

Child Abuse & Boundaries Training at GUIDE – June 1, 2004

By Jackie Fummey-McCoy

During the month of May, GUIDE Program provided a company-wide training on boundaries, dual relationships, and child abuse and neglect. Dr. Susan Kleinberg, a former employee of the State of Maryland Governor's Office of Children, Youth and Families, conducted this special mandatory training on May 11th in Baltimore County, May 14th in Montgomery County, and May 25th in Prince George's County. Dr. Kleinberg is currently an independent consultant and has worked with GUIDE on various projects in the past.

The two-hour training consisted of clarification of key issues with regards to child abuse, child neglect, and child sexual abuse; boundaries, dual relationships, personal relationships; and, conflict of interest as it applies to employees of GUIDE. The training also reviewed GUIDE's policies and reporting procedures as well as State laws and their reporting requirements. Participants were able to openly discuss issues and ask questions with regards to boundaries and child abuse and neglect, and share their own professional experiences. At the end of each training employees were asked to complete an evaluation summary. Employees were asked to rate how they felt about GUIDE taking the time to plan and implement such a training, and whether the training was helpful to them in better understanding the laws and regulations as it relates to boundaries and child abuse and neglect issues. Some other questions from the evaluation summary were, did employees find the training helpful to them with regards to their respective jobs, and was the training helpful in providing a better understanding of how to judge potentially difficult situations regarding child



Dr. Susan Kleinberg

abuse/neglect, boundary issues and/or dual relationships as they occur? Participants were also asked to rate how effective they found Dr. Kleinberg in her presentation of the material.

Although it was obvious that the information presented was not totally new to most of the employees at each of the trainings, the open discussions did bring up interesting questions, situations, and possible alternative and solutions on how to handle potential boundaries, and child abuse and neglect issues. Based on the evaluation forms, employees were pleased that GUIDE had conducted this training. A few employees asked if they could expect other trainings similar to the one on boundaries and child abuse in the near future. One employee commented that as a clinician, he/she was already familiar with the laws and regulations however; it was a good review of the topics. Another employee wrote, "I appreciated the trainer's sensitivity to the clinical aspects of the topics discussed".

GUIDE arranged for the videotaping of the final training session, which took place in Prince George's County. The videotape will be used for future orientation and training of new employees as well as periodic review for current employees.

It was felt that GUIDE was successful in providing support to its staff by offering this update on critical and important information necessary for the safety, and well-being of the clients placed in its care. GUIDE also acknowledges Dr. Susan Kleinberg for lending her knowledge and expertise in this effort.