

**Keeping
Children Safe
is Everyone's
Business!**

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

APRIL

2010

PCA Iowa is interested in hearing about YOUR Child Abuse Prevention Month activities!

E-mail Rhonda Boltz at rboltz@pcaiowa.org

Or call

1-800-CHILDREN



**Prevent Child Abuse
Iowa**

Check Off

As you are planning April's CAP activities, don't forget to mention that everyone can help prevent child abuse and neglect by donating a portion of their Iowa income tax return to the Iowa Child Abuse Prevention Program. Donations will be used to strengthen child abuse prevention programs throughout the state.



Check Off Child Abuse

Talking About Prevention

When you hear the words "child abuse and neglect" does your mind bring up images of a child covered in a corner, covered with bruises and tears? If so, you're not alone. Media reports tend to focus on the most extreme, high-profile cases, leading to a skewed perception of reality. Such reports often lead to a discussion focused on punishment for the perpetrators rather than the factors that led to the abuse or how it could have been prevented in the first place. Given the negative messages that we consistently receive, it's not surprising that many people feel helpless when it comes to preventing child abuse.

As prevention advocates, the challenge that lies before us is educating our communities that the true picture of child abuse and neglect is much different than what we see in the media. Child abuse and neglect does not just happen to the poor and uneducated; it can happen to anyone, in any socio-economic class, and in any community. Child abuse and neglect is not always intentional; sometimes good parents make bad choices out of anger, frustration, and despair. Child abuse and neglect is completely preventable; success for ANY parent requires a combination of awareness, education, and support.

As you work to engage the community in child abuse prevention efforts, remember to point out the impact that toxic stress can have on a child's developing brain, including increased likelihood of criminal involvement, poor health, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Remind your audience that Iowa's future depends upon the safety and well-being of our children. Working together to ensure positive experiences for children is a wise investment in our state and in our future. For more tools on reframing the message of child abuse prevention, visit <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/canp/index.html>.

• Protective Factors •

Although prevention activities should address risk factors for child abuse (such as poverty, mental illness, and substance abuse), they should also focus on increasing protective factors. Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that help parents cope with the daily stresses of parenting. Research has shown that

the following protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- **Nurturing and Attachment** A strong, emotional bond between a parent and child
- **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development** Parents have reasonable and appropriate expectations for their child's behavior

- **Parental Resilience** Parents have the ability to handle everyday stress and recover from occasional crises
- **Social Connections** Parents receive emotional support from family and friends
- **Concrete Supports for Families** Basic resources such as food, clothing, housing, and transportation are available and accessible

Contact Us

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**KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IS
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Pinwheels for Prevention

Prevent Child Abuse America has introduced the pinwheel as the symbol for child abuse and neglect prevention nationwide. The pinwheel represents efforts to change the way we think about prevention, focusing on community activities and public policies that prioritize prevention right from the start to make sure child abuse and neglect never occur. Prevent Child Abuse Iowa encourages ICAPP Councils, CPPC sites, and other organizations who care about the well-being of Iowa's children to participate in this national campaign. Pinwheels can be used in a variety of ways, but should NOT be used to represent fatalities or numbers of abused children. The message we want to take to the public is that promoting positive childhood experiences will lead to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Sample Pinwheel Activities:

- "Plant" pinwheels in flower pots and give away to local businesses
- Collaborate with local elementary schools to sponsor a pinwheel coloring contest
- Plant a pinwheel garden
- Create pinwheel bouquets and sell as a local fundraiser
- Create a "pinwheel float" and enter in local parades
- Have a pinwheel-themed picnic

Learn More.
Lend Your Voice.
Volunteer.
Donate.

Join us in preventing the abuse
and neglect of our nation's children.

Pinwheels
for PREVENTION



Local CAP Activities

Child Abuse Prevention Councils and CPPC sites engage in a wide variety of CAP activities in April and throughout the year. Here are some local examples you may want to consider:

- Submit a letter to the Editor of your local newspaper
- Sponsor a Family Fun Day
- Ask city or county leadership to proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Organize a "March for Children" event
- Distribute parenting information through public libraries
- Sponsor a free movie night or other family event
- Ask banks and other local businesses to display information about CAP month on electronic signs
- Send flyers to faith-based organizations for placement in bulletins or newsletters
- Organize an "Appreciation Luncheon" for people who work to keep children safe
- Sponsor a "make your own pinwheel" activity during a children's event
- Engage a local celebrity to be a spokesperson
- Ask local restaurants to donate a small percentage of profits on a designated day
- Ask businesses to paint storefront windows



Additional Resources

Prevent Child Abuse America

www.preventchildabuse.org

Pinwheels for Prevention

www.pinwheelsforprevention.org

Reframing Toolkit

www.preventchildabuse.org/canp/index.html

Community Partnerships

www.dhs.state.ia.us/cppc/what_cppc/index.html

Child Welfare Information Gateway

www.childwelfare.gov

FRIENDS National Resource Center

www.friendsnrc.org