs are *"a means for families to own their successes and learn new ways of communicating about problems... families are often surprised that we want to hear about their strengths instead of focusing on what they have done wrong"*

Valerie recounts the following about a successful Child and Family Team meeting:

*"We recently had a CFT where the purpose was to recommend that a petition be dismissed and the custody of the children be returned to their mother. When the children came into custody, there were lots of very angry feelings toward DSS from the family. The social worker involved was able to link the family to services in the community that the family found beneficial. During the CFT, the family was able to share their accomplishments... Toward the end of the meeting they were also able to say that although they didn't like the fact that DSS came into their lives, the process has actually made things better for them... The children are now back with their family and the parents know how to seek help if they need it in the future. That, I believe, is a true success."*

Many thanks to Valerie and every other dedicated CFT facilitator. The work you do changes lives. ♦

(Know a hard working facilitator we should spotlight in a future newsletter? Please email [arwakefi@chass.ncsu.edu](mailto:arwakefi@chass.ncsu.edu))

### **NEWS FROM THE FORUM FRONT:**

**SOUTHERN SENSE:** THE FIRST EVER SOUTHERN FACILITATOR FORUM WAS HELD IN SPRING LAKE ON MARCH 10. CO-FACILITATED BY TRAINERS CHENELLE MOORE AND ANNE WAKEFIELD, THE GROUP GOT ACQUAINTED AND DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A CLEAR PURPOSE FOR CFTS. THE NEXT SOUTHERN FORUM WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 17.

**WESTERN WISDOM:** TRAINER BILLY POINDEXTER FACILITATED THE WESTERN FORUM ON MARCH 25. "LIONS AND HORSES - WHAT DOES YOUR CFT LOOK LIKE?" WAS THE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION IN JACKSON COUNTY. THE NEXT WESTERN FORUM WILL TAKE PLACE ON JUNE 25<sup>TH</sup>.

**CENTRAL CHATTER:** ON JANUARY 15, KARA ALLEN-ECKARD AND MARIANNE LATZ LED THE CENTRAL FACILITATOR FORUM IN A LIVELY DISCUSSION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A CLEAR AND OPEN-ENDED PURPOSE. THE NEXT CENTRAL FORUM WILL TAKE PLACE IN BURLINGTON ON APRIL 17.

**TALES FROM THE EAST:** ELIZABETH CITY PLAYED HOST TO THE EASTERN FACILITATOR FORUM ON FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>. TEE HENDERSON AND SUSAN GASMAN CONDUCTED AN ENGAGING FORUM ABOUT HOW BEST TO INCLUDE CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CFT MEETINGS. THE NEXT EASTERN FORUM WILL TAKE PLACE ON MAY 22<sup>ND</sup> IN BAYBORO. ♦

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING FORUMS, CHECK OUT THE CFFACE WEBSITE:

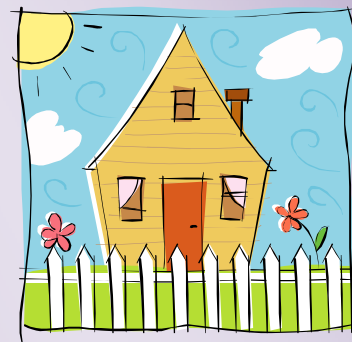
[www.cfface.org/dss/facilitatorforums.htm](http://www.cfface.org/dss/facilitatorforums.htm)

Don't forget to join our online Google Group for CFT Facilitators! To join, email Anne at [arwakefi@chass.ncsu.edu](mailto:arwakefi@chass.ncsu.edu)



**National Center on  
Family Group  
Decision Making™**

*A Program of American Humane*



Seeking additional resources about Child and Family Team Meetings? American Humane ([www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)) has an established history of protecting children from abuse and neglect. Through consultation, research, advocacy, and training, this organization is a leader in child protection. American Humane's National Center on Family Group Decision Making is an excellent resource for facilitators of family-centered meetings.

*"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted. They seem not to notice us, hovering averting our eyes, and they seldom offer thanks, but what we do for them is never wasted."*

*Garrison Keillor*

For information about the upcoming 2008 Conference on FGDM, please see [http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pc\\_fgdm](http://www.americanhumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pc_fgdm). In addition to registration information, you will also find resources about new happenings in the field of child protection and family-centered meetings. ♦

*Thank you for your dedication to children and families.*

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