



## **THE FAITH COMMUNITY: NATURAL PARTNERS TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES**

Faith community leaders see children regularly. Places of worship are seen as a source of support and nurturing. This provides a foundation for relationships that contribute to family resilience and connectedness to the community.

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, everyday. Faith-based groups play an important role in reaching out to all families. Faith communities have many natural teachers and community leaders who can create a culture of building strong families through early education and 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 strengthen families and 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.
- Support member parents by providing parenting and prevention resources, assigning mentors to young parents, hosting a workshop or coordinating a support network for parents.
- Support mentoring programs to foster resilience in children and make sure children have trusted adults in which to confide.
- Learn about child abuse and ways to prevent it. Act as an early warning and response system and intervene before abuse occurs.
- Faith communities should partner with the larger community and other service providers to develop networks of support and care.
- Promote children's healthy social and emotional development: provide activities in the nursery or classroom and education for parents.
- Implement written child protection policies and make this information public for all faith-based members. Ensure all staff and volunteers are trained on these as well as recognizing, reporting and preventing child abuse.
- Volunteer at your place of worship or with local organizations that support families and children in need.
- Share Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's Helpline number – 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) – as a source of support and access to community resources.

### **For More Questions**

Call our Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN to talk about what your faith community can do to prevent child abuse and neglect. 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](mailto:helpline@pcageorgia.org).

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

**E-mail: [helpline@pcageorgia.org](mailto:helpline@pcageorgia.org)**