



Child Abuse is Preventable Everyone Can Help

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Since 1983, April has been designated National Child Abuse Prevention Month and the blue ribbon serves as the symbol of awareness and hope. Together, Coloradoans can prevent child abuse and neglect by getting involved. Each of us can make a difference!

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of child abuse and neglect is prevalent across the nation.

- Nearly 1 million children are victims of abuse or neglect each year in the United States - nearly 9,000 in Colorado alone.
- Children who have been abused are more likely to become adults with other problems such as learning difficulties, substance abuse and incarceration. They may also abuse their own children.
- Costs to society can include services for treatment at hospitals, mental health facilities, psychiatric hospitals and juvenile delinquency detention centers.
- The direct costs to society for the damage resulting from child abuse and neglect has been estimated at \$24 billion per year.
- Approximately 80% of all child abuse is perpetrated by parents or caregivers.

POWER OF PREVENTION

Prevention efforts are growing stronger across our state.

- Prevention is much more than reporting abuse to authorities - it is support, education, friendship, kindness, empathy, advocacy and involvement
- Early intervention is working, in Colorado, to help prevent the abusive cycle. Services such as counseling, medical and mental health support, training programs, and advocacy through the court system are saving millions of dollars in costs to society and Colorado taxpayers.
- Over 30,000 children and families in Colorado were served by member organizations of Colorado's Child Abuse Prevention Coalition in 2005.
- On average, there are 7,758 children per month being helped in out-of-home placement settings in Colorado.
- Knowledge and training in child development is dramatically improving parents' abilities to safely respond to their children's needs.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can play a role in your home, neighborhood, or community.

- **SUPPORT** children & parents in your neighborhood by getting to know your neighbors, welcoming new neighbors to community activities, offering to baby-sit, being kind & supportive of new parents, encouraging a parent to take a class or call for help, or becoming familiar with local community support.
- **ACT** by encouraging your local school district or faith community to sponsor classes & support programs for new parents, talking to others in the community about what needs to be & can be done, calling your local elected officials to help educate them about community needs & programs that support healthy, safe children & families.
- **LEARN** to recognize possible signs of abuse:
 - Injuries that are frequent or cannot be explained
 - Aggression towards adults, other children, or animals
 - Dirty appearance, inadequate clothing, malnourished, or poor medical care
 - Statements demonstrating unusual or inappropriate sexual knowledge
 - Nervousness around adults or fear of going home
 - Withdrawn behavior or changes in behavior
- **VOLUNTEER** at one of many organizations, across the state, which addresses child abuse & neglect.

YOU CAN LEARN EVEN MORE

Whether you are a parent or caregiver, friend, family or neighbor, teacher or other professional, these Child Abuse Resources can help you make a difference in a child's life!

- For links to child serving agencies and prevention resources, statewide, on the web: www.kempe.org/capm
- For 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Support, Information, & Referrals: Family Support Line: 1-877-695-7996 or in Spanish: 1-866-Las-Familias or www.familiesfirstcolorado.org
- For Human Services information & referral to other resources: Dial 211 for the United Way Helpline
- For a list of County Departments of Human Services, refer to: http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/edo/org/hs_counties.html

Safe Children & Healthy Families are a Shared Responsibility!

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Colorado Department of Human Services, American Humane Association, Colorado Association of Family & Children's Agencies (CAFCA, Inc.), and other member organizations of The Colorado Child Abuse Prevention Coalition.