

Speaker Bios

Sharwline Nicholson

Sharwline Nicholson is a domestic violence survivor who experienced the worst of the child welfare system. She is the named plaintiff in the case *Nicholson v Williams*. In this case, a judge decided that the practice of removing children of battered women from their custody was a violation of the fourth and fourteenth amendments rights. A woman is entitled by law their due process.

Ms. Nicholson has not only worked to overcome her own adversities, but also has exemplifies the need for those who are directly affected by policy to play a role in shaping it. This accomplishment in improving the child welfare system is beneficial to countless mothers in NYC and across the country. She has put a human face to the issue. She now serves as a spokesperson and advocate, drawing on her experiences to help other victims of domestic violence find hope, inspiration, and guidance. Sharwline epitomizes strength, courage and determination.

Sharwline Nicholson is one of the first recipients of the Susan Schechter Fellowship. The fellowship was created through the Family Violence Prevention Fund. The fellowships was created to honor the rich history of dedication, ingenuity and compassion that are the hallmarks of the movement to end violence against women and children

Jeffrey L. Edleson

Jeffrey L. Edleson is a Professor in the University of Minnesota School of Social Work and Director of the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse (www.mincava.umn.edu). He is one of the world's leading authorities on children exposed to domestic violence and has published over 100 articles and eight books on domestic violence, groupwork, and program evaluation. Prof. Edleson is the co-author with the late Susan Schechter of *Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice* (1999, co-authored with Susan Schechter, NCJFCJ). Better known as the “*Greenbook*”, this best-practice guide has been the subject of six federally-funded and numerous other demonstration sites across the country. Prof. Edleson has also conducted intervention research and provided technical assistance to domestic violence programs and research projects across North America as well as in several other countries including Germany, Israel, Cyprus, India, Australia, Korea and Singapore.

He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences' Panel on Research on Violence Against Women. He is a consultant to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court

Judge and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prof. Edleson is an Associate Editor of the journal *Violence Against Women* and has served on numerous editorial boards. He is Co-Editor of the Oxford University Press book series on Interpersonal Violence and the Sage book series on Violence Against Women.

Prof. Edleson is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and received his Masters and Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in Minnesota and has practiced in elementary and secondary schools and in several domestic violence agencies worldwide.

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Ruth E. Houtte

Ruth E. Houtte was the Project Director for the Grafton County New Hampshire Greenbook Project. Ms. Houtte has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work and a Master's Degree in Education from Northeastern University. She has 17 years experience with the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, having begun as a protective social worker, then working for the Family Life Center and Project SAFE, specializing in working with families troubled by substance abuse and domestic violence. In 1996 she became a supervisor in the Lowell Area Office. Two years later she founded the second case management unit in DSS to focus on co-occurrence cases involving domestic violence and child abuse/neglect. This included the development and facilitation of a specialized domestic violence multi-disciplinary team. She left that position in March of 2004 to assume new responsibilities with the Greenbook Project. Greenbook was a collaborative project with the family court, child protection and domestic violence programs in New Hampshire – one of 6 demonstration sites in the country. It was funded by the federal government to improve systems' responses to families affected by domestic violence and child abuse/neglect. She is currently the District Director for the Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.