

# Ways the Faith Community Can Help Prevent Child Abuse

Child abuse prevention, at its most basic level, is about strengthening the capacity of parents and societies to care for their children's health and well-being.

Preventing child abuse is the work of everyone, every day. Faith-based groups play an important role in reaching out to all families.

Faith communities consist of/are comprised of many natural teachers and community leaders who can support a culture to help build strong families through early education and solid support systems.

We all have faith of some kind and can put that faith into action. Below are actions your faith community can take to help prevent child abuse:



- Make your place of worship a safe (and confidential) haven in which to share problems, challenges and emotional pain. Build a culture of caring.
- Learn about child abuse and ways to prevent it. Know the contributing factors and behaviors in adults and children at risk to abuse, as well as warning signs in children who are vulnerable for abuse.
- Implement written child protection policies and make this information public for all faith-based members.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers who work with children are properly trained to recognize, report and prevent child abuse.
- Support member parents by providing parenting and prevention resources, assigning mentors to young parents, hosting a workshop or coordinating a support network for parents.
- Advocate for children at the local, state and national levels. Raise awareness about issues affecting children and families, and know your legislators' names.
- Support mentoring programs to foster resilience in children and make sure children have trusted adults in which to confide.
- Volunteer at your place of worship or with local organizations that support families and children in need.
- Share Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia's HELPLINE number – 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) – as a source of support and access to community resources.

For more information about what your faith community can do to prevent child abuse and neglect, call 1-800-CHILDREN or go to [www.pcageorgia.org](http://www.pcageorgia.org).