

2012

A Year of Challenge, Struggle, and Progress

The news is mixed for the children of Westchester County.

Westchester's children, youth and families continue to face many challenges and to feel the effects of the weak economy and shrinking public expenditures. The percentage of children living in families below the Federal poverty level (approximately \$22,000 for a family of four) rose to 13.4% from 12% in 2010. Fewer than half of Westchester's high school graduates are adequately prepared for college or career, according to the New York State Department of Education. Since 2009, the share that low-income families must pay for subsidized child care has increased by an astounding 270%.

On the other hand, more than 10,000 Westchester children and teens have obtained affordable public health insurance over the last decade. Teen pregnancies are declining here, as they are throughout the nation. The percentage of high school graduates receiving Regents diplomas has been steadily rising, from 72.2% in 2005/06 to 80% in 2010/11.

Through it all, Westchester Children's Association has used a range of advocacy tools – research, public education, persuasion and mobilization – to make sure that children and youth remain high on the public agenda, and that public policies help all children reach their potential.

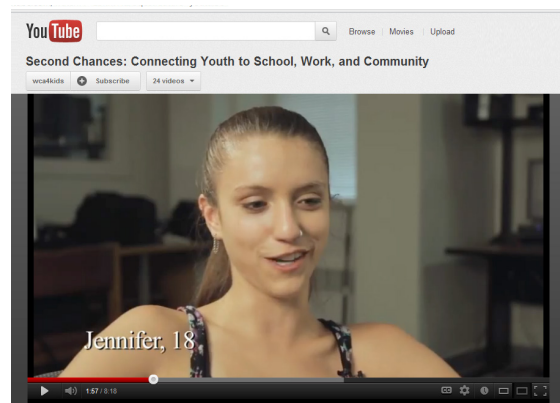
Educating the Public about Children and What They Need

WCA helps policy makers and the public understand how Westchester's children are doing and what they need to flourish.

In March, Dr. Robert Anda spoke at WCA's annual Advocacy Breakfast about the *Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)*, groundbreaking research that demonstrates the high prevalence and long-term health consequences of damaging early experiences in children's lives.



Dr. Robert Anda



WCA's video, *Second Chances: Connecting Youth to School, Work and Community*, debuted in January and was subsequently shown at conferences and forums throughout the year.

The video is part of WCA's ongoing work to examine the causes and remedies of youth disconnection. A report on our findings and

recommendations for action entitled *Dreams Deferred: Reconnecting Youth with School, Work, and Community*, will be released in early 2013.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2012

Annual Report

Westchester Children's Association
470 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite 304
White Plains, NY 10605
914.946.7676 | www.wca4kids.org



A Message

from the President of Westchester Children's Association

Dear Friends of Westchester Children's Association,

It is my privilege to serve as Westchester Children's Association's Board President, and my pleasure to thank you for your generous support of our work. As we approach our centennial in 2014, WCA takes pride in a history rich with accomplishments that have improved the quality of life for many children, made possible by our donors, who enable us all to be children's champions, and to speak up fearlessly on their behalf.

And yet, we recognize that there is more to be done. As the leading voice for the children of Westchester, WCA continues its work to ensure that children's needs are kept in the forefront of the public agenda. As always, we remain committed to our mission – ensuring that every child is healthy, safe and prepared for life's challenges.

Now more than ever, children and youth need strong voices to speak up for their needs and fight for our future. WCA's successful advocacy cannot happen without the dedicated efforts of our energetic and committed staff and board, our Advisory Council, our community partners, and, most importantly, our many philanthropic donors. Your generous and consistent support enables us to be children's champions. We thank you sincerely for your gifts and for helping Westchester Children's Association to remain effective as the voice of Westchester's children.

Sincerely yours,

Catherine Draper, WCA Board President

Financial Profile for 2012

REVENUE

Individual Contributions	\$	198,213
Special Events/Products (Gross Revenue)	\$	97,222
Grants	\$	121,294
Investment Income	\$	274,522
Other Income	\$	16,050
Total Revenue	\$	707,301

EXPENSES

Program Activities	\$	393,395
Management & Administration	\$	65,363
Fundraising*	\$	193,517
Total Expenses	\$	652,275

Note: A copy of the complete audited financial statement is available from WCA upon request, or from the New York State Attorney General, Office of Charities Registration, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

*includes \$39,094 of event/product expenses and \$ 28,900 for costs of the Centennial Campaign.

Speaking Up for Children and Youth

WCA mobilizes adult and youth advocates to raise issues and demand action for kids.

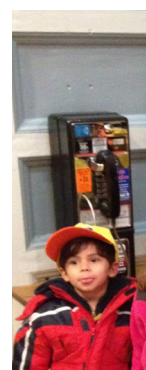
With Child Care Council and other partners, WCA held a **Legislative Breakfast about young children**. Approximately 150 people came to hear State and County legislators respond to questions posed by young people. WCA presented our 2012 local and state advocacy agenda and issued a *Fact Sheet on Our Youngest Citizens* to provide background information to the legislators.



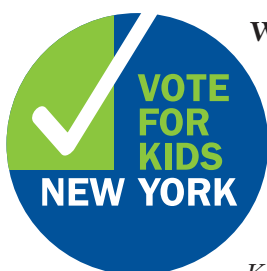
County Legislator Michael Smith receives materials from Cora Greenberg at the 2012 Legislative Breakfast.



Participants in the Mayors and Supervisors Challenge at Speak Out for Youth.



Advocating at a youth event.



WCA launched *Vote for Kids NY* with partner child advocacy organizations in Albany and Rochester, aimed at educating candidates and voters about children's issues in the State legislative elections. We conducted and publicized a candidate survey. We launched a *Vote for Kids NY* Facebook page and Twitter handle with information about issues, candidates and

voting, and provided fact sheets to candidates and the public about key children's issues in the State. The Facebook page reached over 28,000 people and we attracted over 50 followers on Twitter.

Locally, WCA promoted voter education, registration and engagement at events in Yonkers, Greenburgh and

Port Chester with our partners African American Men of Westchester, the NAACP, and other civic organizations.

At *Speak Out for Youth* in October, about 130 young people and their adult allies discussed and debated pressing youth issues and developed a platform of suggested actions to address them. Youth voted for their priorities in real time with facilitation from PACE University Center for Community Action and Research. The resulting report was shared with elected officials and community leaders throughout the County and helped shape WCA's advocacy agenda for 2013.

WCA launched the *Westchester Mayors' and Supervisors' Challenge*. Inspired by an initiative of the National League of Cities, the Challenge asks local officials to make their communities more nurturing places for children and youth. Before the end of 2012, nine communities had joined the challenge: White Plains, Yonkers, Mt. Vernon, New Rochelle, Peekskill, Cortlandt, Greenburgh, Lewisboro and Harrison. The challenge was endorsed by the Westchester Municipal Officials Association, and WCA is actively pursuing more commitments.

Building Partnerships to Solve Problems and Help Kids Thrive

WCA brings together public and private organizations in coalitions that work to solve problems and help kids thrive. Here are some examples:

The 18-member *Westchester Home Visiting Workgroup* is dedicated to improving and expanding early childhood home visiting in the County. Home visiting, in which trained staff support, educate and assist young, new, or at risk parents, has been shown to dramatically improve

Reaching New Advocates

27

PRESS
HITS

Up from 16 in 2011
(+68%)

1,374

TWITTER
FOLLOWERS

Up from 1,023 in
2011 (+34%)

184

FACEBOOK
FANS

Up from 129 in
2011 (+42%)

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2012 SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN INCLUDE...

Monthly infographics posted on Facebook and Twitter.

Publishing "heat maps"—shaded maps that show differences between communities.



Young age for affordable child care.



The photo booth at Speak Out for Youth.



Youth advocate testifies at County Budget Hearing.

the lives of children and families. In 2012, based in part on data and workgroup findings provided by WCA, Westchester was identified by New York State as a high priority area to receive funding to expand early childhood home visiting programs. Because the Workgroup had already built a strong foundation of collaboration and trust, members were able to agree to endorse a single application for expansion funding, thus greatly increasing the probability that more Westchester families will receive services in 2013.

The Connecting Youth Workgroup comprises representatives of a dozen government departments and non-profit organizations working to improve outcomes for young people, ages 16 to 24, who are disconnected from school, work, family and/or community.

Members regularly collaborate to share information and develop cross-system responses to help reconnect this vulnerable group of young people.

On May 15th, WCA convened 30 members of the *Child Health Advocacy Network* to meet Dr. Sherlita Amler, the new Westchester County Health Commissioner, and to learn about how New York State was gearing up to implement the Affordable Care Act.

Since 1991, WCA has led the *Campaign for Kids*, a broad coalition focused on promoting positive youth development. This year, the Campaign initiated a dialogue with the County Youth Bureau to develop a more inclusive, transparent and effective process to assess youth needs and target limited resources.

New Faces for 2012



Top: Program and Administrative Assistant Sarab Yergeau (left) and Intern Christine Hugb. Bottom: Summer interns Christina Herrero (left) and Bianca Herlitz-Ferguson.

At the 2012 Advocacy Dinner...



Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett presents proclamation to honoree Peter Herrero at 2012 Advocacy Dinner.



WCA Board member Jody Greenbaum, Executive Director Cora Greenberg, honoree Peter Herrero, Board Chair Janet Gutterman, Westchester Community College President Joseph Hankin.



Mrs. Kathryn W. Davis and Maris Krasnow, Chair of the WCA Centennial Campaign.

The Westchester Children's Association gratefully acknowledges all our supporters.

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