



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**A Vision for Child and Family Well-being in Georgia**

**ATLANTA**— The Prevention and Community Support Section of the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia has taken action to develop a statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan. Since its last version 20 years ago, state agencies and organizations and various stakeholders, including state and local government leaders, community-based and human services providers, early childhood educators, parents, caregivers, and faith-based organizations, have developed a new vision for child and family well-being in Georgia.

Virtually, on September 16, 2020, the 10-year plan was launched at the Georgia Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. As a blueprint for action, this plan is imperative to ensure that all Georgia's children and families have equitable opportunities and necessary support to thrive in safe, stable, connected, and nurturing communities where they live, learn, work, and play. Child abuse and neglect remain a significant public health problem — and the public's health problem. To address this pervasive problem, the plan provides a unified, collective impact approach to provide comprehensive services that strengthen and support families in Georgia to address their needs related to economic stability, family resiliency, early childhood education, mental and physical health.

Dr. Melissa Merrick, President and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America stated, "We remain steadfast in our mission – to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation's children. To be truly successful, we must actively dismantle the root causes of stress and anxiety that can lead to child abuse, including systematic, structural racism, and discrimination." Dr. Merrick also highlighted Georgia's Plan as a "model for other states."

As we work collectively to execute the plan statewide, focus on each region in Georgia will be given to start developing their unique child abuse, and neglect prevention strategies. The Georgia Essentials for Childhood Initiative will oversee the implementation and monitoring of the state plan and the regional plans' development. For more information about the Georgia Essentials for Childhood initiative, visit [tinyurl.com/GAEssentials](https://tinyurl.com/GAEssentials). To learn more about A Vision for Child and Family Well-being in Georgia – Our State's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan, visit [tinyurl.com/GACANPP](https://tinyurl.com/GACANPP).

**About Georgia DFCS**

DFCS administers foster care for children removed from their homes for their protection when they have been subjected to abuse and neglect. It is responsible for the investigation of reports of child abuse; recruitment of foster homes for abused and neglected children; issuance of SNAP, Medicaid, TANF and childcare assistance to low-income families; assistance for out-of-work parents to help them get back on their feet as well as multiple support services and programs to help families in need.