

NYSPEAP NEWS

NEW YORK STATE PARENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAM
DIVISION OF COURT OPERATIONS

NANCY MANGOLD, DIRECTOR

DANIEL M. WEITZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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SAVE THE DATE!

New York State Parent Education and Awareness Program's Annual Training for Certified Providers

May 22, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(Registration begins at 9:30 am)

New York State Bar Association
One Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207

Chair, NYSPEAP



Honorable Evelyn Frazee

The rollout of this first New York State Parent Education and Awareness Program (PEAP) Newsletter has caused me to reflect on how very far we have come in establishing parent education in New York State. Many of you attended the first organizational meeting held in December, 2000. That gathering was the inspiration for compiling the first list of existing parent education programs and providing us the opportunity to get to know one another, to share ideas, materials, information and, perhaps most important, support. Seeing your dedication and enthusiasm for helping children and their parents cope with the changes caused by a separation or divorce was a truly affirming experience.

We have come a long way since that first meeting a little over seven years ago. From the 55 programs in operation in 2000 we have grown to 74

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OCA Team Ready to Assist with PEAP



Vanessa M. Vitola
Administrator



Sherri Graham
Assistant Court Analyst

Vanessa M. Vitola became the Administrator of the PEAP in April of 2006. Vanessa answers questions and provides information on a daily basis. She makes certain that providers, court staff and outside groups are provided with our materials and that the certified providers submit all of their quarterly reporting. She trains providers on the use of the on-line reporting form. She helps to plan our annual conference each year and is now the graphic designer of this newsletter, just to name a few of the projects she works on. As we all know, Vanessa

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Message from Susan L. Pollet, Counsel and Director

When we think about how far the PEAP has come since its launch in July of 2005, we have much to be thankful for. The guiding presence of our Chair, the Hon. Evelyn Frazee, and the daily efforts of our Administrator, Vanessa Vitola, provide a strong structure. The wonderful benefits of becoming part of the Division of Court Operations of the Office of Court Administration in 2007, which Division is headed by Nancy Mangold, and supported by her Deputy, Dan Weitz, have contributed to our growth and success. The most important "kudos" goes to all of you for providing this service to separating and divorcing parents throughout New York State in the evenings, on Saturdays, in weather good and bad. Your dedication knows no bounds. Your cooperation in following our guidelines, making changes pursuant to our site review evaluations, and your diligence in providing us with class schedules and quarterly reporting are noticed and appreciated.

The purpose of this inaugural newsletter is to highlight various accomplishments of the Program, and to let you meet, through photos, the individuals at the Office of Court Administration who assisted us in reaching our goals. Politics aside-it really does "take a village." Our first goal was to get certified programs "up and running" and available to parents throughout the State. Thanks to all of you, that goal has been met. Now our continuing goal is to outreach in as many ways possible so that more parents will attend those programs.

What did we accomplish in 2007? In addition to getting programs certified and conducting site reviews, we contacted groups throughout the State, created an outreach list, published informational articles in numerous newsletters, made materials available at conferences, spoke to countless groups, launched a small business outreach effort, created a 10 minute promotional video about the program, and put our quarterly reporting on line. We began to work on budget issues, and offered mini grants. We conducted a successful annual conference with binder materials. In 2007, approximately 6,000 parents attended our certified programs, as compared to 575 parents in 2005, and 3,623 parents in 2006.

What other successes do we hope to see in 2008? We

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Counsel and Director Message

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want to see the numbers of parent participants continue to grow. We will continue our outreach efforts to achieve that goal. We will work on the implementation of a revised survey form, which will be 'scanable,' and easier for our certified providers to use with the parents. We will create an educational video to be used by the presenters to describe the concepts of cooperative and parallel parenting. We will distribute our published article in the Family Court Review regarding mandatory parent education programs throughout the United States. We will improve our data collection methods including chart creation. We will organize another annual conference with helpful binder materials.

Our primary goal is to support you in as many ways as we can. As you read about all of the initiatives and all of the people who helped make them possible, you will be reminded of how much passion we have for this Program because it truly helps families, and how much we care about reaching as large an audience as we can. Your success is our success. Thank you for the privilege of working on this effort with all of you. Best, Susan

Public Awareness Campaign



Gregory Murray
Director of
Public Affairs



Andrea Sahakian
Principal Court
Analyst

Gregory Murray, Director, and Andrea Sahakian, Principal Court Analyst, of the Office of Public Affairs, have been working closely with us over the last two years to develop a public awareness campaign, and it has been an extremely fruitful collaboration. They worked with us and with Nicholas Ullo on a promotional video for our Program, discussed more fully on page 3. They helped to design our Parent Ed Poster which was distributed for display in courthouses throughout the State. Additionally, they worked with us to design a Parent Ed business card, which is handed out to parents at all of the courthouses, and is distributed widely at conferences, trainings and other gatherings. This past Fall and Winter, they helped us to get an interview with news anchor Darlene Rodriguez for WNBC's Today in New York (see our website to watch it), and with ads in

local newspapers and public service announcements. (See our website to listen to the PSA). We are now planning a small business outreach, also described below. Finally, we are working with Tony Walters, Deputy Director of Public Affairs, on having Cable TV stations around the State to show our ten minute promotional video, and schedule live appearances for Susan Pollet.

Interview with Darlene Rodriguez



Pictured (l-r): Susan L. Pollet, Darlene Rodriguez, Hon. Evelyn Frazee and Gregory Murray

On December 18, 2007, a segment about the New York State Parent Education and Awareness Program aired on WNBC 's local morning show Today in New York. The segment is available through a link on the home page of our website at www.nycourts.gov/ip/parent-ed to WNBC's website. Gregory Murray, Director, and Andrea Sahakian, Principal Court Analyst, arranged to have Darlene Rodriguez and her cameraman come to 25 Beaver Street for the shoot. Justice Frazee was interviewed, along with two parents who had attended our certified program in Kings County, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens. Their moving words about the Program and how much it meant to them made the entire effort worthwhile.

Susan Pollet spoke about the program as well. The show reached 61,000 people. A lot of behind-the-scenes effort goes into coordinating something like this, and we are grateful to everyone who made the arrangements and participated in it.

Ad in Local Newspapers

During the weeks of March 12th, April 16th and November 26th, 2007, ads about the Parent Ed program ran in nearly 300 community newspapers statewide through a discounted ad-buy placed with the New York Press Association. Reach: 1.9 million households (per week).

Additionally, we will be targeting outreach in the 4th Judicial District with a five-week ad for the month of March 2008. It will be placed in 32 community newspapers with a combined circulation of 178,884. We will also be placing a two-day ad in the Albany Times Union, in the first or second week of April, with a circulation of 140,000.



Tony Walters
Deputy Director of
Public Affairs



Poster



Business Card

Are you a parent going through a divorce or separation?
Do you have children under the age of 18?
 If so, the New York State Parent Education and Awareness Program is here to help you learn how to make your new family life easier for you and your children.
 Call toll-free: 1-888-308-2798
 Email: nyparent-ed@courts.state.ny.us
 Visit: www.nycourts.gov/ip/parent-ed

Chair, NYSPEAP

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programs with a presence in all 62 counties in New York State. New York's certification standards for administration and curriculum content are a model for best practices. The tireless and thoughtful work of the Parent Education and Advisory Board in developing the standards, Susan Pollet's innovative and committed efforts as Counsel and Director with the very capable assistance of Program Administrator, Vanessa Vitola, and, of course, the unwavering inspiration and support of our Chief Judge, Judith S. Kaye, and former and present Chief Administrative Judges Jonathan Lippman and Ann T. Pfau have all been important and essential components in the institutionalization of parent education in this state. But you, the parent educators and providers, are at the center of what has been accomplished. Your belief in the benefits of parent education and the positive impact that it can have for children going through a difficult time in their lives and your willingness to adapt and adopt programs and required changes to meet the standards, often under difficult funding circumstances, are what has gotten parent education to its present level in New York State. You are the heart of parent education in New York State and the reason why thousands of children will have better lives, not just now but in the future.

This first issue of the PEAP Newsletter is devoted to each of you with sincere appreciation and gratitude for all your efforts. The last seven years has presented challenges but also accomplishments of which we can all be proud. Let us continue to work together for the next seven years and beyond to build upon that legacy – our children's lives depend upon it.

Small Business Outreach

In our efforts to continue to work on outreach issues to increase your numbers of attendees, in December 2007, we requested lists of local small business from you. We asked you to identify small businesses in your respective counties where the public frequently seeks services (e.g. barbershops, hair salons, nail salons, delis, etc.). We asked that these comprehensive lists include telephone numbers, addresses, and email addresses.

In the coming months, our Public Affairs Department will be providing you with folders to distribute to these businesses containing, in part, parent education materials.

Promotional and Educational Videos



Nicholas Ullo

In November 2007, we sent you a CD copy of the ten-minute promotional parent education video, which had been slightly revised from the one that we showed at the May 17th Conference. We envisioned that you would show the video as an outreach tool, to use when making presentations to various groups to get them interested in referring parents to parent education. Some of the ideas we have had in this regard are to use the video for grant-writing purposes, to show to judges, court staff and community groups, and any other uses you identify to help promote the program. We wish to sincerely thank Nicholas Ullo for his dedication to our Program, and for his hard work and creativity in bringing our Program "to life."

After we completed our site reviews around the State, we noted that the concept which seemed to be the most difficult to explain and grasp was that of cooperative versus parallel parenting. We determined that having a video which could explain the concept, with interesting visual imagery, in a creative format, would enhance the classes. Nicholas is now assisting us with the creation of this video. Stay tuned as we will be providing you with copies of it to use in your classes.

Media

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Public Service Announcement

From Election Day, November 6, 2007, through the remainder of that month, the Parent Ed PSA aired statewide on alternate radio stations.

Cable TV

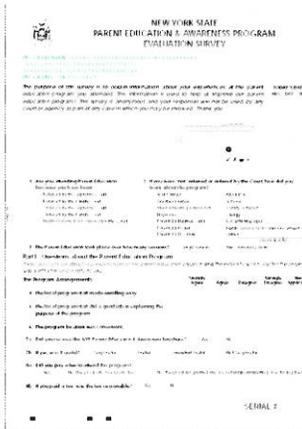
Gregory Murray, Director, and Tony Walters, Deputy Director, have been assisting us with locating quality cable tv shows around the State who will show our promotional video, or who will host live interviews. Susan Pollet has participated in such an interview in Albany, and is in the process of scheduling others. These shows reach thousands of families, and are an excellent way to make our Program known.

Outreach List

With the help of our interns, we have been developing a comprehensive statewide list of organizations who can assist us with making our Program known. Susan Pollet has been following up with all of the organizations on the list to see if they will do an e-mail blast, put our newsletter article in their newsletters, put a link on their website to ours, distribute our brochure and business cards, and provide speaking opportunities at conferences, etc. As a result of that outreach, which Vanessa and Sherri have assisted in tracking, we have communicated with hundreds of agencies, and succeeded in getting our article in hundreds of newsletters, with multiple links, distributed our materials to hundreds of organizations, and presented at close to 100 conferences. In addition, we communicated with every bar association and law guardian in the State, spoke to their groups and distributed materials.

We will distribute this list via e-mail to all of you so that you can follow up with the organizations in your respective areas. We can brainstorm at the May conference, and discuss the best way to continue this effort.

New Survey Form



As of February 1, 2008, you stopped using the pre and post class survey forms in your classes. Within the next few months, you will be provided with a new printed survey, which will be used in lieu of them. The new survey form will be handed out at the end of the last class session, and then collected by you before you hand out the certificates of compliance. (There will be no pre-class survey). We will give you complete instructions before the new surveys are sent to you.

You will have some weeks where you will not be handing out surveys until the new ones are ready. Do not be concerned—we have been collecting and storing all of this data, and it will be utilized. We know you will enjoy this break, and you will appreciate the new survey! Thanks go to Philip Ferrara, Research Psychologist, and his staff, for assisting us with this effort: Warren Klein, Personnel Analyst; Sridevi Gadiraji, Personnel Analyst; and Ourania Vasilatos, Special Projects Assistant. We also wish to thank Deborah Seep, Senior Court Analyst in the Personnel Office in Albany.

You will be hearing Phillip speak at the May conference.

On-line Reporting



Karen Kane



Fred Sahakian

Karen Kane, Associate Computer Systems Analyst, Court Research; Fred Sahakian, Associate Computer Systems Analyst, Division of Technology; and Latoya Solorzano, Senior Court Analyst, Jury & Data Services, assisted us in developing the On-line Reporting Form for the quarterly reporting, and Karen developed the manual to accompany it. You met Karen at the May conference last year, when she presented about it. As you know, all certified providers began using the form for the October, November and December 2007 quarter. If any of your staff needs additional training, please contact Vanessa Vitola. We will note any problems with it, and will work with our Division on attempting to make it even more “user friendly” as we go forward. From all reports, once individuals are used to working with it, they are finding it to be a time-saver.



Latoya Solorzano

On the Court side, the Family Court has the Clerks throughout the State generating the order and referral forms through UCMS, which also tracks statistics. When matched against the file numbers and docket numbers on the provider side, we will be able to track families going forward. Although initially some providers were having difficulty getting the file numbers and docket numbers regarding the Family Court Orders and Referrals, and the index numbers for the Supreme Court matrimonial Orders and Referrals, once they instituted a system to get them on the enrollment forms, and found a resource within the courts to provide numbers when the parents could not (established initially through the Chief Clerks), it has greatly improved the process.



Data Collection Methods



Frank Woods

Frank Woods, Assistant Coordinator in the Office of ADR and Court Improvement, and his staff are working with us to improve our data collection methods. On the "front end" he will help us to work out any "kinks" with the on-line reporting to make everything run as smoothly as possible for you, using "Filemaker." He is working with "Crystal Reports" to enable us to use the data from the on-line reporting forms to create charts and other visual forms of the statistics on the "back end." We are grateful for his time and attention to this. We welcome your input with all of this. (Frank and Amelia Hershberger have assisted us with budget issues as well.)



Amelia Hershberger

Publications

In April of 2008, an article entitled "A Nationwide Survey of Mandatory Parent Education," written by Susan Pollet with assistance on the research by a law student from Hofstra University School of Law and summer interns, will be published in the Family Court Review, an interdisciplinary journal of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. A copy will be e-mailed to you upon publication. Susan Pollet recently became an officer of the New York Chapter of that Association. Justice Frazee had created the Chapter and was its first President.

Revisions to Materials

We revised all of our parent education materials in the Fall of 2007, and are in the continuing process of distributing them via the Chief Clerks in Family Court and Supreme Court throughout the State. All of the new materials can be found on our website. This includes the PEAP brochure, the Guidelines for Courts, the Procedures for the Administration of the NYSPEAP, all of the Appendices, including the Order and Referral forms and the FAQ's for providers, the courts and the parents. You will also receive an updated version of the Parent's Handbook when you order more. Special thanks go to Justice Frazee for all of her great input and guidance.

Please take some time to read the Procedures for the Administration of the NYSPEAP. It answers many questions.

Revision to Website



In January of 2008, the revisions to the website were made with the able assistance of Phillip Yow, Website Systems Director, and Thomas Klem, Web Developer. They helped to redesign the lay out so that it is consistent with the "look" of the other websites within the Division, and to make it easier to read and use. All of our new materials are included as well. They spend a lot of time, on a regular basis, updating our website with new contact information and changes to our certified provider list. We are grateful for that effort.



Phillip Yow



Thomas Klem

Translation of Parent's Handbook into Spanish

Although none of the certified providers are currently giving classes in Spanish, or in any other language, there was some demand expressed for a Spanish translation of our Parent's Handbook. That has been accomplished, and we are now determining where the need for them is throughout the State. We will then print them and make arrangements to distribute them.

OCA Team Ready to Assist with PEAP

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is efficient, polite, and always willing to assist with all of our initiatives. We so appreciate her hard work and dedication.

Sherri Graham, Assistant Court Analyst, started working with us on a part-time basis in July of 2007. She assists another unit within the Division of Court Operations as well. Although Sherri works out of the Beaver Street, NYC office, the “wonders” of e-mail and interoffice mail keep us in close contact. Sherri helps with mailings, keeps our tracking lists up-to-date and just completed summarizing post class surveys in order to help to provide feedback to providers regarding parent participant satisfaction. With our rapid growth in the number of providers statewide, her assistance is essential to keep up with all of the paperwork. We welcome her to team, and are grateful for all of the assistance she has given us.

Pace Law Student Interns



Brenda Hernandez is a second year student at Pace University School of Law in White Plains. She has a passion for family law issues. Brenda has been assisting us on a volunteer basis with outreach efforts in order to get more parents to attend our certified programs. She has been doing research, as well, on programs for children of divorcing and separating parents. Brenda is helping to bring us to “the next level.”



Erin K. Hanlon, another second year law student, just started with our Program and will be providing us with some continuity when Brenda returns to her home state of Massachusetts for the summer.

Lawyer/Intern

Andrea Putnam is an attorney, and mother of three, who is a volunteer intern with our office as well. She has been working diligently on finding us outreach opportunities, particularly in the medical arena, which is one of her areas of interest. Her efforts are helping to shape new directions for us.

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