GROWING
a Better Tomorrow for All Children,
TOGETHER

2021 Community Action Guide
Child Abuse Prevention
Awareness Month
2021 Community Action Guide
Child Abuse Prevention Month

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Register for Our Child Abuse Prevention Month Community Learning Series
Every Thursday at Noon

April 1
Mandated Supporter

April 8
Connections Matter

April 15
Racism, It’s Baked In

April 22
Civic Lunch

Register at tinyurl.com/PCAGAwebinar

This project was supported in part by the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CFDA 93.590). Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CFDA 93.590).
2021 Community Action Guide
Child Abuse Prevention Month

While April is Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month child abuse happens every day and so must prevention efforts. Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia provides sample communications pieces and community event ideas to be used during CAP Month and year round to help promote awareness, educate the general public, and also target specific audiences. Whether you use these tools in their entirety or simply for inspiration, this guide is a stepping stone for your CAP Month activities.

All of the documents and images within this guide, and additional resources, are available for download online at PCAGeorgia.org. If you need assistance accessing any of these pieces, please reach out to PreventChildAbuseGA@gsu.edu.

By clearly stating how individuals and groups can work to prevent child abuse and neglect, we can create a common agenda and collective effort to ensure safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for Georgia’s children and families.

The three domains of the 2021 Community Action Guide are:

**Educating & Awareness**: Individuals and communities can help prevent abuse by learning about strategies to strengthen families.

**Messages & Ideas**: On Thursday, April 1st, individuals and organizations across the US will make a visible commitment to helping make great childhoods happen nationwide by **WEARING BLUE**.

**Communication**: In April, communities send a unified message that child abuse and neglect is preventable by tangibly investing in children and families.

We encourage you to use messaging and artwork from this document, the CAP Month artwork and campaign elements, including images and image licenses, are property of Prevent Child Abuse America. Any campaign components used by a local partner **must be attributed to PCA Georgia**, meaning they must mention PCA Georgia in outreach efforts. Pinwheels for Prevention® and the blue pinwheel mark are both trademarked by Prevent Child Abuse America. If you have any questions, need assistance customizing any of the campaign components, or need help with trademarked materials, please contact us at PreventChildAbuseGA@gsu.edu.
Key Messages and Takeaway Points

Why Does It Matter:

We are the stewards of the next generation. We know that our ability to raise healthy children who will lead tomorrow’s communities requires smart and innovative thinking today.

Children are shaped by their earliest experiences and relationships. Creating safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for Georgia’s children allows healthy brain development and promotes lifelong learning and success.

What Is the Issue:

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as child abuse and neglect, can cause high levels of stress. When stress is frequent and prolonged, it can dramatically change how the brain develops. In the absence of supportive relationships and community resources, these early adversities can affect a person’s health, educational obtainment, and economic opportunity over their lifespan and can even carry over to the next generation.

While abuse and neglect occurs in families from all ethnicities, it is important to acknowledge that families of color continue to face systemic racism and differential access to supportive services that protect against abuse.

How to Solve It:

Child abuse and neglect is caused by multiple factors related to the individual, family, community, and society at large. Environments that have high rates of violence, inequitable access to community resources and social services, and are disproportionately affected by poverty or unemployment are contributors to child abuse.

Science shows that providing supportive and positive conditions for early childhood can prevent or even reverse the damaging effects of early life stress, with lifelong benefits for learning, behavior, and health. Addressing community adversities and providing concrete supports to families and children is more effective and less costly than attempting to address the consequences of adversity later in life.

By removing barriers to supports for all families and investing in policies and programs that work to overcome individual and widespread adversities, we can create a state where all children thrive.
Who Can Solve It:

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to celebrate the good things our community does and lift up the work and partners we still need to ensure every child has the chance to thrive.

Below are a few examples of how caring and innovative adults, including policy makers, business leaders, and community members can prevent child abuse and neglect or other early adversities. To see a more detailed list of roles and actions to help Georgia’s families thrive go to: www.BelongingForHope.org/Roles.

• Business Leaders can promote a culture of parent support.
• Policy Makers can identify and assess which policies may positively impact the lives of children and families and reduce possible barriers to families receiving needed supports and resources.
• Faith Communities can offer space for parent and youth activities.
• Family and Youth Serving Organizations can train staff on preventing, recognizing, and responding to child abuse using the Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children, Connections Matter, or Mandated Reporter Trainings.
• Educators can follow-up if something seems wrong with a child and be ready to give families local resources that might help families in their district.
• Friends and Neighbors can help break the social isolation some parents may experience or encourage parents to seek support when needed by calling the 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) Helpline.
• Individuals can volunteer for an after-school mentoring program.

Want to know how you can help? In 2020 Georgia released a State Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan that includes ways individuals, communities, workplaces and others can get involved. As Georgians we have the collective power to strengthen families by advocating for policies, programs, and practices that increase:

• Family Economic Stability,
• Access to Early Childhood Education,
• Family Physical and Mental Health,
• Family Resilience, and
• Community Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Strategies.
2021 Child Abuse Prevention Month National Theme

Growing a Better Tomorrow for All Children, Together
Every day, we help positive childhood experiences take root.

Theme Talking Points

• **Children are locally grown.** We work together to cultivate relationships, connections, and environments that help every child thrive.

• **We harvest what we sow.** We plant seeds of support for all children to yield healthier adults with abundant futures.

• **Our work is rooted in science.** We know positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments provide fertile ground for physical and mental health, learning, and social skills to flourish.

• **We unearth the possibilities.** We focus on innovation every day to give every child what they need and to build bountiful, safe communities.

• **Planning and purpose create common ground.** We share resources equitably, expand access to services, and balance conditions for positive childhood experiences to enrich every community.

• **We tend and replenish the soil.** We offer homegrown solutions and hardy support to protect what we grow in all elements.

• **Hope and commitment are powerful fertilizers.** We combine the promise of a better tomorrow with our resolve to nourish all children and their families in every season.

CAP Month During COVID-19

• The coronavirus outbreak and its subsequent losses have changed our world permanently. In the United States, we are still trying to adapt and understand the new landscape that the pandemic has created and its repercussions for child abuse and neglect prevention.

• The risk to our nation’s children for experiencing child abuse and neglect in times of extreme stress and uncertainty is quite high. COVID-19 has added stressors to the lives of parents and caregivers, such as loss of employment, loss of income due to lack of paid leave, school and business closings that necessitate new childcare and homeschool arrangements, and food insecurity.

• Physical distancing leads to the unintended consequence of isolation. The social connections and community services and activities that serve as protective factors against child abuse and neglect under ordinary conditions may not exist in this extraordinary time of physical distancing.
What is Child Abuse Prevention?

ANYTHING that strengthens families and helps children thrive!

The prevention of child abuse and neglect cannot be achieved with one program or one strategy. Programs that only target caregivers are shown to improve parent-child interactions, but don’t account for other root causes of maltreatment such as social isolation, poverty, community violence, and other stressors. It requires a comprehensive approach with strategies at many different levels and with multiple sectors working together.

There are several ways to think about and group strategies.

**WHO** .................................................. Everyone, those at risk, or those who have already experienced abuse

**WHEN** .................................................. Before abuse/neglect occurs (Primary/Secondary), or after it has occurred (Tertiary)

**WHAT** .................................................. Individuals, families, communities, or society level will the strategy address

- **Primary Prevention**
  - Caregivers seek supportive resources through the 1-800-CHILDREN helpline
  - Caregivers attend a parenting group/class on child development
  - Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention programs

- **Secondary Prevention**
  - Home visiting programs: Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, and Healthy Families
  - Parenting education programs: Triple P or Nurturing Parenting
  - Substance abuse or behavioral health services for parents prior to report of abuse/neglect

- **Tertiary Prevention**
  - Therapy for sexual abuse victims (Child Advocacy Centers of Georgia)
  - Home visiting/parenting education for families referred by DFCS, like SafeCare
  - Substance abuse or behavioral health services for parent/caregiver reported to DFCS

**Societal Commitments & Investments**

- **Safe, Stable & Nurturing Family Relationships**
  - Advocate for family friendly policies
  - Family Connection Partnerships improve well-being via coalitions
  - Community/professional training
  - Second Step, a Social-Emotional Program in schools

- **Supportive Communities & Environments**
  - Equitable access and opportunities
  - Accessible healthcare and quality childcare
  - Housing stability and affordability
  - Family friendly work policies

- **Tertiary Prevention**
  - Abuse/domestic violence support groups and resources in communities
  - Protective laws for victims and survivors of domestic violence or trafficking
Social Media Content

This calendar includes sample social media posts that you can use each day during April. You can find and download all the images online here.

Share your posts and activities with us by tagging us on Facebook @PreventGeorgia or Instagram @PreventChildAbuseGA! Remember to use this year’s theme #GrowingBetterTogether.

**Physically Apart, Socially Connected**
We encourage you to share how you are being a connection, support, or resource to a friend, family or community member with us @PreventGeorgia, #BeAConnection.

- Teachers visiting children from cars: link
- Kids having online play dates: link
- Making cards to mail out to friends

Image and content below are meant to be a preview, you can download all the images and a word document of the content to easily plug into your social media platforms by clicking here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Image Preview</th>
<th>Post Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu 3/30</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Let the countdown to #WearBlueDay2021 begin! This Thurs, break out your best blue outfit and help us raise awareness for Child Abuse Prevention Month and remember to tag us! #CAPMonth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 3/31</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Join PCA Georgia this Thursday and every Thursday in April for their Community Learning Series! You can register at tinyurl.com/PCAGAwebinar #CAPMonth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4/1</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Today begins Child Abuse Prevention Month as we #WearBlueDay2021 to support growing a better tomorrow for all children, together. Post a photo of yourself wearing blue in the comments below. And let us know what you think of our #GrowingBetterTogether theme!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 4/2</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Every day, we help positive childhood experiences take root. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow for children and families in your community: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Image Preview</td>
<td>Post Content</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 4/3</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Child Abuse Prevention Month Frame" /></td>
<td>It’s Show Your Support Saturday! Will you take a couple of minutes and add the Child Abuse Prevention Month frame to your Facebook profile photo? It’s available at <a href="https://facebook.com/profilepicframes">facebook.com/profilepicframes</a>. It’s a simple yet powerful way to show your friends that you’re helping to grow a better tomorrow for all children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 4/5</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Locally Grown" /></td>
<td>We work together to cultivate relationships, connections, and environments that help every child thrive. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow for children and families in your community: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 4/6</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Positive Words Help Kids Develop Social Emotional Competence" /></td>
<td>It’s easier than you think to make a big difference in a child’s life with simple actions. Just by changing the words we use, we can help build social and emotional competence in children. ❤️ <a href="http://www.strengtheningfamiliesga.org">www.StrengtheningFamiliesGA.org</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 4/7</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Harvest What We Sow" /></td>
<td>We harvest what we sow, which is why we plant seeds of support. Healthy, supported children flourish into adults with abundant futures. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow for children and families in your community. <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 4/9</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Rooted in Science" /></td>
<td>Our work is rooted in science. We know positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments provide fertile ground for physical and mental health, learning, and social skills to flourish. Learn more about how science empowers our work: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 4/12</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Pinwheel Garden" /></td>
<td>We can still grow a better tomorrow for all children, together, while being apart. Until we can physically plant pinwheels together, let’s take part in this 100% virtual, nationwide pinwheel garden. Donate and plant a pinwheel with your message of support. <a href="https://pinwheels.preventchildabuse.org/">https://pinwheels.preventchildabuse.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Image Preview</td>
<td>Post Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tu 4/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>What do we mean when we say we unearth the possibilities? We focus on innovation every day to give every child what they need and to build bountiful, safe communities. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow for children and families in your community: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 4/14</td>
<td>Download GIF</td>
<td>Let’s see if we can plant some seeds of gratitude and share some #Wedwisdom with each other. What’s one thing you’re grateful for this week? Leave a comment below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4/15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning and purpose create common ground. We share resources equitably, expand access to services, and balance conditions for positive childhood experiences to enrich every community. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 4/16</td>
<td></td>
<td>What do we mean by positive childhood experiences? Research tells us that kids who grow up in safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments are more likely to be happy, healthy, and successful well into their adult years. By cultivating these positive childhood experiences, we aren’t just actively working to prevent child abuse and neglect - We are #GrowingBetterTogether!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 4/19</td>
<td></td>
<td>We tend and replenish the soil. Offering homegrown solutions and hardy support helps us protect what we grow in all elements. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow: <a href="https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Tu 4/20 |  | Every parent needs someone to listen and help — now more than ever. Free support and resources are available for all parents and caregivers in Georgia. Call 1-800-CHILDREN [(1-800-244-5357)](tel:1-800-244-5357) today. [bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN](https://bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN)  
**Spanish:** Cada madre o padre necesita que alguien le escuche y apoye. Obtenga apoyo y recursos gratis para su familia - donde sea que vive en Georgia. Llame 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5357) hoy. [bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN](https://bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN) |
| W 4/21 |  | We can prevent child abuse BEFORE it ever starts through #PROTECTIVEFACTORs that create supportive communities and strong families to nurture a child’s development. [www.StrengtheningFamiliesGA.org](http://www.strengtheningfamiliesga.org) #GrowingBetterTogether |
## Social Media Content

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Image Preview</th>
<th>Post Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th 4/22</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Kids and caregivers in your community need support—but they don’t always know how to ask for it! 😊❤️🤗. Be the help they need, so #GreatChildhoods can happen! Find supportive resources for caregivers at <a href="http://www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org">www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org</a> Spanish: Todos los padres de vez en cuando necesitan apoyo - ahora más que nunca. Consiga apoyo para usted y su familia donde vive en Georgia. Llame 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5357) hoy. <a href="http://bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN">bit.ly/1-800-CHILDREN</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 4/23</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Hope and commitment are powerful fertilizers. We combine the promise of a better tomorrow with our resolve to nourish all children and their families in every season. Learn how you can plant the seeds of a better tomorrow: <a href="http://https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY">https://bit.ly/3hY0ZhY</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 4/26</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Every day, you can plant seeds for all children to grow up healthy and happy. Together, our actions help positive childhood experiences take root — and flourish. Let’s grow a better tomorrow for all children, together. <a href="http://https://www.belongingforhope.org/roles">https://www.belongingforhope.org/roles</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 4/27</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Creating #GreatChildhoods also means creating equitable opportunities. Future success and well-being outcomes should not differ by a child’s race, ethnicity, gender, family income, or neighborhood. <a href="http://https://cssp.org/our-work/focus/racial-equity/">https://cssp.org/our-work/focus/racial-equity/</a> #GrowingBetterTogether #BeAConnection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 4/28</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>According to @CDCgov, relationships with caring adults and positive role models can improve outcomes for kids (AND ADULTS). You (yes, you) can be that adult! #HowIConnect #BeAConnection <a href="http://www.ConnectionsMatterGA.org">www.ConnectionsMatterGA.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 4/29</td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Every gardener knows the secret to a bumper crop is conditioning the soil. We tend and replenish our community’s soil by offering homegrown solutions and hardy support, protecting what we grow in all elements. Learn more about how you can plant and tend the seeds of a better tomorrow for children and families: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/GACANPP">tinyurl.com/GACANPP</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 4/30</td>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>THANK YOU! For joining us this Child Abuse Prevention Month, and every day, to help positive childhood experiences take root. With your support, we can grow a better tomorrow for all children, together. See how you can help kids and families thrive at: <a href="http://https://www.belongingforhope.org/roles">https://www.belongingforhope.org/roles</a> #GrowingBetterTogether</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Join the Virtual PINWHEEL GARDEN

Show your support for growing a better tomorrow for all children, together.

Supporting PCA Georgia’s Virtual Pinwheel Garden

Until we can physically plant pinwheels together, let’s take part in this 100% virtual, nationwide pinwheel garden. Each pinwheel planted represents a $10 donation that supports the essential services of PCA Georgia, such as the 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline, a critical point of connection between families and resources.

Plant a Pinwheel in the Virtual Garden Today
What are Pinwheels for Prevention®?
Pinwheels for Prevention® is a national public awareness campaign during Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month every April. It was designed by Prevent Child Abuse America to communicate efforts and change the way people think about prevention. Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia encourages community activities and the support of public policies that prioritize healthy child development right from the start!

Talking Points, We All Have a Role to Play
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. “Pinwheel gardens” planted in communities across the nation are visual reminders that we all play a role in ensuring happy and healthy childhoods for all children everywhere. Their presence has resulted in increased awareness, expanded dialogue and community engagement around the healthy development of all children and the prevention of child abuse before it ever occurs.

Use Positive Messaging
Research shows that while horrific stories of child abuse and neglect may gain short-term media attention, this approach is not successful in building lasting public will for effective prevention efforts. To promote lasting change, the pinwheel messages must focus on proposing effective solutions and engaging people in positive, preventative actions they can take on their own.

Connecting Pinwheels and Pinwheel Gardens to community resources or needs, let others know how they can help families in their community!

• Avoid giving lots of numbers, pick just 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
• Give specific actions others (individuals, business, etc.) can do to get involved

While pinwheels are available to be purchased through many craft stores or online vendors, purchasing pinwheels from PCA Georgia supports programs and services that are helping reduce child abuse and neglect in your own state!

NOTE: We ask that pinwheels are not used with negative or graphic content (a common example is the number of child deaths in a given year) because prevention is about promoting programs and resources that strengthen families.
Pinwheels for Prevention
Download Resources & Activities

How can I participate?

#PinwheelsforPrevention Crafting Competition

Child Abuse Prevention Month means... PINWHEELS! This year we are having a #PinwheelsforPrevention crafting competition.

We’re calling on you to **design and create your own pinwheels** and share them with us via Facebook! We want to see pictures of pinwheels of all shapes, sizes, media and materials coming to life in your homes, whether you draw, color, sculpt, paint, knit, or any other way you find to make a pinwheel. Share it with us all month long at @PreventGeorgia (Facebook) or @PreventChildAbuseGA (Instagram)! At the end of the month, we’ll announce the top three most creative Pinwheels and yes, THERE ARE PRIZES - Get crafting!

Involv...
Prevent Child Abuse Georgia
Online Store

Items available for purchase.

Pinwheels for Prevention, Pinwheels 100% recyclable blue and silver plastic

Pinwheels for Prevention lapel pins made from Zinc alloy, measure 1-3/8”H x ¾”W

Post-it Notes with Positive Messages for Kids on Each Sheet.

Each Sheet has a Different Message
Post-it Notes with positive messages on each sheet. Measures 3 x 2 inches

CAP Month Customizable Lawn Sign 24 x 18 inches

Pinwheels Car Magnet 8 inches tall, says “Supporting GA Kids & Communities”

Visit the PCA Georgia Online Store at www.PCAGeorgia.org or email PreventChildAbuseGA@gsu.edu.
Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor (LTEs) get the most attention when they respond directly to a recent event or article in the news. When writing to your local news outlet, be sure to reference a specific story or community issue that’s related to child health and well-being. Also, verify the maximum word count for the outlet to which you’re writing; if your LTE is too long it will either be discarded or edited by someone else, sometimes deleting important elements. Up to 250 words is typical for local and regional papers, but many larger newspapers are limited to 150 or so, and some magazines limit letters to less than 100 words.

Sample—Short (150 words)

Letter to the editor, intended for publication

Your recent coverage of [APPLICABLE STORY IN YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER] reinforces that we all share a responsibility for the well-being of children and their families in [STATE or CITY]. And since April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, it’s the perfect time to help people understand that it’s possible to do the things they love and help families and their community thrive.

All parents want to provide and nurture their child in a positive, healthy environment, but sometimes they need a little extra support along the way. That’s why I encourage everyone to proactively engage parents in their community and offer your support—whether it’s by making a meal for the family or reading to a child. An easy way for professionals and caregivers to find supportive resources in their community is by calling 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373), PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org.

Collectively, these small steps will help create better, brighter futures for children and families in [STATE or CITY].

Sincerely,

[NAME, TITLE]
[ORGANIZATION]
Sample-Long – Call to action focused

Letter to the editor, intended for publication

Your recent coverage of [APPLICABLE STORY IN YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER] reinforces that we all share a responsibility for the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children and their families in [Georgia or CITY]. And since April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, it’s the perfect time to help people understand that it’s possible to do the things they love and help families and their community thrive. Small steps can make a big difference in a child’s life—and a parent’s.

Everyone wants to provide and nurture their child in a positive, healthy environment, but sometimes parents need a little support along the way. That’s why we encourage community members to proactively engage parents and offer your support. Here are some suggestions:

- Wear blue on Thursday, April 1, National Wear Blue Day, to show support for children and families. Include the #WearBlueDay2021 and #GrowingBetterTogether in your posts.
- Join your region’s efforts to implement Georgia’s Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan that includes ways individuals, communities, workplaces and others can get involved.
- Participate in a training on preventing, recognizing, and responding to child abuse using the Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children, Connections Matter, or Mandated Reporter Trainings.
- Encourage families you know to call the 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Helpline to talk to trained professionals who will connect them with supportive programs in their area. You can also search for local support services online through the Georgia Resource Map at www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org.

Collectively, these small steps will help create better, brighter futures for children and families in [STATE or CITY].

Sincerely,

[NAME, TITLE]

[ORGANIZATION]
Press Release
CAP Month

Child Abuse Prevention Month Recognizes Every Community’s Role in
Growing a Better Tomorrow for All Children, Together

(CITY, STATE)—[Organization] along with Prevent Child Abuse Georgia recognizes the importance of community-based support for all children and families during National Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month in April. The theme of this year’s awareness and impact campaign is “Growing a Better Tomorrow for All Children, Together.”

We can build healthier, safer, and thriving communities if we take the same approach to raising families that we do to tending a community garden on a shared piece of land. Too often, our society thinks of raising healthy children as a parent or caregiver’s responsibility alone. In reality, we all benefit when groups of people work together to collectively care for children, who grow up to become successful, contributing adults.

“Research shows that positive childhood experiences in nurturing environments provide fertile ground for physical and mental health, learning, and social skills,” explained Dr. Melissa Merrick, president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America. “By preventing child abuse and neglect we aim to holistically improve the lives of all families and the communities they live in.”

The risk to our nation’s children for experiencing child abuse and neglect in times of extreme stress and uncertainty is quite high. COVID-19 has added stressors to the lives of parents and caregivers, such as loss of employment, loss of income due to lack of paid leave, school and business closings that necessitate new childcare and homeschool arrangements, and food insecurity. We also know that these hardships disproportionately impact families of color. Although physical distancing alters the way families socially connect and interact with community services, we must ensure these supportive resources are still in place to help strengthen Georgia's families.

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia recommends the following ways that people everywhere can dig in and help raise awareness and impact virtually during this year’s CAP Month:

• Wear blue on Thursday, April 1, National Wear Blue Day, to show support for children and families. Include the #WearBlueDay2021 and #GrowingBetterTogether in your posts.

• Join your region’s efforts to implement Georgia’s Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan that includes ways individuals, communities, workplaces and others can get involved.

• Participate in a training on preventing, recognizing, and responding to child abuse using the Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children, Connections Matter, or Mandated Reporter Trainings.

• Encourage families you know to call the 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Helpline to talk to trained professionals who will connect them with supportive programs in their area. You can also search for local support services online through the Georgia Resource Map at www.PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org.

We all share a responsibility for the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children and their families. [Insert Organization] and PCA Georgia encourages everyone in Georgia to help strengthen families in their community this April.

For more ways to get involved in CAP Month, please visit www.PCAGeorgia.org.

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Join Prevent Child Abuse Georgia and help show others how they can make an impact with every day actions to create thriving communities. Sign-up for PCA Georgia’s newsletter to stay involved year round in statewide efforts to create stable, safe, and nurturing environments and relationships.

**Other Recommended Child Abuse Prevention Resource Guides:**

- **CDC’s Essentials for Childhood**
- **CDC’s Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect**
- **Prevention Resource Guide**

You can access and download all of the components included within this toolkit, including images and templates on the [PCA Georgia CAP Month Toolkit Page](http://www.PCAGeorgia.org).

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