



INTERFAITH CHILDREN'S MOVEMENT

Engaging Communities of Faith in Child Abuse Prevention Month

Create a better tomorrow for all children today. LEARN...PRAY...ACT.

Mission

The Interfaith Children's Movement is an interfaith grassroots, advocacy movement that is dedicated to improving the well-being of all children in the state of Georgia.

ICM – Advocating for Children

- Founded in 2001 on the conviction that people of all faiths, can and must work together for the good of all children
- Created “Faith in Action” program which focuses on eight work areas

Poverty

Education

Health Care

Juvenile Justice

Child Care /
Child Protection

Parental
Nurture

Child Advocacy

Immigration

ICM - How we do what we do

Education

Communicating to faith communities what we know about the issues that adversely affect the lives of children in Georgia

Advocacy

Appealing to those who can make a difference (communities of faith, legislators, community coalitions, corporations, individuals)

Mobilization

Gathering faith communities for action

Networking

Connecting with people and programs that can help children

Information Resourcing

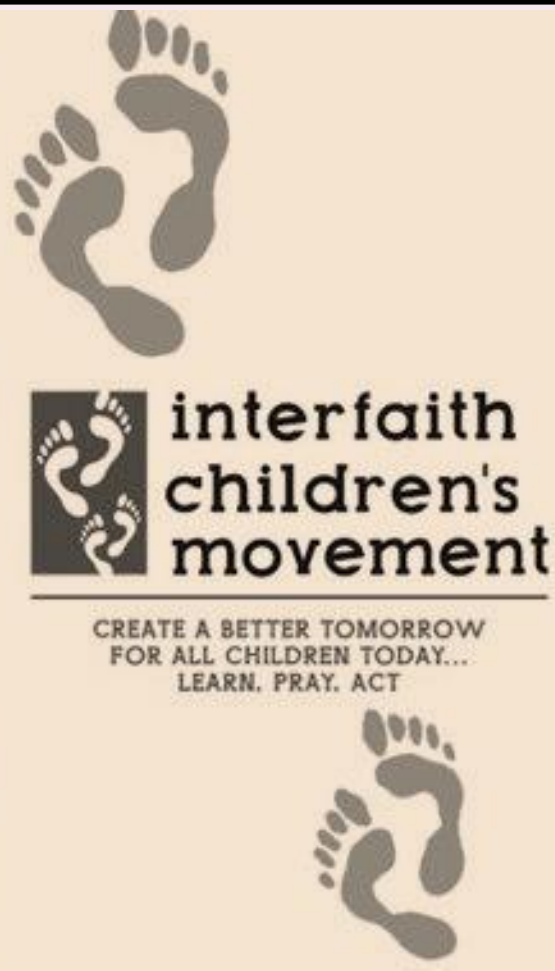
Providing access to materials, data and/or expertise through advocacy organizers, agencies or other means to assist with the maintenance and development of programs and initiatives for children

Overview

- The importance of faith communities engaging in child abuse prevention
- Why is faith community engagement important?
- How can faith communities integrate prevention into the composition of the organization (with intentionality)?
- What resources are available to faith communities?
- Child Abuse Prevention month activities for faith communities

Called to be a blessing

All major faith traditions call us to be a blessing to all children—individually and collectively—especially to those whom we know are in the most vulnerable of situations.



Called to be a blessing

- In the book of Colossians, Christians are taught:
“...do not provoke *or irritate or exasperate* your children [with demands that are trivial or unreasonable or humiliating or abusive; nor by favoritism or indifference; treat them tenderly with lovingkindness], so they will not lose heart *and* become discouraged *or unmotivated* [with their spirits broken].
- In Judaism, childhood is considered a period of purity, joy, and beauty to be valued and cherished. The Talmud states "childhood is a garland of roses." “...the abuse of children is prohibited even to parents and teachers with good intentions. This especially applies to orphans for whom the community bears responsibility for their needs”
- In Islam, parents are called to: “Love your children, and be kind and merciful to them. Fulfill your promises made to them....”
- Buddhism teaches that: “'The first teachers' is a designation for mother & father. Mother & father do much for their children...They care for them, nourish them, introduce them to this world.”

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=colossians+3%3A21&version=AMP>

How Children are Valued in the Jewish Tradition, Rabbi David Rosen

<https://www.quora.com/What-does-Islam-say-about-parents-abusing-their-children-or-about-bad-parenting-in-general>

<http://online.sfsu.edu/rone/Buddhism/BuddhismParents/BuddhismParents.html>

Characteristics of Faith Communities

Spirituality, Compassion, Trust, Support, Caring



Why Faith Communities?

- Faith communities play a vital role in families and communities.
- Central to the lives of their congregants and to other groups of persons who depend upon their services (e.g., homeless, child welfare/foster care, victims of domestic violence, immigrants/refugees, etc.).
- Abused and Neglected Children are often members of families that are stressed beyond their ability to cope. And faith communities can take action to ensure that children across Georgia are protected and supported.

Making Contact

- Faith community structures can vary by denomination and/or faith tradition.

Common Points of Contact:

- Faith Leader
 - Secretary/Office Assistant
 - Children and/or Family Director
 - Contact made through another event
- Faith communities have lives – ensure that your program offering enhances the life of that congregation
- Do not assume that all denominations of a faith tradition think alike.
- When in doubt about the protocol of a faith tradition, ASK..

What Faith Communities Can Do

- ✓ Require personal letters of reference for all employees who work with children.
- ✓ Conduct criminal background checks on staff and volunteers who work with children.
- ✓ Ensure that there is more than one adult supervising a child or group of children at all times.
- ✓ If a group contains male and female children, they should be supervised by male and female adults.
- ✓ Require that staff/volunteers who work with children be over 21 years of age or under adult supervision.
- ✓ Avoid private one-on-one situations between an adult and a child.
- ✓ Monitor changes in a child's behavior and talk to the child to determine how the faith community can be a source of support.
- ✓ Form a child safety task force that will monitor risk factors that may exist within the facility (e.g., children are left unattended – without proper adult supervision)

What Faith Communities Can Do

- ✓ Invite child-serving agencies in to conduct training sessions on how to identify child abuse and neglect and how you can help families in crisis.
- ✓ Provide social support for families under stress, especially single-parent families.
- ✓ Assist families that are coping with drug and alcohol abuse, poverty and chronic health problems in order to ensure the children's needs are met in spite of family difficulties.
- ✓ Offer opportunities for parents and other caretakers to improve parenting skills and understand children's developmental stages.
- ✓ Inform parents about the available prenatal and postnatal parenting classes and family counseling programs.

What Faith Communities Can Do

- ✓ Organize support groups where expectant parents and/or current parents can gather to discuss the joys and challenges of childrearing.
- ✓ Develop educational or recreational programs for children during the week and/or on weekends to give parents a much needed rest.
- ✓ Take time to talk with mothers and fathers who seem overwhelmed and ask what you can do to support and nurture them.
- ✓ Implement a mentor program so that children can form friendships with adults in the faith community.
- ✓ Host a seminar about adoption. Sponsor a foster family and offer them care, support and respite.

Faith Community Resources

- **Children's Advocacy Centers of Georgia** – A group that can help you locate the agency nearest you in order to learn more about preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. Web site: <http://www.cacga.org/>
- **Episcopal Church – “Safe Church”** 815 Second Avenue New York, NY, 10017 Phone: 800-334-7626 or 212-716-6000 Web site: https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/model_policies.pdf
- **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – “Safe Haven for Children” ELCA Churchwide Organization** 8765 W. Higgins Road Chicago, IL 60631 Phone: 800-638-3522 or 773-380-2700 Email: info@elca.org Web site: www.elca.org/safeplace
- **FaithTrust Institute** believes that the best way to address domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and sexual violence is through a united front of religious and nonreligious resources. Skilled staff is available for trainings, seminars and keynote presentations in your area. All presentations include religious and pastoral issues. 2400 N. 45th Street #101 Seattle, WA 98103 Web site: www.faithtrustinstitute.org • To order educational materials call toll-free: 1-877-860-2255 • To request training and consulting information contact our Operations Associate, at 206-634-1903 ext. 21, or by email operations@faithtrustinstitute.org

Faith Community Resources

- **Georgia Center for Child Advocacy** – Champions the needs of sexually and severely physically abused children through prevention, intervention, therapy, and collaboration. The Center provides a safe, friendly place where a child can end their silence by telling a trained therapist about the abuse during a videotaped interview. In addition, children and families are offered long-term psychological treatment to provide healing and hope for the future. The Center coordinates with agencies involved in the investigation of physical and sexual abuse and offers education for professionals and adults in sexual abuse prevention.
<http://georgiacenterforchildadvocacy.org/>
- **Jewish Family & Career Services** – Provides counseling to children and resources on preventing and responding to child abuse. 4549 Chamblee Dunwoody Road Atlanta, GA 30338 Phone: 770-677-9300 Email: info@jfcs-atlanta.org Web site: <https://www.jfcs-atlanta.org/>
- **JSafe: The Jewish Institute Supporting an Abuse-Free Environment** - Works to promote a Jewish community in which all of its institutions and organizations conduct themselves responsibly and effectively in addressing the wrongs of domestic violence, child abuse and professional improprieties. Through its certification program, publications, and educational initiatives, JSafe promotes standards for training and policies that prevent abuse, that ensure that survivors are treated supportively and appropriately, and make perpetrators accountable, thereby promoting a safe environment for all children and adults. 233 Walker Place West Hempstead, NY 11552 Phone: 203-858-9691 Email: info@jsafe.org Web site: <http://www.jsafe.org/>

Faith Community Resources

- **Presbyterian Church (USA)** – resources on child abuse awareness 100 Witherspoon Street Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396 Phone: 1-888-728-7228 or 502-569-5000 Web site: http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/mid_council_ministries/reporting_child_abuse.pdf
- **Prevent Child Abuse Georgia** – Supports places of worship and communities in building safe havens for children by establishing programs aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect. Web site: <http://www.preventchildabusega.org/> . Prevent Child Abuse GA Help Line: 1-800-CHILDREN
- **Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing** - Staff work with clergy, congregations, and denominational bodies on a one-time, short-term, or long-term basis to address sexuality issues. Staff can help choose or plan curricula, develop safe congregation policies, identify local consultants or referral sources, and respond to difficult situations and circumstances around a sexuality issue. Phone: 203-222-0055 Email: info@religiousinstitute.org Web site: <http://www.religiousinstitute.org/abuse.html>
- **Safe Church** – Provide inspection and assessment tools to make your congregation safer. Phone: 1-800-747-2154 Email: Info@SafeChurch.com Web site: <http://www.safechurch.com/Pages/Default.aspx>

Faith Community Resources

- **Shalom Task Force** – Provides information/referral, education and outreach. Hotline provides information on rabbinic, legal and counseling service for anyone in the Jewish community in an abusive situation. Phone: (888) 883-232
- **Southern Baptist Convention** – Provides resources for sexual abuse prevention. Web site: <http://www.sbc.net/churchresources/sexabuseprevention.asp>
- **Unitarian Universalist Association on Congregations** – Provides resources on keeping children safe in congregations. 25 Beacon Street Boston, MA 02108 Phone: 617-742-2100 Email: info @ uua.org Web site: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/balancingacts/index.shtml>
- **United Methodist Church – “Safe Sanctuary Policy,”** General Board of Discipleship The United Methodist Church P.O. Box 340003 Nashville, TN 37203-0003 Toll-Free: 1-877-899-2780 Email: gbod@gbod.org Web site: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/safe-sanctuaries>
- **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops – Child and Youth Protection** - The Secretariat for Child and Youth Protection is a resource for dioceses/eparchies for implementing 'safe environment' programs and for suggesting training and development of diocesan personnel responsible for child and youth protection programs. 3211 4th Street, N.E. Washington DC 20017 Phone: 202-541-3000 Email: scyp@usccb.org Web site: <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/>

Think Prevention in April and beyond...



*What other ideas have you seen
within faith communities?*

- ✓ Host a Pinwheel Planting ceremony – make sure that children are included in this event. Allow them to plant the pinwheels and even plant the pinwheel in honor of another child (sibling, friend, etc.)
- ✓ Host a Children's Observance service as a way of highlighting children and our responsibility to work together to make their "tomorrows" better than their "todays."
- ✓ Highlight the sacred texts that speak to nurturing and protecting children in weekly study lessons .
- ✓ Faith leaders can deliver a message about the sacred duty of caring for and protecting children.
- ✓ Invite Prevent Child Abuse GA to speak at faith community in the month of April
- ✓ Include healthy parenting tips in communications (worship bulletin, Web site, social media, bulletin boards, etc.)
- ✓ Post the Prevent Child Abuse GA 1-800 CHILDREN help line on Web site and in other communications.

Think Prevention in April and beyond...

- ✓ Become advocates for better policies and laws for children that keep them safe and improve their quality of life.
- ✓ Create a social media campaign “Help Great Childhoods Happen” that challenges followers to submit photos of themselves being positive influences in children’s lives.
- ✓ Provide respite care for parents of children with special needs
- ✓ Volunteer at school, summer camp, recreation center
- ✓ Host an information session on being a foster parent
- ✓ Collect baby and/or children’s clothing for local foster parents
- ✓ Collect canned foods for a local food pantry / deliver weekend lunches to families
- ✓ Collect items and assemble first aid kits for families in need
- ✓ Collect toiletries for homeless families and children
- ✓ Hold a baby shower to collect needed items for a local pregnancy care center

Faith Community Pinwheel Plantings



Contact ICM

We already have our
Pinwheel Planting Campaign going!

Interfaith Children's Movement, Inc.
404-527-7756

info@interfaithchildrensmovement.org
www.interfaithchildrensmovement.org


Child Abuse Prevention Month 2018



When you hear abuse you think.....

- Parents are solely responsible
- If kids don't do well, lack of parental discipline is the reason
- Abuse is considered to be a very individual and private act, or even a family matter.
- People feel like it doesn't affect them—it's more of an individual issue instead of a societal problem.
- People don't connect primary prevention methods such as helping parents find resources or creating more family friendly work policies with the prevention of child maltreatment.

Changing the Conversation

- Optimism is 
 - to promote lasting change, the CAP Month messages must focus on ***clearly stating what we want*** for children (*safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments*), proposing effective solutions and **engaging people** in positive, preventative action they can take on their own.
- Guidelines to consider as you develop your CAP Month Campaign messages:
 - Avoid just giving numbers, pick one thought provoking statistic
 - Educate people on what child abuse prevention is and looks like in action
 - Talk about the importance of healthy child development
 - Focus on success stories and community
 - Give specific actions others (individuals, business, faith communities, etc.) can do to get involved

Positive Messaging Around Prevention



Engaging in Difficult Conversations and Reframing the Language

Change the focus
from dismaying
Data and Statistics



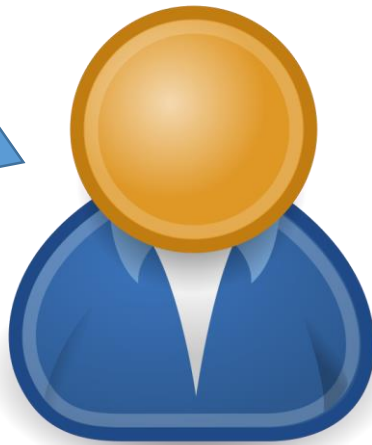
Positive
messaging and
solutions

- 87% of Americans believe they could do 'some' or 'a lot' to prevent child maltreatment yet they are not aware of specific activities or solutions.
- Why aren't more conversations being had?

Spark the Conversation

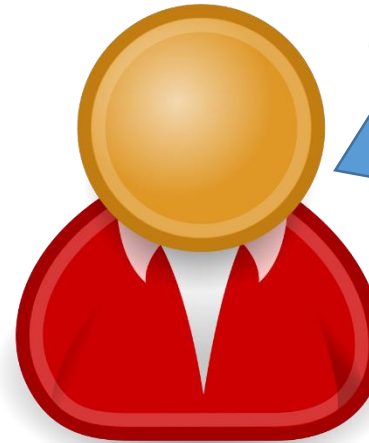
- Do not focus the conversation on '**bad parenting**'. Expand and reframe the conversation around the healthy development of children!

If parents only knew better, or had the grit and determination to make the “right” choices in the face of adversity, their children would do better



VS

Parenting behavior (while important) doesn't account for constraints such as housing, neighborhoods, availability of services, income, social norms and public policy



Spark the Conversation

- Keep in Mind: It is more common for people to respond to the statistics than to the solution.
 - Everyone **Can** make a difference in a child's life and as a community member it is your responsibility to not only help people realize this, but to also communicate **Specifically How** they can help



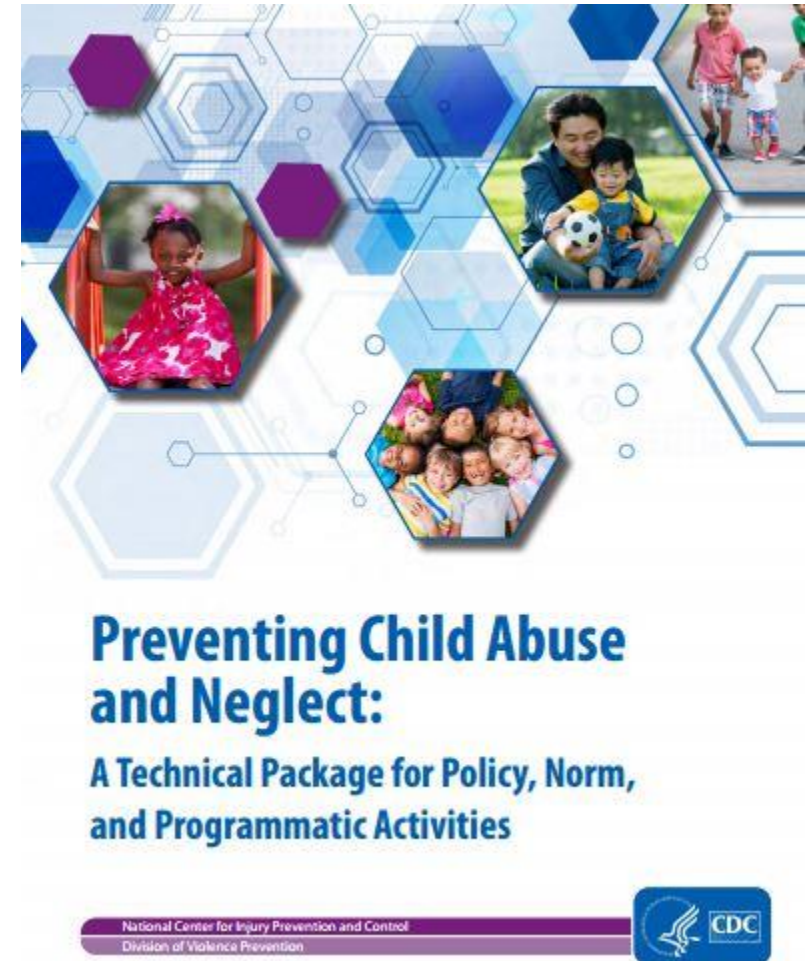
CDC's new resource guide on social norms:

<http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/violence-prevention-basics-social-norms-change>

Changing the Conversation

CDC's Technical Package

- *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: A Technical Package for Policy Norm, and Programmatic Activities*
 - Family-friendly work policies, paid leave
 - Subsidized child care
 - Legislative approaches to reduce corporal punishment
 - Enhanced primary care
 - Strengthening household financial security/ livable wages
 - Funding early childhood home visitation



<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/can-prevention-technical-package.pdf>

Other Resources

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway: National Child Abuse Prevention Month Guide](#)
- [CDC's Essentials for Childhood Framework](#)
- [Voices Agency Resource guide](#)
- 1-800-CHILDREN- Helpline linking parents and caregivers with resources in their community
- Prevent Child Abuse America- www.preventchildabuse.org
- [Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe and Healthy Children](#): various trainings online and in person

Available Trainings

- Better Brains for Babies- <http://www.bbbgeorgia.org/educatorInvite.php>
- Strengthening Families Georgia- sfgatraining@gmail.com
- Online mandated reporter training- https://www.prosolutionstraining.com/store/product/?tProductVersion_id=861
- In-person mandated reporter training- nmcdowell2@gsu.edu
- Stewards of Children <http://www.d2l.org/site/c.4dICIJOkgcISE/b.6221401/k.BD31/Georgia.htm>

Have a Movie Screening

- Raising of America
- Paper Tigers
- Happy Valley- Netflix
 - Pair with Stewards of Children Trainings
- PCA GA has a list of easily available movies to screen during this month on our Media Toolkit
 - Rich Hill (2014)- Two filmmaker cousins return to their decaying hometown to Rich Hill, MO., to film this affecting documentary about the lives of three local boys



Foster Care and Adoption

Netflix

- Closure (2013) – Angela Burt Tucker, a black woman raised by a white adoptive family, searches for her biological parents after 25 years without any contact.
- Stuck (2013) – Following the fates of four orphans around the world, this earnest documentary argues that international adoption laws are deeply flawed. NR. 82mins.
- The Dark Matter of Love (2012) – Adoptive parents learn that the reality of bonding with children who've grown up in institutions is more difficult than they ever imagined.

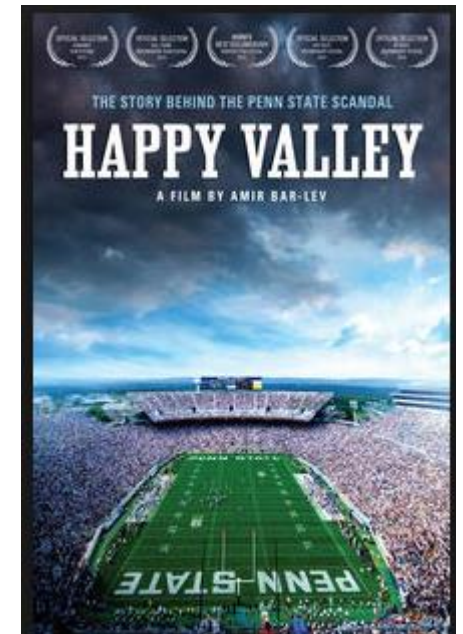
Other

- POV: Tough Love (2015) – Having lost custody of their children to Child Protective Services, two parents – one in New York City and one in Seattle – fight to win back the trust of the courts and reunite their families. NR. 83mins. <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365523216/>

Juvenile Justice

Netflix

- Kids for Cash (2013) – Determined to deter kids from crime, a juvenile court judge hands out harsh sentences for trivial offenses, until one parent questions his motives. PG-13. 101mins.
- Girlhood (2003) – This powerful documentary tells the story of two teens and their dramatic journeys through Baltimore's juvenile justice system.



2018 Community Action Guide & Media Toolkit

- Ready to download on the website
- **Community Action Guide:** Covers how organizations can engage communities during CAP month
 - Help Great Childhoods Happen content
 - Wear Blue Day
 - Pinwheels for Prevention
- **Media Toolkit:** Promotional and Educational Materials
 - Fact Sheets
 - Community Activities
 - Sample Press Releases and Letters
 - Social Media Posts and Talking Points

Social Media

- Wear Blue Day
 - April 6th, 2018
 - Host a social media contest and the person or organization with the most likes receives a prize or recognition
- Twibbon Campaign
 - Campaign will go live in March
 - PCA GA will share the link
 - The Twibbon is temporary



Social Media

- 30 Things You Should Know to Make Great Childhoods happen
 - We will share a tip each day on Facebook and Twitter
 - You can find examples under the social media tab of the media toolkit page



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Order Pinwheels for Prevention Online at
<http://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/cap-month/>