

Children First

Our mission is to respond to the complex needs of abused and neglected children, and those involved in their care, by providing best practice counseling, legal, and educational services. Through research, communications and training initiatives, we work to expand these programs to prevent abuse and help more children heal.



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When Parents Are Desperate: Neighbors Can Mean the Difference Between Life and Death for a Baby

By Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.

Executive Director, The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Three infants in New York City have died in the past few months after being thrown out of windows, allegedly by their mothers. Rizwan died in August, 2015, a newborn baby girl (unnamed) in September 2015, and six-month-old Janilah died in October. For those of us who dedicate our lives to protecting children, it makes you question whether or not we are doing enough to reach parents who are at the end of their rope. Obviously, we are not.

We all must get involved if we think a child is at risk. Back in the 1990s, I was involved in a "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" campaign. Its goal was to encourage citizens in the Bronx to reach out to those who lived nearby if they suspected they were stressed, struggling and in danger of harming their children. By offering support and becoming familiar with available resources, we hoped child abuse and neglect would be prevented. We need to encourage this type of involvement now.

Many adults are still reluctant to report their suspicions when they think a child may be at risk. How many times do we hear on the news, "I knew something was wrong, but I never thought she'd hurt the baby," or, "They are always fighting in that house, but you are afraid to get involved. You don't know if they could turn on you."

So, children are left in danger. I am encouraging you to take action. When a child is brought to the attention of the authorities, the child and the parent(s) can get the help that they need to prevent abuse and strengthen their family. It can mean the difference between life and death for newborns and children under the age of four, when most fatalities occur.

Please learn the basic steps to help a baby or child at risk.

First of all, if you see a child being abused, or hear a child screaming in pain, call 911. If you have suspicions that a child is at risk, every state has a hotline that you can call to make a report. They will ask for your name and number, but you can choose to remain anonymous. Even if you are not certain about all the specifics, make the call. It's then up to the investigators to follow through. The National Child Abuse Hot-line is 1-800-4 A CHILD or 1-800-422-4453.

There are also resources that could help desperate parents: Safe Havens, Crisis Nurseries and Parent Crisis Helplines.

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Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends:

As many of you know, 2015 marks The NYSPCC's 140th Anniversary –that's 140 years of protecting and healing children and families from trauma, abuse and neglect. And with your support and generosity, it was an exemplary year! As of September 30th, The NYSPCC has already served over 4,000 children, parents, caregivers, and professionals.

Notably, The NYSPCC continued to provide the Safe Touches child sexual abuse prevention program to children in kindergarten through the third grade throughout the Bronx public school system. During the 2014-2015 school year, in collaboration with The Horace Mann School, The NYSPCC brought the program to 13 elementary schools, reaching 2,720 children. Two articles about Safe Touches were published in the *American Journal of Public Health* and *The APSAC Advisor*, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children's quarterly news journal. The articles highlighted the results of a National Institutes of Health-funded research study, which showed that children who participated in Safe Touches showed statistically significant gains in knowledge of body safety concepts, as compared to children who did not participate.

The NYSPCC will continue to share our innovative and effective program models with other child welfare advocates, professionals and organizations, helping them to improve programs for vulnerable children nationwide. In fact, The NYSPCC's new strategic plan (2015-2019) includes increasing research efforts to further contribute to the child protection field, and ramping up our advocacy activities through public awareness campaigns and meetings with legislators. I look forward to updating you about our progress.

I also hope to see you in 2016, at one of our upcoming events. Mark your calendars! Our Family Benefit, featuring the Broadway musical, *School of Rock*, will be held on Sunday, February 28, 2016, and our Spring Luncheon at The Pierre Hotel will be on Tuesday, April 12th. To stay informed of these events, and more, please be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and join our e-mail list.

As the holiday season is a time to spread joy and give back, please consider us when making your year-end donations. From all of us at The NYSPCC, we send our deepest gratitude and warmest wishes for a peaceful holiday season.

Warm regards,

Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.
Executive Director



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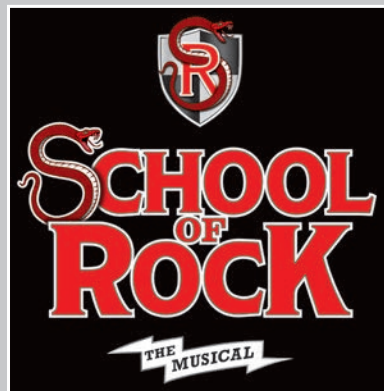
A Warm Welcome To Our Newest Board Member



After five years of serving The NYSPCC as an advocate and supporter, Penny Grant, MD, was elected to the Board of Directors on June 16, 2015. Dr. Grant is a former Pediatrician, who specialized in child abuse at Montefiore Medical Center. As a physician, Dr. Grant focused on addressing the needs of children living in dangerous drug environments, working closely with the National Alliance of Drug Endangered Children. In the early 2000's, Dr. Grant was a powerful voice for children, having extensively published and presented her research on the negative effects of parental drug abuse on children and the steps needed to protect them. In addition to The NYSPCC, she has supported the Association to Benefit Children, The Humane Society of New York, The American Cancer Society, The New York Mission Society, and the French Heritage Society. We are honored that Dr. Grant has designated The NYSPCC as her primary charity.

Holiday Gift Idea!

Join us for our 2016 Family Benefit featuring the new Broadway show



Sunday, February 28, 2016
Pre-Show Lunch Reception: 1:00pm
Matinee Performance: 3:00pm

Event Co-chairs:

Chani Churchill	Tania Higgins
Eliza Dyson	Tatiana Perkin
Peter W. Espy	Whitney Topping

Nelli Voorheis

For more information,
contact 212.920.7341 or
SoigneBySabrina@gmail.com

Limited Tickets Available

APRIL

12

SAVE
THE
DATE

The NYSPCC's
Spring Luncheon

Tuesday, April 12th, 2016
The Pierre Hotel

For reservations and more information:

📞 212.233.5500 ext. 216

✉ info@nyspcc.org

Special Events

Spring Luncheon

On April 21, 2015, The NYSPCC hosted the annual Spring Luncheon at The Pierre Hotel, benefitting the Trauma Recovery Program. The event, co-chaired by Elizabeth Mayhew and Valesca Guerrand-Hermès, featured a conversation with Regina Calcaterra, New York Times best-selling author of *Etched in Sand*. The memoir tells the story of Regina and her four siblings' abusive childhood on Long Island in the shadows of Manhattan and the Hamptons – and her amazing story of survival. A big thanks to the Vice-Chairs, the Board of Directors, and everyone who helped to make the afternoon a wonderful success raising essential funds for the agency.

Photography: Patrick McMullan



Shopping Online This Holiday Season?

Choose The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children at **AmazonSmile**, and support us every time you shop!



The NYSPCC Out and About

Junior Committee Event

On May 6, 2015, The NYSPCC's dedicated Junior Committee hosted its annual Spring Benefit at Tao Downtown. The Benefit featured signature cocktails, delicious food, and a silent auction. The Benefit was an immense success, raising essential funds for The NYSPCC's programs. We are deeply grateful for Alexandra Papanicolaou Shaheen's leadership and the Committee's continued enthusiasm and dedication.

Photography: Annie Watt



Donna Simonelli, Kate Hemphill, Julia Moore



Jennifer Lee, Xanthe Ranger, Bettina Bennett



Tatiana Perkin, Thorne Perkin, Alexandra Papanicolaou Shaheen

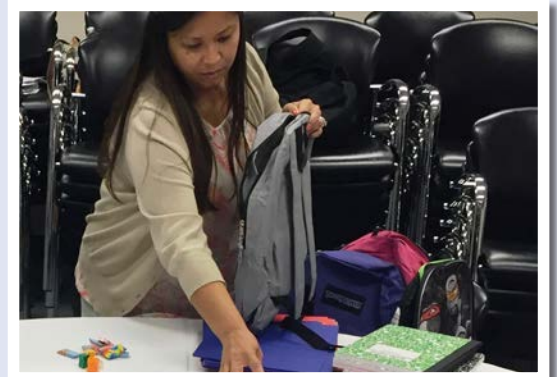
Our dedicated friends and supporters were out in full force this year, helping The NYSPCC to raise funds and awareness!



NYSPCC Board Director, Dr. Penny Grant, hosted a cocktail party and shopping event on August 8th at Space Sixteen in Southampton. A portion of the evening's sales was donated to The NYSPCC.



On Thursday, September 10th, Michele Smith hosted a shopping and cocktail party at the Milly NYC Boutique. Special thanks to Board Director Tatiana Perkin for arranging the event. Co-hosts included Board Directors Valesca Guerrand-Hermès and Elizabeth Mayhew, as well as Kimberly Guilfoyle and Kelly Rutherford.



Thanks to Board Director Peter W. Espy, The NYSPCC was the featured charity for a recent Credit Suisse Blue Jean Friday fundraiser. Company employees generously donated and used the funds raised to purchase backpacks and school supplies for the low-income children The NYSPCC serves. They held a fun backpack-stuffing event on September 18th.

Program Spotlight:

Healing Through Play

The NYSPCC's Trauma Recovery Program provides a safe, supportive and nurturing environment for children, who have experienced abuse and neglect or have witnessed family violence. The Program's therapeutic services are designed to enable children to understand and manage their emotions, learn coping techniques and move forward to lead happy, healthy lives.

With a strong foundation in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, The NYSPCC's clinicians are enhancing the Trauma Recovery Program by incorporating more Play Therapy, which can be very effective in

helping children identify and communicate their emotions, process traumatic events, and develop coping skills. The NYSPCC has been consulting with Eliana Gil, PhD, a well-known play and art therapist. Dr. Gil, a national expert, has worked in the field of child abuse prevention and treatment since 1973. She is supporting the on-going integration of play-based and art-based techniques into our interventions.

Dr. Gil's training and support will enable The NYSPCC's already-experienced clinicians to increase the frequency and quality of the Play Therapy techniques. Children who participate in the Trauma Recovery Pro-



gram will receive more and higher-quality opportunities to engage in Play Therapy activities, such as sand tray therapy, the use of symbols and metaphors to process worries, and the use of other creative strategies to access emotional experiences when language fails.



In Memoriam, Nelson Doubleday

This year, we lost our beloved friend, Nelson Doubleday. A dedicated member of the Board of Directors for over 55 years, Nelson maintained a passionate commitment to the safety and well-being of New York City's children throughout his tenure. He was unanimously elected to the Board in 1960, and became an Honorary Director in 2006. Nelson's compassion, generosity of spirit and five decade commitment to The NYSPCC were an inspiration to us all. We extend our deepest condolences to Sandra and the entire Doubleday family.

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When Parents Are Desperate: Neighbors Can Mean the Difference Between Life and Death for a Baby

Every state in the United States, has a law that allows an unharmed child to be relinquished to the proper authorities, no questions asked. It's called the "Infant Safe Haven Law." It was developed as an incentive for mothers in crisis to safely give up their child to designated locations where the babies are protected. The laws generally allow the parent to remain anonymous and to be shielded from prosecution for abandonment or neglect in exchange for bringing the baby to a safe haven. You can access the laws for each state through the Child Welfare Information Gateway. The locations that are designated Safe Havens vary by state, but they include: fire stations, police stations, hospitals, emergency medical providers and churches. These providers then contact child protective services to let them know the infant has been relinquished.

Crisis Nurseries are another option for parents at their wits' end, or who are in an emergency situation whereby they can't care for their child(ren). These programs were developed to prevent child abuse and neglect. Most offer free 24/7 crisis nursery care for children up to age 12, when parents are over-stressed, need a break, or have an emergency arise. Usually, you can leave a child for up to 72 hours at a time. The staff at these programs work with the parent(s) to develop a safety plan for the children's return to home.

A partial list of crisis nurseries can be found at this link: http://people.wku.edu/darbi.haynes-lawrence/crisis_nursery.htm. The best way to identify programs in your area is to google "crisis nursery" along with the name of your state.

Parent Crisis Helplines can help too. First, they can put the parent in touch with one of the crisis nurseries or explain the Safe Haven law, if it applies. They can also provide a supportive outlet for a stressed out parent to discuss the difficulties that they are having in parenting their children.

In New York, I regularly refer parents to the Prevent Child Abuse New York's Parent Helpline at 1-800-Children, a confidential helpline where parents can get information and referrals to places in their community that can help.

So, we will never know if these services would have helped the parents and babies that I referenced earlier, but they could help others. Part of the problem is that parents, who need these services, don't know about them. There is very little funding available to advertise Safe Haven or Crisis Nursery availability.

Please share this article with parents you know. You may be helping a desperate parent do the right thing when they are under too much stress. You may also be saving a child's life.

Help Us Keep Children Safe!



Safe Touches: Personal Safety Training for Children is a child sexual abuse prevention program that empowers children with the knowledge they need to protect themselves from sexual abuse and to seek help if they ever feel unsafe.

Since 2007, The NYSPCC has been bringing *Safe Touches* to children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, in NYC schools. These children, ages 5-9, are in the highest-risk age group for child sexual abuse—so it is a critical time period to teach them about the privacy of their bodies.

In 2014, The NYSPCC provided *Safe Touches* education to 2,720 children in 13 Bronx public schools, and your support can help us reach even more.

Please consider making a gift at one of the following levels:

- **\$500** provides one classroom with a *Safe Touches* workshop.
- **\$250** provides one *Safe Touches* workshop adapted for parents.
- **\$100** provides 100 children with a free copy of the activity book, *Keeping My Body Safe!*
- **\$ _____** Other amount.

**CLICK TO
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Special Thanks

We are grateful to the following supporters who have made Annual Fund gifts of \$500 or more from March through October 2015, to help support our work with NYC's children:

- Leigh & Carrie Abramson
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Support Our Holiday Toy Drive

The NYSPCC is working to ensure that every child in our programs receives a gift this holiday season.

You can help us bring smiles to each and every one of their beautiful faces. We are seeking gifts for approximately 200 children. The NYSPCC serves boys and girls, ranging from six months to 18 years old. We request new toys for children and gift cards for teens. Please call (212) 233-5500, ext 220 or email info@nyspcc.org to join us in this important effort!

