

Community Action Guide

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, April 2011

Pause for a child.



Make children a priority.
Take time to focus on prevention.

The “*Pause for a Child*” campaign encourages you to make a difference for the families you touch by turning your influence into action. It takes a village to keep children free from abuse and neglect, and everyone has a role to play in this effort. Make children a priority and take time to focus on prevention.

The “*Pause for a Child*” campaign incorporates Prevent Child Abuse America’s symbol for prevention—the pinwheel—and the Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign. Prevent Child Abuse America adopted the pinwheel as the symbol of prevention to stress the positive impact of developing strong families and communities.

When strong families and communities are the focus, advocates have found that they are more successful at beginning a new dialogue about the prevention, rather than the problem, of child abuse and neglect. They are inspiring individuals and groups who once thought that preventing child abuse was impossible to take more active roles in their communities.

Make a Difference for the Families You Touch

Things move so quickly in today’s world. We’re often preoccupied, stressed or fearful of taking a stand. No matter how fast the world might be moving around us, it’s critical that we slow down and pay attention to our children.

Across the country, April is recognized as Child Abuse Prevention Month. State and local agencies and concerned citizens all work toward the common purpose of preventing child abuse and deliver a powerful, collective message about the importance of protecting children, supporting families and strengthening communities.

These messages are most effective at the community level, where specific actions can be identified and effective networks mobilized. The Ohio Children’s Trust Fund works to support communities in these efforts by providing information, materials, assistance and message guidance. This guide is a brief summary of resources available to your community and also provides some helpful hints for getting organized. More information is available on the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund Web site at www.jfs.ohio.gov/octf.

All Ohioans share a responsibility to support children and promote safe and stable families. Research

has shown that toxic stress from child abuse and neglect impedes healthy brain development and effective child development. As a result, child abuse and neglect prevention is the most critical issue we can address for the long-term well-being of our children and communities.

Research has demonstrated that our past collective efforts have been successful at raising child abuse and neglect awareness across Ohio. Now is the time to advance from making people aware of child abuse and neglect to taking concrete action to prevent it. It indeed takes a community to keep children free from abuse and neglect, and *everyone* has an active role to play in this effort.



Getting Organized

To plan your Child Abuse Prevention Month events, start by pulling together a dedicated team of people. Here are some helpful hints for assembling a group that works well together.

- **Get a plan.** Decide what you want to do and make sure your goals are achievable. Identify resources, persons responsible and a timeline to stay on track. This is your most important planning tool.
- **Engage the community.** Your number one goal should be to engage people in your community from all walks of life. Make sure that you are not “preaching to the choir” and think outside the box when planning your events and activities. Reflect your community’s heritage and values in what you plan to do.
- **Use free resources.** Prevent Child Abuse America, the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources all provide free materials of excellent quality for communities implementing child abuse prevention month activities.
- **Involve the media.** Define the media’s role in your efforts. Are they helping you promote activities or reporting on them after the fact? Are they engaged with you in planning? Make sure the media understands your positive message about families and communities.

Pause and Share Your Success

Communities can improve their efforts by learning from each other. Be sure to document your successes by saving media coverage, taking photos and collecting stories. Send them to the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund, where they can be posted online and shared statewide.



Free Resources for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

*Prevent Child Abuse America
Pinwheels for Prevention*

Prevent Child Abuse America has a number of materials available free for download, including pinwheels and coloring sheets.

www.preventchildabuse.org

*U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services
Community Resources Packet*

This packet includes a number of printable fact sheets and other useful tools such as talking points and press releases. www.childwelfare.gov/preventing

Ohio Children’s Trust Fund
www.jfs.ohio.gov/octf

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