



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

Challenges Adults to Trust Their Gut and Take Action

Atlanta – March 30, 2006: April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia will add a print component to its ground-breaking statewide radio public awareness campaign, **It's Your Call** which began on 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 that child's life in a significant way," says Doug Middleton, executive director of PCA Georgia. "The stereotype of the dangerous stranger leaves our children vulnerable to abuse by ignoring the biggest percentage of those at-risk to harm them – specifically people we know, love and trust."

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. "These alarming statistics are actually quite empowering in that they tell us that we all have incredible opportunity to prevent harm to a child," says Sally Thigpen, statewide coordinator for PCA Georgia's **Stop It Now! Georgia** program. "The most effective way to prevent harm to children is for adults to take responsibility and hold one another accountable for behaviors of concern." The **Stop It Now! Georgia** program 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.

While some of the words used in the campaign can be a bit of a shock, these same words are the words that race through our minds when we get that "uh-oh" feeling about behaviors we may see in people we know and love. The challenge put forth in the **It's Your Call** campaign is to take action when that gut feeling occurs. "It doesn't take an expert to prevent child sexual abuse before a child is harmed," says Ms. Thigpen. "There are four 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. But most importantly, 4) If you see someone NOT following the plan, talk to them before a child is harmed!**"

It's Your Call is being aired across the state on the Clear Channel radio network through the end of September 2006. The corresponding print campaign is visible throughout the state. To download free 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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