



APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Throughout April, communities in Georgia and all over the U.S. will participate in activities to raise awareness for child abuse prevention. Of course, preventing child abuse is important year-round; however April's focus provides opportunities for renewed commitment to valuing children and strengthening families.

Preventing child abuse requires all of us to work together to **reduce the risks** that threaten the health and safety of children by **increasing the protective factors** that keep families and communities strong. These protective factors are the conditions that, when present, help to assure the well-being of children and families. Each of us must build protective factors within our families, neighborhoods, and communities.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Positive attributes that strengthen all families. These include nurturing, love, acceptance, positive guidance and protection.
- Characteristics of families that help them to recognize and address problems. Parents who are emotionally resilient have a positive attitude, creatively problem solve, effectively address challenges and are less likely to direct anger and frustration at their children.
- Ability of parents to build and draw on natural support networks within their family and community for emotional support, encouragement and assistance in facing the challenges of raising a family.
- Knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs for healthy physical, social, cognitive and emotional growth.
- Communities that invest human, professional, and material resources into creating environments that are supportive of family life.

As we come together this month to discuss child abuse prevention, let's acknowledge the good work that is taking place in our communities. Let's spotlight the accomplishments that are helping to build and sustain strong families and communities in which all children can thrive and let's do more of that good work. Remember we can't stop here. Preventing child abuse is important every day of every month of every year.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Partner with parents you know. Understand that all parents have strengths and help families build on those strengths.
- Know your neighbors and watch out for children in your neighborhood. Make your community a place where folks support and look out for one another.
- Reach out to children with a smile or word of encouragement. It means a lot!
- Advocate for policies and programs that support children and family stability.
- Give of your time and resources to organizations working to build strong families, neighborhoods and communities.

For More Information

Call our Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN to talk about what you can do to prevent child abuse in your community. The Helpline is available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m to 8 p.m. You can also e-mail the Helpline at helpline@pcageorgia.org.

Helpline:
1-800-CHILDREN
(244-5373)

E-mail: helpline@pcageorgia.org