



Stop It Now! Georgia

The Campaign to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse



Prevent Child Abuse
Georgia

a program of

Press Release

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It's Your Call Campaign Asks Adults to Trust Their Gut

Atlanta – March 17, 2006: April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia will launch a ground-breaking statewide public awareness campaign, **It's Your Call**. Starting Monday, March 20th the campaign will challenge all adults in Georgia to listen to their instincts and confront behaviors and situations that may leave children at risk for child sexual abuse.

"Most child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child; someone who is a part of his life." says Doug Middleton, executive director of PCA Georgia. "That means we adults know these abusers – they are our neighbors, friends, relatives, and acquaintances. They are people with whom we have influence. Each of us has the power to intervene when we are concerned about someone's behavior towards children. We must use that power. That is the only way to truly prevent child sexual abuse. We must not wait until we see or hear that a child has been harmed."

Research supports this. Over 90% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows and trusts, often a family member. It is also common for children and families to keep this abuse a secret – nearly 88% of child sexual abuse goes unreported. Depending on children to recognize inappropriate behavior and to protect themselves is not enough to prevent child sexual abuse. The most effective way to prevent harm to children is for adults to take responsibility and hold one another accountable for behaviors of concern. PCA Georgia's program, **Stop It Now! Georgia**, offers adults and communities the information, tools and resources to do just that. The **It's Your Call** campaign is part of this child sexual abuse prevention strategy.

"It doesn't take an expert to prevent child sexual abuse before a child is harmed," says Sally Thigpen, Statewide Coordinator for PCA Georgia's **Stop It Now! Georgia** program. "There are three easy steps to being a hero in the life of a child, **1) Learn more, 2) Create a plan for safety in your home and community, and 3) Insist that all adults and children respect and follow the plan.** I suppose there is a fourth step as well – if you see someone NOT following the plan, talk to them **before** a child is harmed!"

It's Your Call will be aired across the state on the Clear Channel radio network through the end of September 2006. A corresponding print campaign will be visible throughout the state. To download campaign materials, visit www.stopitnowga.org

Stop It Now! Georgia is a program of Prevent Child Abuse Georgia. Funding for this project comes through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PCA Georgia is a statewide private nonprofit organization dedicated to child abuse prevention and relies on community support and volunteers to assist in its effort to end child abuse in Georgia. Stop It Now! Georgia is one site of the national Stop It Now! organization, which was founded in 1992 with the belief that adults can prevent child sexual abuse.

For information about how to create a safety net around children at home and in communities, please call the Stop It Now! Georgia and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) 8:00am-8:00pm, Monday through Friday, or go to www.stopitnowga.org

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