

**Remarks by Jerry Mogul
Executive Director
Massachusetts Advocates for Children**

Thank you, Superintendent Martes for hosting this event, but more important, for taking a lead role in the state by adapting the information in *Helping Traumatized Children Learn* to your whole district, so that all of Framingham schools will be sensitive to the needs of traumatized students.

The impact of trauma on children in our schools is an issue whose time has come. As we strive to educate every child – for as you know, a high school degree is a bare minimum prerequisite for future success in this global economy – we have to pay attention to those who are at greatest risk of being left behind.

We have learned from trauma experts, and confirmed by educators, that trauma caused by exposure to violence, particularly in their own homes, is a major contributor to their inability to succeed in school – academically, emotionally or socially.

The good news is that we now have the tools – from the sciences of neurobiology and psychology, and from the pedagogy of the classroom – to both see the problem with a new clarity and to help these children succeed by developing school-wide frameworks and specific educational techniques. This is the substance of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*.

MAC is very proud to be in the forefront of this issue. It has been our tradition for over 35 years to uncover and take action against major societal problems that act as barriers to the well-being and success of children: for example, discrimination against children with disabilities, lead poisoning, and hunger. *Helping Traumatized Children Learn* fits squarely in that tradition.

This report has been seven years in the making- but not just for the painstaking research and writing of it – more so for building the momentum and constituency for change that is evident in this room. The power of this work lies in the presence of both classroom teachers and educational and legislative leaders, who each from their own perspective, can attest to the promise of this approach.

On behalf of MAC, I'd like to thank you for standing with us as partners on this issue. We look forward to working with you at both levels- refining and disseminating how to be successful in the classroom, and shaping the policy agenda that has been set out in this report.

Now I know that the reason we are all here today is to hear about the report and from the panelists, but please bear with me, because I have an important job to do, and that is to thank people. Before I introduce our next speaker, Susan Cole, I am very pleased and honored to recognize and thank the funders of this project and this report who are in this room. Without them, we would not be standing here today.

- Lonnie Powers – Mass. Legal Assistance Corp.
- Tom Coury – Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation
- Adelisa Gonzalez – Mellon New England's Charitable Giving Program
- Beth Lynch – Massachusetts Bar Foundation

And MAC is proud to be an affiliate of the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, who is represented here today by Lisa Pickard.

The Mass. Advocates for Children board of directors have been a steadfast supporter of this project and are represented here today by Ron Eskin, its co-chair.

I would also like to recognize and thank those who are supporting this report and are here today:

- David Driscoll, Massachusetts Commissioner of Education
- Tom Scott, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Superintendents Association
- Glen Koocher, Executive Director of the Massachusetts School Committee Association
- Carla Jentz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education
- Marilee Kenney Hunt, Executive Director of the Governor's Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence

Finally, I would like to thank MAC's partner in the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, Harvard Law School's Hale and Dorr Legal Services Center, represented here today by Cheryl Burg Rusk, its associate director.

Now, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Susan Cole. Susan is an attorney and an educator. She is a senior project director at MAC, a clinical instructor at the Harvard Legal Services Center, the director of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, and the lead author of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*. She has been the heart and soul of this project since its inception, seven years ago. Please welcome Susan Cole.