



**GEORGIA ALLIANCE**  
FOR DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

Rescue. Defend. Shelter. Support.



# What is DEC?

- A national, statewide and local movement.
- A term used to describe a subset of our nation's abused and neglected children.

[www.nationaldec.org](http://www.nationaldec.org)





## What is a Drug Endangered Child?

- **Both children who are exposed to potential harm and children who suffer actual harm from the manufacture, distribution, sale and use of alcohol and drugs to be drug endangered children. This includes both children who are endangered by the actions of others and children who are endangered through their own actions.**
- **Not exclusive to methamphetamine.**



# Impact of Parental Substance Abuse

## **Children of Drug Abusing Parents Are:**

- **3x more likely to be victims of physical or sexual abuse**
- **4x more likely to be neglected**
- **More likely to be in foster care & to stay there longer**



## National Center on Addiction & Substance Abuse (CASA)

- Substance abuse is a factor in 70% of child abuse cases
- Nearly 25% of U.S. children live in home with parent who is binge/heavy drinker
- 13% of U.S. children live in home where parent/other adult uses illicit drugs



## Translating CASA Estimates Into

- Georgia's 2.4 million children ...
  - 600,000 endangered by alcohol
  - 300,000 endangered by drugs



# DJJ Critical Review of Needs Assessment Findings

**Youth Reporting A  
History of Addictive  
Behavior/Drug  
Problems**

**36%**

**Youth Reporting  
Having An Alcoholic  
or Drug Addicted  
Parent or Sibling**

**99.8%**

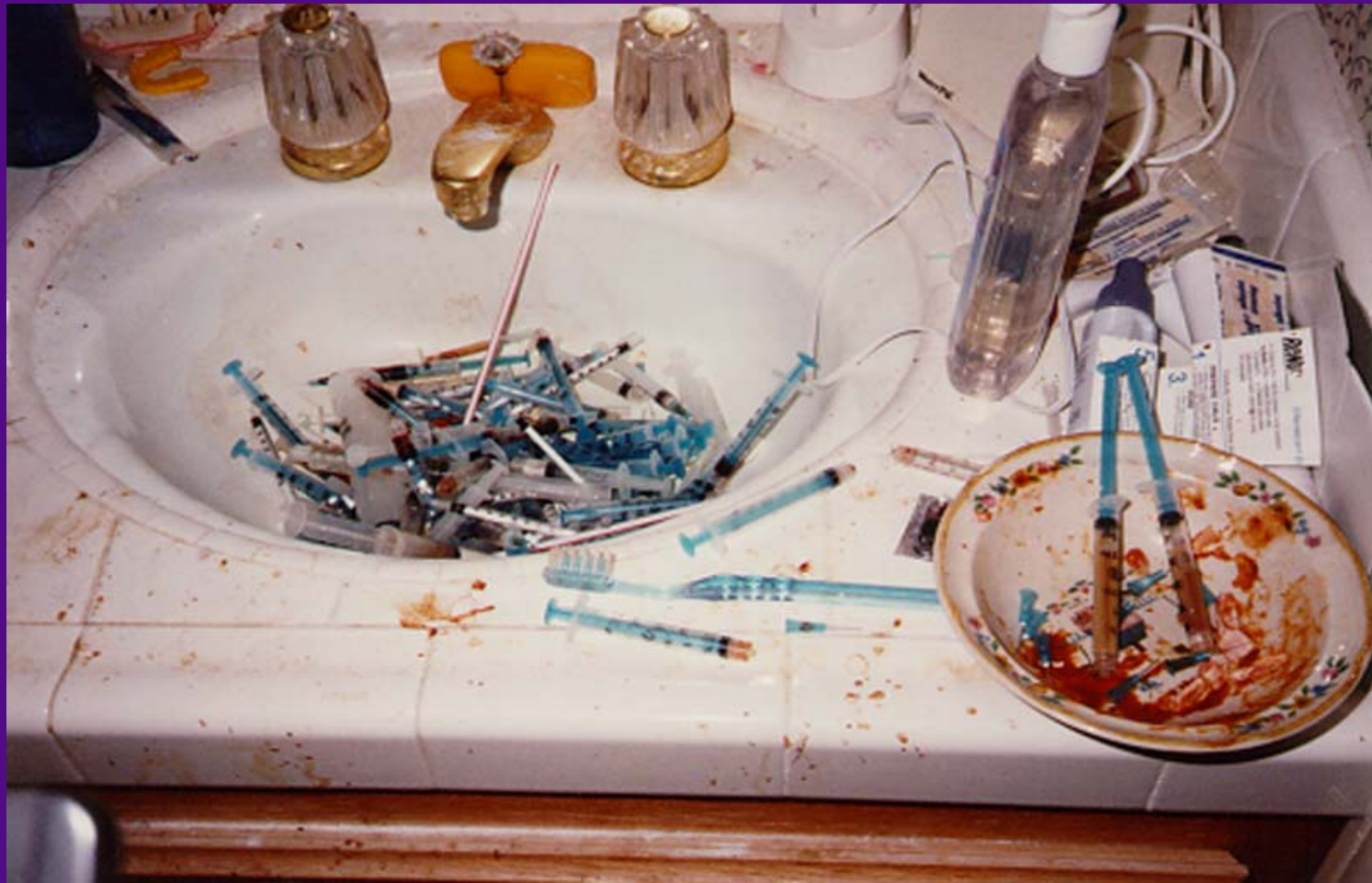
# Ways Children are Endangered

- Lack of nurturing and emotional response
  - Developmental delays
  - Depression
  - Attachment disorders
  - Malnutrition and failure to thrive
- Failure to protect
  - Trading children for drugs
  - Emotional abuse
  - Exposure to drugs, dangerous people
  - Sexual abuse
  - Physical abuse
  - Disconnected smoke detectors, standing water, etc.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



# Risk Factors



# Early Identification is Valuable



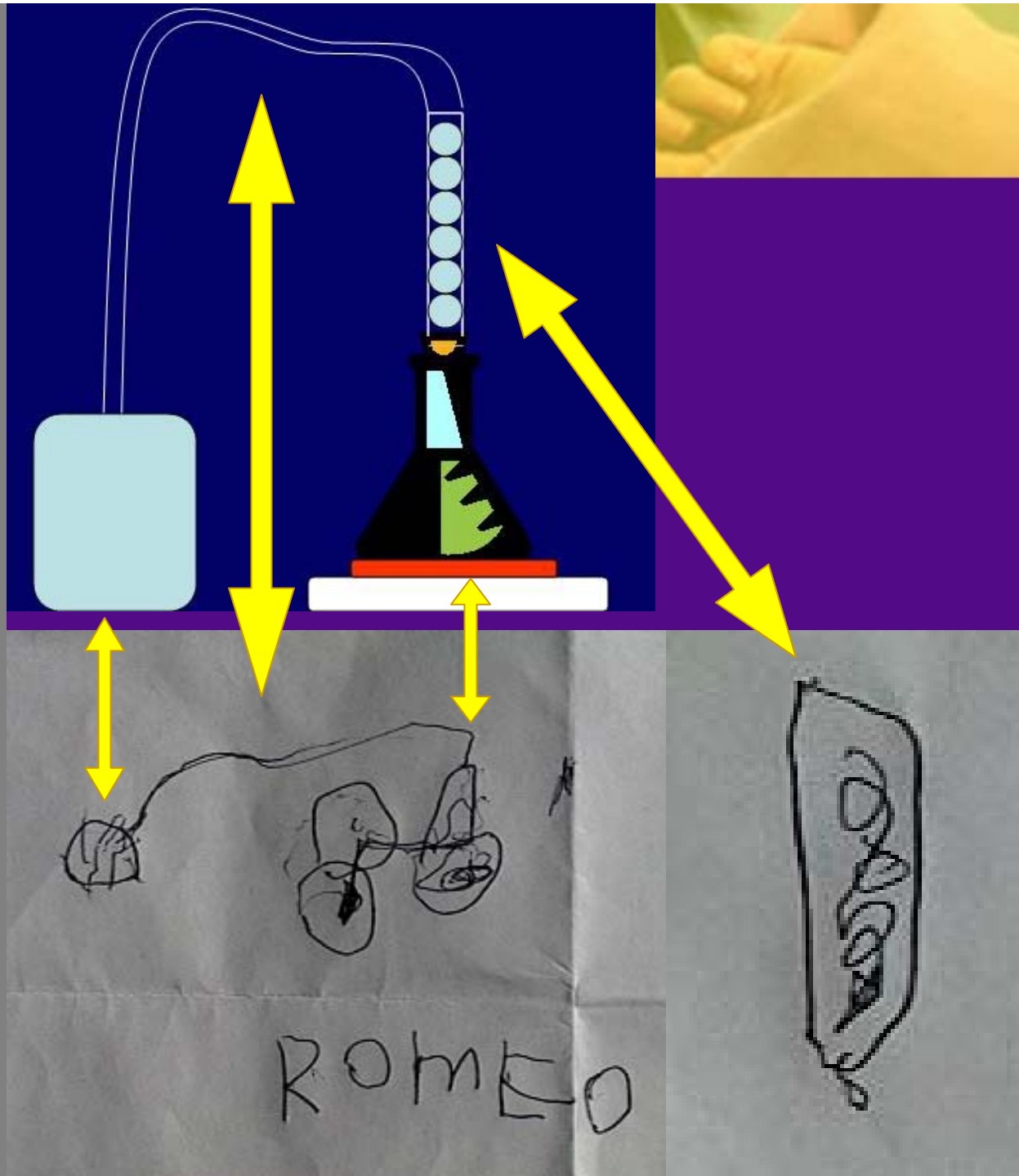
Is this response normal?



# THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD...

A four year old child draws pictures of the meth lab in his parents' home.

October 23, 2002





# What You Ask:

If I were

President

I would get

a limo

# What they may tell you:

And help children  
that have parents that  
do drugs and put them  
in jail and find them  
some new parents.

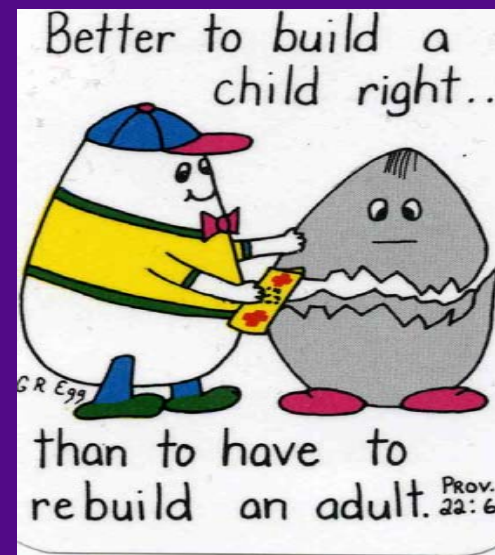


## Characteristic Concerns Children

- Children feel responsible for parent's substance use/problem.
- Children equate substance use with not being loved.
- Children feel angry with non-using parent.
- Children fear the substance using parent will get hurt or die.
- Children are embarrassed by the parent's behavior.
- Children never know what to expect.
- Children sometimes want their parents to use.

# Prevention through Protection

- Early identification.
- Placement in a safe environment.
- Developmental testing and follow-up care.
- Comprehensive health and mental health services.



# A Role for Professionals

- Schedule DEC trainings at work
- Participate in local DEC efforts
- Discuss puzzling cases with other professionals





# Timeline

- Year one – review 4 DEC cases and develop recommendations and action plan
- Year two – implement action plan to include Response teams and Education teams
- Year three – continue action plan
- Year four – continue action plan and review 4 DEC cases (evaluation process)

# Outcomes of DEC may include:

- Physical and emotional protection of children.
- Breaking the cycle of child abuse.
- Protection of exposed child's health.
- Establishment of community protocol through cooperation, sharing of information, and case coordination.
- Restoration of family

[www.georgiadec.org](http://www.georgiadec.org)





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