

Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Work Group

Presenter: James Bulot, PhD, Director, DAS

Presentation to: Department of Human Services Board Meeting

Date: December 12, 2012



DHS Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision

Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia.

Mission

Strengthen Georgia by providing Individuals and Families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia's vulnerable children and adults.

Core Values

- **Provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families.**
- **Deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect. Manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency.**
- **Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.**
- **Develop our employees at all levels of the agency.**

Division of Aging Services

Vision

Living Longer, Living Safely, Living Well

Mission

The Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services supports the larger goals of DHS by assisting older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives.

Core Values

- **A Strong Customer Focus:** We are driven by customer – not organizational – need. Our decisions involve our customers and include choice.
- **Accountability and Results:** We are good stewards of the trust and resources that have been placed with us. We base our decisions on data analysis and strive for quality improvement.
- **A Proactive Approach:** We anticipate the needs of our customers and advocate on their behalf.
- **Dignity:** We respect the rights and self worth of all people.
- **Empowerment:** We believe in self-determination for our customers. We support the right of our customers and workforce to make choices and assume responsibility for their decisions.

Development of the Work Group

- Division of Aging Services has historically had contact with the GBI where it intersected with LE requesting GBI assistance on Elder Abuse Cases.
- In 2010, DAS in coordination with LE agencies began developing what became known as ACT (At-Risk-Adults Crime Tactics) Certification.

Development of the Work Group

- ACT Curriculum was developed in coordination with:
 - GA Public Safety Training Center
 - GA Peace Officer Standards and Training Council
 - **GA Bureau of Investigation**
 - Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia
 - Institute for Continuing Judicial Education of Georgia
 - GA Administrative Offices of the Courts
 - GA Sheriffs' Association
 - GA Association of Chiefs of Police

Development of the Work Group

- October 2011, GBI staff attended Act training in Kingsland, GA
- November, 2011, ACT Class was held at GBI Training Center (largest class to date)
 - Prosecution, Law Enforcement, DCH Healthcare Facility Regulation Division, Resident Advocates, Adult Protective Services, and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Development of the Work Group

- November, 2011 – Police arrested a caretaker for abandoning four disabled people in a vacant Barrow County Home – DAS arranged protective services for residents
 - Barrow County Sheriff Jud Smith thinks his investigators have only scratched the surface of what appears to be a network of unlicensed group homes for the mentally disabled. WSBTV, Nov 16, 2011
- DAS Forensics Special Investigations Unit (FSIU) provided technical assistance to GBI in Newton County Investigation of Personal Care Home. DAS arranged for protective services for residents

Development of the Work Group

- February, 2012
 - State Representative Cooper Sponsored HB 1110
 - HB 1110 Health; penalties relative to owning or operating of unlicensed personal care homes; revise provisions
 - Also authorizes GBI to investigate cases of elder abuse, which Representative Cooper said is rampant in Georgia.
 - Signed into law April 19, 2012
 - Effective July 1, 2012

Development of the Work Group

- March, 2012
 - GBI Indicated it was interested in having Agents Act Certified
 - FBI requested information from DAS on At-Risk Adult abuse in Georgia, as a result, released nationally a “Situational Information Report” Activity Alert
 - “FBI Atlanta is releasing this Situational Information Report (SIR) to alert law enforcement and private sector partners to an upsurge in cases involving the abuse and exploitation of At-risk adults (adults over 65 and disabled adults over 18).”

Development of the Work Group

- March, 2012
 - Initial meeting with GBI Director Keenan and DAS FSIU regarding unlicensed PCH and Human Trafficking as it might relate to HB 1110.
 - Gwinnett County Police Officer (who received ACT Certification) requested a strategy meeting with DAS Forensics Special Investigation Unit regarding a pending arrest of prolific unlicensed home operator in Gwinnett
 - DAS, Det. Flanagan (Gwinnett PD), Jeanne Canavan (DeKalb Deputy Chief ADA), Tom Caul (SSA OIG) and staff from from DBHDD and DCH, met with Director Keenan and others about unlicensed facilities/hybrid human trafficking.

GBI Director Keenan

- May 2012
 - Director Keenan briefed Governor's staff about At Risk Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
 - GBI indicated that all involved LE Agencies, State and Federal Departments will need to work collectively to find the best approach to:
 - “Seek them out” (bad guys)
 - “Rescue them” (victims)
 - Requested initial work group meeting

Goal of Work Group

- Coordinate activities
- Make recommendations
- Identify obstacles
- Create initiatives
- Evaluate legislation
- Network

Works Group to Membership Today

Federal Agencies

- Inspector General - USDA
- Inspector General - SSA
- Inspector General - HHS
- FBI
- US Attorney - Northern GA
- Inspector General - VA
- US HHS - Administration for Community Living

State Agencies

- GA Advocacy Office
- Prosecuting Attorneys Council of Georgia
- DHS/DAS
- GNESEA - GA Network to End Sexual Assault
- GBI
- GA Chiefs of Police
- Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs

Works Group to Membership Today

State Agencies

- Governor's Office of Children and Families
- Governor's Office of Disability Services Ombudsman
- GA Administrative Office of the Courts
- DBHDD
- DCH
- GA Commission on Family Violence
- Governor's Office
- GA Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council
- GA Sheriff's Association
- GA Institute for Continuing Judicial Education
- Medicaid Fraud Control Unit
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- DPH
- OIG/DHS
- OIG/DCH

Works Group to Membership Today

Local Agencies

- DeKalb PD
- DeKalb Fire/Rescue
- Gwinnett PD
- DeKalb District Attorney
- Atlanta Legal Aid
- LaGrange PD
- Cobb County DA

Obstacles identified

- Emergency shelter for at-risk adult victims
- Training
- Preservation of victim's testimony
- Agency policies restricting data sharing
- Background checks personal care home owners
- Current GA law requiring mandated reporters to report to non-emergency responders
- Frequent moving of clients (unlicensed facilities)

Outcome of Works Group to Date

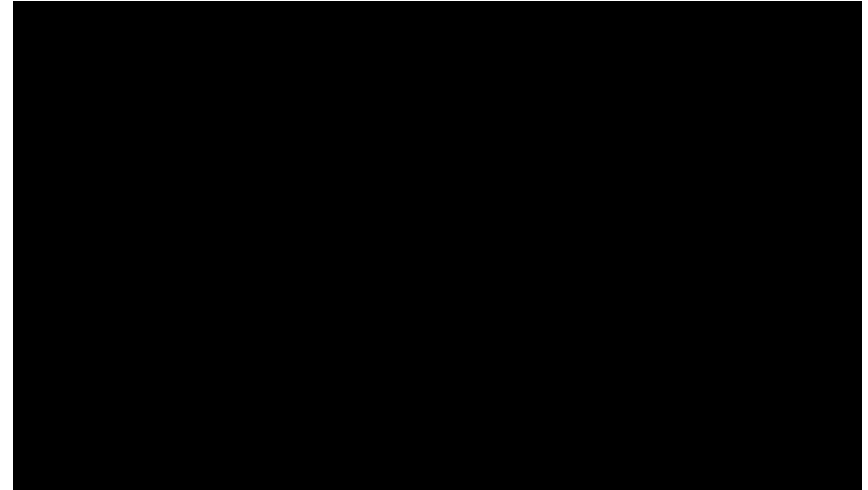
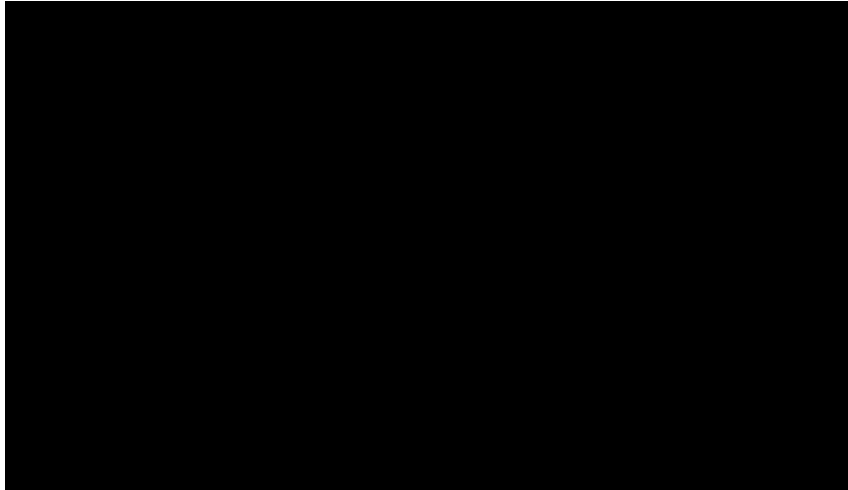
- Regular meetings of the Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation (ANE) Working Group coordinated through the GBI
- Strike Force Coordination on PCH raids across agencies
- Local, State and Federal Agencies consistently communicating on ANE
- Obstacles to coordination and prosecution of crimes identified
- Networking

Outcome of Works Group to Date

- Other ongoing initiatives:
 - Roll Call Video production
 - Law Enforcement Protocol development
 - Prosecutor's Manual Update
 - Data sharing processes between agencies and LE
 - Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police White Paper on ANE

Outcome of Works Group to Date

**Public Service Announcements with Governor Nathan Deal,
Director Vernon, DeKalb District Attorney Robert James and other
work group members**



ANE Working Group in Action

