



## Child Abuse Prevention Month ▼ April 2007

This year's theme "It Only Takes a Moment", honors the difference individuals can make in the prevention of child abuse. The prevention packet is a way to improve the safety and well-being of children by offering parenting tips, developmental guides, and safety tips to increase the skill, knowledge and confidence of parents and other caregivers. We have also included materials for bringing individuals from diverse backgrounds together in order to build strong communities. We hope as individuals use the packet materials they will continue to make the connection that it only takes a moment to make a difference in the lives of children.

### How To Use The Packet....

Use this packet any way you like in putting together your observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month 2007. You have permission to copy or reprint anything in the packet. Feel free to customize the packet materials and to add the name of your group or local program.

There are samples of a press release, public service announcements and a proclamation for you to use.

### Try a Blue Ribbon Poster Contest....

Instructions for participating in this year's contest are included in the packet. Groups of younger children may want to send pictures or posters. However, please make sure that any submitted drawings are on paper no larger than 11" X 17". Send us your contest winners and the best of them will be used in April 2008.

### Find Prevention Information on the Web....

You can find the latest information on prevention month activities and other prevention information on our website [www.pcat.org](http://www.pcat.org).

### Don't Forget to Fill Out Your Survey....

Filling out the mail-back survey in the packet is very important. We will use your responses to plan for next year's Prevention month packets. You may mail or fax back the survey. We also would appreciate a copy of all the materials you produced and distributed during Prevention month and clippings from your local newspaper.

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This project is funded under an agreement with the state of Tennessee



## Child Abuse Prevention Month ♦ April 2007

### What is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Each April, people across the country join forces to raise awareness of the terrible tragedy of child abuse and neglect and to promote specific ways to join the prevention movement. In fact, Child Abuse Prevention Month has been observed each April since its first presidential proclamation in 1985. Since that time, millions of Americans have participated each year in this crucial public awareness campaign.

Although awareness of child abuse and neglect needs to be a year-round commitment, concentrating our efforts in April serves to focus public attention on the positive solutions to a devastating problem. If everyone in the community takes a moment to prevent child abuse we can make a difference in the lives of children throughout the state of Tennessee.

Through a wide range of activities during April, Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee and many other community groups offer you an opportunity to join this movement. You can be among the Tennessee citizens working to remind everyone about the importance of children in our lives, and how we can all be a part of preventing child abuse and neglect.

Child Abuse Prevention Month activities are one way everyone in a community can play a role in child abuse prevention. It is a way to rally many people in your community to support programs that help parents and children.

You can be involved in Child Abuse Prevention Month in a number of ways:

- **Wear a blue ribbon** as a reminder of child abuse awareness and the need for prevention programs.
- **Attend local events**- contact Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee for a statewide calendar of Child Abuse Prevention Month Activities or look on their website at [www.pcat.org](http://www.pcat.org) for prevention activities.
- **Implement activities** in your own community to draw attention to Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- **Educate yourself and others** about child abuse and its prevention. You can start by visiting [www.pcat.org](http://www.pcat.org) for more information on preventing child abuse and neglect.



## Child Abuse Prevention Month ♦ April 2007

April was first declared “Child Abuse Prevention Month” by Presidential proclamation in 1985. Since then, organizations who are dedicated to protecting children have used this special time of year to acknowledge the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse in all its forms.

### Guidelines for Talking About Child Abuse and Neglect

Thanks to Prevent Child Abuse America’s work with Frameworks Institute, we know that a major barrier to talking about prevention in a meaningful way is the public’s current understanding of child abuse as extreme, dramatic, intentional and criminal. In this scenario, there is little room for many of the preventive programs and services for which we seek support. Thus, here are some general guidelines to consider in communicating about child abuse prevention-particularly during Child Abuse Prevention Month. We hope to increase public understanding of the importance of supporting families to prevent child abuse and neglect. Often the public is only aware of abuse after it happens instead of supporting families before abuse or neglect occurs. Remember it only takes a moment to prevent child abuse and neglect.

#### **Spell out your preventative solutions at the top of the communication.**

The public often believes the only solutions to child abuse lie within the legal system. To make a case for prevention-a vague word on its own-we need to describe actual prevention activities and explain why they are successful. It is up to us to connect the dots for people so that prevention programs make sense to them.

**Include a clear definition of the problem, its causes and solutions** while making your case for prevention. This should be careful not to focus on people in the abusive situation, but rather on the predictable situations in which abusive behavior happens: poverty, divorce, addiction, drug abuse, stress, limited education, job loss, isolation, etc. Language is important here. Instead of referencing parents, talk about the families that children live in and the pressures surrounding them. Prevention programs work to connect families to needed resources, and to ensure healthy development for children. Such programs are likely to pique public interest and support more than those perceived to help “bad parents”.

**Avoid vivid, dramatic details and the focus on the worst cases**, as well as on sexual abuse as the dominant form of abuse, as these only serve to reinforce people’s understanding of abuse as specifically a criminal issue. When exposed primarily to dramatic cases (which the media favor), people tend to conclude that abuse is inevitable because it involves bad people who are bad parents. The solution that makes sense to them then is to remove children from danger and punish those responsible.



**Wherever possible, tell stories of efficacy-** demonstrate how programs and policies have worked for the benefit of children by predicting and addressing abusive situations before they happened. Doing so increases the idea of situations, not people, as the appropriate focus for child abuse interventions.

**Highlight more than the numbers for explaining the prevalence of abuse.** People believe it is a big problem and they tend to overstate it numerically. It is not a good idea to pair prevention activities and announcements with the release of your state's annual child abuse statistics. Remember that if you give these numbers to the media, the story will almost certainly lead with them.

**Stop fighting the fight we've won:** people understand the seriousness of child abuse. It is time to shift to deepening citizens' understanding of the problem and its solutions. We believe child abuse prevention is not receiving adequate public support not because the issue doesn't outrage people, but because they stop at outrage and lack credible solutions beyond reporting.

**Don't issue confusing or conflicting calls to action** such as asking outsiders to both befriend and report troubled families. The message should either be about prevention- family support, parent education, family-friendly policies, child development initiatives-or reporting. Addressing both at the same time is confusing. Promoting support asks the reader for empathy, while issuing calls for people to report asks for vigilance and judgment.

**Try to get multiple actors into the picture** and avoid communications that imply that abuse is only a family issue, solved by outsiders who "save" or "punish." Try to broaden the discussion to the larger community.



## Child Abuse Prevention Month ♦ April 2007

### General Media Tips

**Stay on message.** Narrow your message to one or two central points that you want to get across and stick to them. You do not have to explicitly answer every question a reporter poses. Answer every question in such a way that it reflects your key message. Do not repeat anything a reporter says that is not part of your point, even to disagree with it. For instance, by saying “child abuse is not just dramatic cases of parents killing their children, “ you remind your audience of parents killing children.

**Emphasize that April is about solutions to child abuse.** It’s about prevention, but don’t leave the word “prevention” unexplained. Describe the solutions. Keep in mind that reporters will usually try to move you back to drama and tragedy, but you can stress that child abuse is a problem with solutions that don’t receive the attention they should. Explain that the American public cares deeply about child abuse, but doesn’t know what can be done to prevent child abuse and neglect.

**Reporters will want statistics.** Instead of supplying them with the traditional child abuse statistics on reports, substantiations and deaths, give them stats on efficacy. What works? How many people do you reach with services? What has been the impact of such services?

**Letters to the editor are a great way to reach a general audience.** Keep them short and focused and be sure to include a call to action whether it is to support legislation or to learn more about a program.

# Public Service Announcements

## **: 10- April is Child Abuse Prevention Month in Tennessee**

This April, wear a blue ribbon to show that it only takes a moment to make a difference in the life of a child.

## **: 30-Prevention.**

We understand prevention when it comes to driving too fast, wearing a seat belt, and having enough air in our tires. Helping prevent child abuse takes only a moment. Prevention starts with you. Find out by calling 1-888-383-0994.

## **: 30-Did you hug your child this morning? Did you tell him you love him?**

We all have expectations for our children. Did you know you could help your child reach those expectations by increasing your parenting skills? It only takes a moment to make a difference in your child's life. To find out more information call 1-888-383-0994

## **: 60-April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.**

What will it take to prevent child abuse and neglect? Parents who understand that what they do and say can affect a child for a lifetime. Community members who show they are part of a neighborhood invested in the success of children and families. What can prevent child abuse and neglect? People who take a moment to make a difference in the lives of children, we can prevent child abuse and neglect. Call 1-888-383-0994 for more information.

Sample media release

# XYZ Organization Launches Child Abuse Prevention Month Campaign

For Immediate Release

Date  
Contact Number  
Phone Number

Town Name – XYZ Organization has launched a community public awareness campaign in observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month. To take place throughout April, the campaign theme for the month is “It Only Takes a Moment”. It only takes a moment to make a difference in the life of a child.

Child Abuse Prevention Month has been observed each April since its first presidential proclamation in 1985. Since that time, individuals and organizations have joined together during April to raise the public’s awareness of child abuse and its prevention.

Among those events sponsored by *(insert your organization’s name)* to draw attention to child abuse prevention are *(insert details of events and/or programs)*.

*(Include a paragraph describing your organization or committee, its mission, history and contact information).*

# Proclamation

By virtue of the authority vested in me, I hereby proclaim the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Whereas, preventing child abuse and neglect is a community problem that depends on involvement among people throughout the community; and

Whereas, child maltreatment occurs when people find themselves in stressful situations, without community resources, and don't know how to cope; and

Whereas, the majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that are preventable in an engaged and supportive community; and

Whereas, all citizens should become involved in supporting families in raising their children in a safe, nurturing environment; and

Whereas, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships created among social service agencies, schools, faith communities, civic organizations, law enforcement agencies, and the business community; and

Therefore, I do hereby proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in \_\_\_\_\_ and call upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, and businesses to increase their participation in our efforts to support families, thereby preventing child abuse and strengthening the communities in which we live.

Now therefore I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby recognize April 2007 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in \_\_\_\_\_ and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.



Prevent Child Abuse  
Tennessee

## Blue Ribbon Advocate Awards 2007

Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee awarded its first Blue Ribbon Advocate Award in 2003. These awards are designed to recognize advocates in Tennessee who help prevent and fight child abuse on a daily basis. There are three categories of awards that we are currently accepting nominations for, and they include:

- **Blue Ribbon Prevention Advocate**
- **Blue Ribbon Community Advocate**
- **Blue Ribbon Corporation Advocate**

The **Blue Ribbon Prevention Advocate Award** is for individuals who help fight child abuse in their community through service, commitment, legislative advocacy and volunteerism. Past winners of the Blue Ribbon Prevention Advocate Award include: Trudy Hughes, Executive Director of Blount County Children's Advocacy Center, Representative John Hood, Lynne Luther, retired Executive Director of PCAT and Linda Moynihan, Executive Director of TCSW.

The **Blue Ribbon Community Advocate Award** is for individuals or organizations that dedicate themselves to empowering others in their area. Through volunteerism, donations, organizing events, time and energy they commit to children and families. Past winners of the Blue Ribbon Community Advocate Award include: DCS Child Abuse Prevention Advisory Council, Sarah Fulton of Vanderbilt's Kappa Delta Sorority, Woodbine Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Foresters.

The **Blue Ribbon Corporation Advocate Award** is for corporations that are making the difference in the lives of children thru financial contributions, employees that volunteer and sponsoring event that promote the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Past winners of the Blue Ribbon Corporation Award include Target, Caterpillar, Dr. David Dickerson and City Paper.

If you are interested in nominating someone or an organization for any of the Blue Ribbon Awards please fill out the nomination form and return it to:

Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee  
Attn: Blue Ribbon Advocate Award Committee  
1120 Glendale Lane  
Nashville, TN 37204  
615-383-0994



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Tennessee

# Blue Ribbon Advocate Awards Nomination Form 2007

This is a nomination for (please check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ The Blue Ribbon Prevention Advocate

\_\_\_\_\_ The Blue Ribbon Community Advocate

\_\_\_\_\_ The Blue Ribbon Corporation Advocate

## **Nominee:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City	State	Zip Code
------	-------	----------

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Nominator:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City	State	Zip Code
------	-------	----------

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Nominator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Please read thru the rules and regulations of the nomination form.**

## **Rules and Regulations for Blue Ribbon Advocate Nominations**

### **References:**

Please submit two references with the nomination form. The references should be individuals who are familiar with the advocacy work of the individual or organization. The nominator or persons related to the nominee are not allowed to write letters of references. Please provide name, address, and daytime phone number in the letter of reference.

### **Summary:**

Submit the nomination form, and on a separate sheet of paper, please briefly (2 pages or less) address the nominee's accomplishments in relation to child abuse prevention services and/or advocacy in their community. Discuss the nominee's commitment to improving, expanding, and/or advocating for child abuse prevention and/or services to children and families in their community.

### **Selection Criteria:**

The nomination committee will select award winners based on their demonstrated commitment to improving the lives of children through advocacy and dedication to child abuse prevention intervention in their communities. The length of service, scope of service and impact of service combined with advocacy efforts will help to determine who will be an award winner.

### **Rules:**

All nominees must be residents of Tennessee.  
All nomination forms and letters of reference are due by April 15, 2007.  
The 2007 Blue Ribbon Advocate Awards will be presented at PCAT's Annual Child Abuse Prevention Luncheon in April 2007.

Please mail or fax completed nomination forms and letters of reference to:

**Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee**  
**Attn: Blue Ribbon Advocate Award Committee**  
**1120 Glendale Lane**  
**Nashville, TN 37204**  
**Phone 615-383-0994 Fax 615-383-6089**





## Child Abuse Prevention Month ▼ April 2007

### Blue Ribbon Poster Contest

**Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee** would like to introduce a contest for children in the state of Tennessee. The goal of the contest is to have artwork done by children lining the hallways of the legislature for Child Abuse Prevention Month in 2008. The poster contest is a great way to talk about prevention month activities with schools, churches and civic groups. We suggest that you hold a contest in your local schools, scout group, after school program and churches, using our contest idea, and send us all the posters. Once we have all the posters we will pick a winner from every county. Some of the winners will be displayed during Child Abuse Prevention Month 2008 in the state legislature or in the Prevention Packet.

#### Contest details:

- Children can draw why their family is a “blue ribbon” family.
- Children can draw why their community is a “blue ribbon” community.

Examples of a blue ribbon family would be a special time the family had together such as a special vacation or a special holiday memory. Also children can draw all the members of their family and what makes them special. For instance, a child might want to draw their favorite teacher or their favorite coach.

All contest entries are due by May 1, 2007. The winners will be announced on May 15, 2007. All drawings may be used for events in April 2008. Your participation is greatly appreciated.



Prevent Child Abuse  
Tennessee  
1120 Glendale Lane  
Nashville, TN 37204  
615-383-0994  
615-383-6089 Fax  
1-800-356-6767 Parent

  
**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Tennessee

# Blue Ribbon Poster Contest 2007

Help us find the children and families who will be recognized in April 2008!

**Teacher or Group Leader:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student/Artist:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Student as of September 1, 2007: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please ask the student's parent or guardian to read and sign this:**

**This poster is \_\_\_\_\_'s own work and is a realistic description of our family. I understand that all or part of the drawing may be reprinted in Child Abuse Prevention Month literature and that our real names may be used. I agree that the poster may be used in this way.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mail with the poster to:  
Essay Contest  
Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee  
1120 Glendale Lane  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204





# Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

**The following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect:**

## **The Child**

- ◆ Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- ◆ Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents attention.
- ◆ Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes.
- ◆ Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- ◆ Lacks adult supervision
- ◆ Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- ◆ Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

## **The Parent**

- ◆ Shows little concern for the child
- ◆ Denies the existence of – or blames the child for – the child's problems in school or at home
- ◆ Asks teachers or other caretakers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- ◆ Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless or burdensome
- ◆ Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- ◆ Looks primarily to the children for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs

## **The Parent and Child**

- ◆ Rarely touch or look at each other
- ◆ Consider their relationship entirely negative
- ◆ State that they do not like each other

# Know the warning signs of abuse

Children who are abused may show physical and behavioral signs. You may be this child's only lifeline to safety. Please pay attention to the treatment of children around you. **Child abuse is everyone's business.** If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected in Tennessee, call 1-877-54ABUSE (1-877-542-2873).

## Some general signs children may be suffering from abuse:

- Nervous around adults
- Reluctant to go home
- Very passive and withdrawn
- Tired a lot or complaining of nightmares
- Fearful and anxious
- Sudden changes in school performance or behavior

## Some signs of physical abuse:

- Unexplained burns, bruises, black eyes or other injuries
- Apparent fear of a parent or caretaker
- Faded bruises or healing injuries after missing school

## Some signs of sexual abuse:

- Difficulty walking or sitting, or other indications of injury in the genital area
- Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond what is normal for the child's age
- Running away from home
- Describe a situation that is sexual in nature

## Some signs of emotional abuse:

- Acting overly mature or immature for child's age
- Extreme changes in behavior
- Delays in physical or emotional development
- Attempted suicide
- Lack of emotional attachment to the parent

## Some signs of neglect:

- Poor school attendance
- Begging for or stealing food or money
- Lacking needed medical care
- Being frequently dirty to the degree they become sick
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Saying they stay home alone

***These signs don't prove that a child is being abused. But they could be a signal that the child and his or her family need help.***

Also, know the signs of an abusive adult. Consider the possibility of abuse if a parent or caretaker:

- Seems unconcerned about the child's welfare at school or home
- Sees the child as worthless or a burden
- Avoids discussing the child's injuries or gives conflicting explanations for them
- Abuses drugs or alcohol
- Uses harsh physical discipline or asks other caretakers to use it
- Seems indifferent to the child
- Seems secretive or tries to isolate the child from other others
- Frequently blames, belittles or insults the child.
- Seems isolated from other parents

***These signs don't prove that an adult is an abuser. But they could be a signal that the adult and his or her family need help.***

*Adapted from Prevent Child Abuse America resources.*



## How You Can Help Prevent Child Abuse

There is a lot you can do in your community to help prevent child abuse.

### Be a nurturing parent and make children a priority

If you are a parent, begin today by being a better parent.

- Show your children that you love them everyday. This gives them a sense of security, belonging and support. Catch them being good and give them lots of praise.
- Really listen. Give your children your undivided attention when they are talking-be patient and remember that children move at a different pace when they are talking about their day.
- Spend time with your children. Find some special time for each of your children. Play with them, talk with them, and read with them.

### Reach out to your neighbors

Isolation is often a contributing factor to child abuse. Lack of a support system, and the feelings of being stressed and alone can intensify or heighten problems. If you know of a person who is having a difficult time give them the Tennessee Parents Helpline number. The helpline is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and counselors are available for the Latino community. The number is 1-800-356-6767.

### Know the warning signs of abuse and report it

In Tennessee, call 1-877-54ABUSE to report abuse and neglect. Remember it only takes a moment to make a difference in the life of a child.

### Take part in prevention efforts

Learn how your community supports children and families. A range of programs and services are most likely available, and can use your time and talents. Volunteer at an organization that supports the mission of preventing child abuse and neglect. Make a donation to an organization that puts children first. Become an advocate for children. Contact your local representatives and find out about legislation that will have an impact on children. Raise awareness of child abuse by participating in Child Abuse Awareness Month activities. Remember it only takes a moment to make a difference in the life of a child.

- ◆ Volunteer
- ◆ Make a donation
- ◆ Become an advocate
- ◆ Raise awareness

# Child Abuse Prevention Month ▼ April 2007

## What to do in your community

Below are some suggested activities to bring Child Abuse Prevention Month to your community. With these activities, you can encourage groups of concerned citizens to participate in child abuse prevention activities.

### Blue Ribbon Campaign

Many communities across the country conduct blue ribbon campaigns to draw attention to Child Abuse Prevention Month.

### Ideas for a community blue ribbon campaign

- A blue ribbon committee can be formed to plan and implement the campaign.
- Wear a blue ribbon each day in April, and encourage others to wear them as well.
- Fire and police departments can display blue ribbons on vehicles throughout the month of April.
- City councils, mayors' offices, states' attorney's offices, and other government staff may wish to get involved in child abuse prevention activities, including wearing blue ribbons throughout the month.
- Storeowners can display blue ribbons on doors, windows, light posts, and other visible areas.
- Employees (especially those seen by the public) may wear blue ribbons during April; consider retail, theater and restaurant workers.
- Grocery stores can print information about Child Abuse Prevention Month on grocery bags, receipts and shopping cart inserts.

### Ideas for other Child Abuse Prevention Month Activities

- A media conference is a good way to announce Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- A luncheon or reception can be held honoring Child Abuse Prevention Month and the work being done in your community.
- Mall store windows, business lobbies and bulletin boards can be a place to display materials, posters and brochures concerning child abuse prevention.
- Schools and parent-teacher organizations can be involved with events, essay or poster contests, material distribution, and blue ribbon campaigns.
- Churches, synagogues, and faith communities can also be involved in Child Abuse Prevention Month activities.
- In those areas with city- or county-run utilities, monthly statements may be available for adding messages about Child Abuse Prevention Month and positive parenting.



# Help Make Your Community Better for Children

Children do well when their families do well, and families do better when they live in supportive communities. Do you want to contribute to the well being of youth and families in your community, but are not sure how? Here are some simple ways to create an environment that will allow children to grow into citizens who are willing and able to give back to their communities.

## IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

**Know your neighbors.** Introduce yourself and your family to your neighbors. Know their names and the names of their children. Family's feel safer and less stressed when they know support is nearby. Offer to be that support for your neighbor.

**Keep your neighborhood safe.** Offer to pick up your neighbor's mail when they are out of town, and let them know you can keep an eye on their home. Report burned out streetlights to the city to avoid dark places in your neighborhood.

**Mentor a new parent.** Sometimes families receive a lot of support when the baby first arrives but little support after the first few months, which can leave a new parent feeling overwhelmed. Check in often with a new parent. Sometimes just holding or changing the baby will allow the new mom or dad to shower or fold laundry.

**Offer support to families in need.** Instead of telling a parent to call you if they need anything, offer to make dinner, help with chores or baby-sit their children on a specific day. A little extra help from a neighbor can ease the demands of parenting.

## IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

**Reach out to those in your community.** A wave, a smile or a kind word can make a passerby's day a bit brighter.

**Be a good role model.** Parents are always looking for new parenting techniques and you can help them by setting a good example.

**Celebrate children.** Smile at a child and praise them for doing something well. It will make a parent feel good about their parenting.

**Be active in your community.** Help parents feel supported by starting or participating in playgroups for families at community centers, libraries or schools. This prevents isolation and contributes to healthy child development.

**Volunteer your time.** Start a Circle of Parents® support group, spend time mentoring a child, or start a family-friendly program of your own.

**Distribute parenting materials in your community.** Free parenting flyers and tip sheets are available at [www.pcat.org](http://www.pcat.org) for easy reproduction.



## IN PUBLIC PLACES:

Parenting can be most stressful when running errands with a small child, or a few children in tow. Sometimes parents don't choose the best parenting techniques when their child misbehaves in public. Parents become focused on what needs to be done, such as grocery shopping or the doctor visit, and can feel embarrassed that their child is acting out. Any assistance you can offer a stressed parent will help them feel supported.

**Praise the parent or child at the first opportunity.** Think of something positive and say it! It helps to hear others are supportive of you.

**Identify with the parent.** You can let them know you've been there by saying, "My kids used to do the same thing when they were that age. Is there something I can do to help?"

**Blame the environment.** "This is such a bright and colorful place and filled with things for children to want to touch. I swear the supermarkets have really done a great job creating a place where children just want to run around!"

**Offer assistance.** "You seem to really have your hands full. Can I help you?" or "Can I find someone to come and help you with something?"

**Empathize with the child.** "You don't feel like sitting in that stroller anymore, do you? Well just a little longer and Mommy/Daddy will be all done and you can get out."

If you are concerned about the physical safety of the child **offer assistance.** For example, if a child is left unattended, stand by the child until the parent returns.

# What you and your community can do to help prevent child abuse and neglect.

## Remember

*that children are the future*

Children are our future and their early years have an enormous impact on their future health and success. Child abuse prevention is one result of a firm community commitment to supporting children and the families raising them.

## Recognize

*prevention is a shared responsibility*

Parenting is the toughest job any of us will ever undertake, and our most important civic contribution. As parents we have enormous responsibility to raise our children to be productive members of society, and as citizens we are responsible for ensuring that all parents and families have access to the support, information and services they need to succeed.

## Raise

*the issue of prevention*

We all care about the issue of child abuse. But, we hear a lot more about the problem than we do about the solutions. Preventing child abuse means setting the stage for healthy, stable families who have the tools they need for nurturing their children. Help your community understand *prevention*. Ask your elected officials to support programs and services that help families and children. Contact your local school district and faith community to encourage them to sponsor classes and support programs for new parents.

## Reach out

*to kids & parents*

Anything you do to support kids and parents in your family and extended community helps to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

Be a good neighbor. Offer to baby-sit. Donate your used children's clothing, furniture and toys for use by another family. Be kind and supportive, particularly to new parents and children.

## Recommend

*ideas that your community can use*

There are many programs, services and actions that support families and prevent child abuse.\*

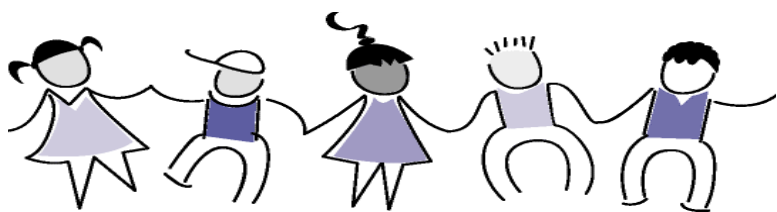
**Facilitate friendships and support.** Offer opportunities for parents in the neighborhood to get to know each other, develop support systems, and take leadership roles. Strategies may include sports teams, potlucks, classes, advisory groups, board leadership and volunteer opportunities.

**Strengthen parenting.** Develop ways for parents to get support on parenting issues when they need it. Possibilities include classes, support groups, home visits, tip sheets in pediatricians' offices and resource libraries.

**Respond to family crises.** Offer extra support to families when they need it, as in times of illness, job loss, housing problems and other stressors.

**Link families to services and opportunities.** Make sure families know where to go for job training, education, health care, mental health and other essential services.

\*Adapted from *Building on Strengths: Enhancing Protective Factors for Children and Families*, National Clearinghouse of Child Abuse and Neglect Information.



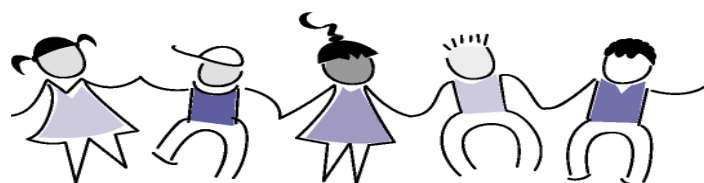
## **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**

**Wear This Blue Ribbon to  
Show That You Care**

### **The Blue Ribbon Story**

In the spring of 1989, a Virginia grandmother began the blue ribbon campaign as a tribute to her grandson. The three-year old died at the hands of his mother's abusive boyfriend. Since that time, concerned citizens all over the country have worn the blue ribbon as a symbol of the need to prevent child abuse and neglect..

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**Be a Blue Ribbon Parent**

Show your children that you love them. Really listen to your children. Spend time with your children. Plan fun family events.

**Be a Blue Ribbon Family**

Spend time together.  
Respect one another.  
Create family traditions to help everyone feel connected.

**Be a Blue Ribbon Kid**

Be kind.  
Solve problems with brainpower, not fists, hurtful words or weapons.  
Help others in need.  
Be a good friend.

**Make yours a blue ribbon community.**

Help parents you know, offer to baby-sit.  
Volunteer to help the community.  
Learn how to prevent child abuse and neglect.

**Call the Parent Helpline  
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# The oment is NOW...

## How to Build Self-Esteem in Children

- Children will model the behavior they see at home. If you yell at your child they will yell at their friends, brothers and sisters, other adults and you because that is what they see you doing.
- Remember that children are always listening to what the adults around them are saying so always say positive things about the child to them and about other people.
- Spend quality time with your child. Turn off the television and play games with your children, read to them or go for a walk. Your children will enjoy getting to spend quality time with their parent.
- If you have more than one child, remember to spend alone time with each child. This will let you be able to talk to the child about how school is going, and find out what is going on with each child.
- Avoid backhand praise. This mixes praise and insult. Say, "I'm glad you got it done," instead of "It's about time." Try saying, "you look good in blue" instead of "I'm glad you are wearing something besides all that black you and your friends like."
- When your child is misbehaving make sure to discipline the behavior you do but not make the child feel bad about themselves.
- Remember to give your child lots of praise and encouragement.
- Avoid comparing children to each other. Every child is going to be different so make sure to make each child feel special for there own uniqueness.
- Give your child lots and lots of hugs!!!!

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## How to Build Self-Esteem in Teenagers

These tips will help you build self-esteem for your teenager:

- Teenagers will act like the adults around them, set a good example for your teenager.
- Let your teenager have some responsibility such as coming home at a designated time on the weekends. Make sure that if the teenager breaks a rule, there is a consequence. The consequence could be grounding or not letting the teenager have their cell phone.
- Talk with your teenager about their goals for the future, and let them know that you are supportive of their goals. Help your teenager think about goals for the future by talking about what your goals were when you were their age.
- Let your teenager talk about their beliefs. Even though you may not agree with them, it is a good way for teenagers to be able to express themselves.
- Don't be too critical of your teenager. Teenage years are difficult and many teens are very critical of themselves. Find ways to encourage your teen.
- Help your teenager remember to think positive about them.
- Ask your teenager where they are going, who they are going with, and what they are going to be doing. Call other parents and verify that your teenager is allowed to come over. Also have your teen call you and check in throughout the evening.
- Find out who your teenager's friends are, make sure they are good teenagers who are not involved in bad activities. Try to meet the parents of your teenager's friends so that you will feel comfortable calling them if you have concerns.
- Set limits for your teen; don't be afraid to say "no." It lets them know that there are boundaries in life and sometimes we don't get to do what we want to do.
- Encourage your teenager to get a part-time job. A part-time job will allow the teenager to learn responsibility and have the ability to pay for some of their own items. This is an excellent way to teach a teenager about the value of money.

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# The oment is NOW...

## Parents-Teenager Relationships are Important to Adolescent Success

### 4 Key Factors

#### Relationships

- Teens who have warm, involved, and satisfying relationships with their parents are more likely to do well in school, be academically motivated and engaged, have better social skills and have lower rates of risky sexual behavior than their peers.
- Conversely, teens with poor relationships with their parents are more likely to have psychological and other problems.

#### Modeling

- Teens whose parents demonstrate positive behaviors on a number of fronts are more likely to engage in those behaviors themselves, and teens whose parents take part in risky behaviors are more likely to do the same.

#### Monitoring/Awareness

- Parents who know about their children's activities, friends, and behaviors, and monitor them in age appropriate ways, have teens with lower rates of risky physical and sexual behaviors, as well as lower rates of drug, alcohol and tobacco use than their peers.
- Teens who perceive that their parents are taking on this monitoring role are more likely to do well academically and socially.

#### Approach to Parenting

- Teens whose parents are supportive and caring, but who also consistently monitor and enforce family rules, are more likely to be motivated and successful in school, as well as psychologically and physically healthy.
- Teens whose parents are overly strict and do not give them any independence are more likely to engage in risky behavior.
- Teens whose parents are warm but permissive, tend to be impulsive and engage in risky behavior.

From Child Trends Research Brief, #2002-57

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## Dealing with Stress as a Parent

Every parent experiences stress at times. Keeping these tips in mind can help you stay in control when parenting your children:

- Maintain a routine. Try to get 6 to 8 hours of sleep a day.
- Exercise at least 30 minutes, 3 times a week.
- Build a support network-find other mothers who are in similar situations as you are and talk about the stresses going on in each other's lives. It helps to have friends who will listen and will also share their stresses in life.
- When you need support, parenting tips, someone to listen or help you problem solve call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-356-6767.
- Practice breathing in and out slowly while counting to 20.
- If you feel you are out of control, call the DCS Reporting Hotline at 1-877-54-ABUSE and 911.
- Find a hobby or interest that you like, making time for your hobby will help you relax.
- Pay a babysitter to come to your house once a month so that you can have a night out to go see a movie or do something you enjoy.
- Ask for help if you need it. Speak with your parents, your pastor at your church or a friend if you need help. Everyone needs help once in a while.
- Think about how happy parenting makes you, stay calm with your children and they will be calmer too.
- Remember to think positive things about yourself, parenting is hard work and you are doing a good job.

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# The oment is NOW...

## How to Help Abused Children in Your Classroom

Children who are victims of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect need reassurance that they are worthwhile. For some children, the teacher may represent their only opportunity for a positive relationship. These children also need:

- **Security.** All children need to feel safe, and to know they can trust you; that you will not embarrass them by telling others of their problem or by scolding them in public. They need to know that you look forward to seeing them each day and that they belong in the group.
- **Structure.** Routines help children feel secure. Insecure students may need very specific instructions. In time, the child will feel more confident and will need less direction from you. However, each child needs structure to a different degree. Adjust for individual differences.
- **Consistency and predictability.** These students have experienced considerable upheaval and probably much family dysfunction. They need to be able to predict your behavior and know exactly what you expect of them. Describe new situations beforehand. Erratic changes in your behavior could make the child feel insecure and afraid to trust you. Be consistent in your relationship with the child. For example, don't lavish attention one day and ignore them the next. If you behave in a consistent manner so will the child.
- **Self Esteem.** Help develop the child's self esteem by providing positive information to the child about him/herself. Look for their strengths and point them out. The child needs to know he/she is likable.
- **Sense of belonging.** Display the child's work along with the rest of the class. Put the child's desk where s/he is very much a part of the group. Praise and encourage any involvement in group activities.
- **Touch in appropriate ways.** With all abused children and particularly for a sexually abused child, be cautious about touching until you have established a good relationship and then only touch with permission.
- **Approval.** A smile, a note on their paper-whatever you are comfortable with to show that you like him/her or what they did.
- **Help expressing their feelings.** Children who have been victimized may act out with anger, withdrawal from others or seem anxious, hyper or clingy. Help the child find words for their feelings.
- **Reassurance** that you are available to discuss things that trouble the child.

Reprinted from the The National Children's Advocacy Center

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## Helping Your Child Use the Potty

Learning to use the toilet can start when a child has:

### 1. Physical Ability:

- Able to walk.
- Has a larger bladder; so urinates fewer times a day.
- Wakes up from nap with a dry diaper.
- Can control the muscles that hold and release urine and bowel movements.
- Can take underwear off and put it back on.

### 2. Mental Ability:

- Understands the signals for needing to use the toilet.
- Understands words such as “peepee,” “poopoo”, and “potty.”
- Understands what is expected, such as when to go, what to do and where to do it.

### 3. Social and Emotional Ability:

- Can express needs, such as discomfort when they soil a diaper and can tell you about it.
- Wants to learn to use the toilet.

How can you help your child learn?

- Parents should agree on when a child is ready and what to do.
- Make sure child can easily get to toilet. Provide a potty chair in the bathroom. Place toilet paper within easy reach.
- Dress the child in clothing that is easy to take off such as a dress, skirt or pants with an elastic waste.
- Use cloth-training pants. Disposable paper-training pants will seem like diapers to a child.
- Help your child overcome any fears of the toilet. The deep hole and loud flushing noise can seem scary.
- Watch for signs that your child may need to go; such as frowning and holding their crotch.
- Praise your child for using the toilet.
- Never scold or shame a child for an accident. These are natural body functions and children easily forget and get distracted.
- If a child has lots of accidents, go back to diapers for a while. Try again when the child seems ready.

Remember, unless the child is ready, it will be much harder to potty train.

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## How To Be A Positive Parent

**Praise Effort:** Children learn at a fast paced and so you should always offer children praise whether they succeed or not.

**Be A Role Model:** Children watch and learn behaviors from those around them. Taking time and practicing to get it right will ensure that children will behave right as they mirror your actions.

**Positive Play:** Children learn social skills through playtime. Let your child make decisions about what to play, this will help them develop their leadership skills.

**Keep Trying:** Parenting is the toughest job you will ever have. There isn't a "perfect" parent out there. Just like your child you are learning and must accept it is okay to make mistakes and ask for help.

**Be Encouraging:** As often as possible, take notice when your child does something right and praise the behavior immediately. Children remember and react better to positive messages than negative messages.

**Set Limits and Boundaries:** Children need limits and boundaries to feel safe. They test those boundaries to make sure they really exist. Be consistent in the enforcement of your rules.

**Be Reliable:** Work with your child to find fair solutions to a problem. Your child will trust you with their concerns.

**Don't Bribe:** Bribing your children sends the wrong message to them, plus it gets expensive. Use positive reinforcement for positive behaviors. Work with your child to change negative behaviors.

**Remember Discipline is Not Punishment:** Make sure your behaviors are in check before expecting your child to behave appropriately. Discipline is not yelling, spanking or threatening. It is about teaching, reinforcing, demonstrating consistency, and is often unemotional. Reacting without anger, frustration, or despair allows the issue at hand to come into focus, not an emotional reaction.

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# The oment is NOW...

## Information on Sexual Predators

The first physical contact between predator and victim is often nonsexual touching designed to identify limits: an "accidental" touch, an arm around the shoulder, brushing a child's hair. Nonsexual touching makes the child trust the person, which can lead to more overt sexual touching—the predator's ultimate goal. Predators often work on developing an emotional bond that leads to physical contact with a child called "grooming". Predators use this process to break down a child's defenses and increase the child's acceptance of touch.

The predator will attempt to forge a bond through these steps:

- Trying to win your confidence and support
- Portraying themselves as caring and concerned about the well-being of a child
- Trying to have access to the child on ongoing basis
- Testing the child to see how much they can get away with
- Identifying and engaging their victim
- Gaining the child's trust
- Manipulating or controlling the child
- Visiting places where children like to go: school, the park, skating rink, etc...
- Enticing with gifts, offering to give rides, or playing games
- Targeting children with obvious vulnerabilities: loneliness, unpopular, children with family problems, children with low self-esteem, and children who are isolated
- Trying to create a "special" bond by identifying with child's unique situation
- Finding and filling a void in a child's life
- If you suspect sexual abuse of a child call the DCS Hotline at 1-877-54-ABUSE

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## Normal Sexual Development of Children 10-14

Pre-adolescent children (ages 10-12) are more focused on social relationships and expectations, and begin to experience clearer sexual feelings.

Children touch, fondle, and rub their own genitals throughout childhood, but they begin to more clearly masturbate during this time, developing clearer patterns into and beyond puberty (ages 12/13 and up).

By puberty and adolescence, body parts and sexual organs are clearly developing, and puberty brings the onset of menstruation in girls and more routine masturbation for both boys and girls, and especially boys.

Girls may develop pubic hair and breasts as early as age 9 or 10.

Boy's penis and testicles may start to develop at age 10 or 11.

Dating and more intense sexual relationships begin and deepen, moving from thinking about and discussing romances, to dating, kissing, sexual petting, and, in many cases, sexual relationships and intercourse.

Children at this age are also more self-conscious and may feel uncomfortable undressing in front of others.

But it is important to distinguish between age appropriate and age inappropriate sexual behaviors.

Many children engage in sexual behaviors and show sexual interests throughout their entire childhood, even though they have not yet reached puberty.

However, normal sexual behavior is usually not:

- overtly sexual
- is more exploratory and playful in nature,
- a preoccupation with sexual interactions
- hostile, aggressive, or hurtful to self or others

If you suspect your child has been sexually abused call the DCS Reporting hotline at 1-877-54-ABUSE

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## Normal Sexual Development of Children 7 to 10

- School-age children to explore their bodies.
- Children this age begin to seek information about sex and look for books and diagrams that explain curiosity about sexuality at this age takes the form of playing games such as, “ I'll show you mine if you show me yours.”
- Boys at this age compare penis size.
- Children of this age become interested in sex words and dirty jokes.
- Limited interest in the opposite sex may be evident in 6 - 10 year olds.
- Children at this age are interested in their own and other's bodies, particularly if changes in their bodies begin to occur.
- Feelings of needing privacy emerge at this age.
- At this age, most children will have developed an established sense of female or male identity.
- Some children will show early signs of puberty (e.g., starting their period)
- Children at this age have a basic understanding of the process of human reproduction, understands proper terminology for sexulaity related body parts, and has a basic understanding of sexual orientation
- Children at this age occasional masturbate. For some children at this age, masturbation may begin to take on a pleasure oriented rather than a relaxation focus.
- If you suspect your child has been sexually abused call the DCS Reporting Hotline at 1-877-54-

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## Normal Sexual Development of Children 1 to 3

### Is it okay for toddlers to be curious about sex?

- It's okay and perfectly normal and healthy for toddlers to be interested in sex.
- Even infants are curious about their bodies.
- Both boys and girls are curious about sex and may have sexual behaviors.
- Sexual behavior is normal and healthy in toddlers.

### What kind of sexual behaviors are okay?

- Masturbation in toddlers is usually nothing to worry about. Kids touch their bodies because they are curious and because it feels good.
- If your child is preoccupied with masturbation (cannot be distracted from doing it), it could be a sign of a behavioral problem or sexual abuse.
- Children are curious about naked bodies. It is not unusual for toddlers to "play doctor" (to show other children their body parts).
- Children may also be curious about women's breasts and want to touch them, especially if they have a younger brother or sister who is being breastfed.
- Kids may copy adult sexual behavior they have seen at home or on TV. For example, children might hug passionately or lay on top of one another.
- If you suspect your child has been sexually abused call the DCS Reporting Hotline at 1-877-54-

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## Normal Sexual Development of Children 4 to 6

### Normal

- Genital or reproduction conversations with peer or similar age siblings
- Show me yours/ I'll show you mine with peers
- Playing "doctor"
- Imitating seduction (i.e., kissing, flirting)
- Dirty words or jokes within cultural or peer group norm

### Yellow Flags

- Attempting to expose others genitals
- Sexual graffiti
- Preoccupation with sexual themes (especially sexually aggressive)
- Preoccupation with masturbation
- Simulating foreplay with dolls or peers with clothing on (petting, French kissing)

### Red Flags

- Touching genitals of others
- Inducing fear/ threats of force
- Sexually explicit conversations with significant age difference

If you suspect your child has been sexually abused call the DCS Reporting Hotline at 1-877-54-ABUSE

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# The oment is NOW...

## How to Help Your Toddler During the Terrible Two's

- Always speak kindly even when speaking firmly.
- Child proof your home. Place out of reach things that could be broken or pulled off of the shelf. This will keep your child from getting into things that could be dangerous to them.
- When talking to your toddler about a bad behavior, keep it short and simple such as "We don't bite. Biting hurts."
- Provide a consistent schedule. Try really hard to put your child to bed at the same time every night, make sure that nap time is the same time everyday. Doing the same thing at the same time every day will help your toddler feel safe.
- When 2 year olds don't want to what you ask, you can often draw their attention away from things you don't want them to do by giving them a different toy, moving them to a different spot in the room, or giving them an interesting book to look at as a new option.
- Create a special place that is only used for time out. If a child is acting out tell them to stop and place them in the special place for time out.
- Never yell at your child.
- Never use bribery, threats or physical discipline with your child.
- Don't expect your toddler to act like an adult. Toddlers need you to stay in control and provide a safe consistent schedule for them.
- Use games to get your toddler to help pick up their toys. Play their favorite song and see if the toddler can put away all their toys before it is over.
- Reward the child for good behavior. A reward can be allowing the toddler to watch their favorite DVD or having their favorite healthy snack.

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## **When A Babysitter Is Needed**

### **Before leaving your child with a sitter, ask yourself:**

- Is the person old enough and mature to care for my child?
- Is the person trustworthy and reliable?
- Does this person know how to care for a child my child's age?
- How does this person discipline children?
- How does this person handle stressful situations such as my baby crying, being difficult or not following rules?
- What do others know about the qualities of this person as a sitter?
- Does this person have a problem with violence, alcohol, drugs, the law, temper or caring for themselves?
- How well does this person handle emergencies such as my baby choking or a fire?
- Will this person supervise and watch my child?
- Will my child feel safe and comfortable with this person?

### **Before the sitter arrives ask yourself if you, your child, and home are prepared:**

- Did the sitter meet your child beforehand?
- Did you talk to your child about family rules and what to expect while you are gone.
- Do you have a first aid kit?
- Is your home free from all safety hazards?
- Have you prepared enough formula, bottles, diapers, meals and activities?

### **Before you leave are you and the babysitter clear about:**

- Your rules and expectations about what the babysitter can and cannot do?
- Your expectations for disciplining and watching your child?
- Your child's routine, activities and any likes/dislikes?
- Any medical conditions, allergies, injuries or special needs your child may have?
- Instructions for any medications your child needs to take?
- When to expect you back and what to do if there is a problem?

### **Before leaving have you posted and given to the babysitter:**

- Your name and the children's name with their ages
- The home's telephone number
- How to contact you in case of an emergency
- Phone numbers of a relative or neighbor in case you cannot be reached
- 911 for Emergency Services, number for poison control, and number for doctor

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# The oment is NOW...

## Tips for Getting Your Child to Sleep

Children need sleep. All children need at least 10 hours of sleep at night. Younger children will need more than 10 hours of sleep at night.

These tips will help you and your child make bedtime better:

- Keep a regular schedule, seven days a week.
- Make sure the bedroom is cool, dark, quiet and comfortable
- Do the same things every night. This ritual could consist of bath, discussing the day and story time.
- Get rid of televisions, radios and phones in the bedroom, they will make bedtime become wild time.
- If you have trouble getting your child to go to bed create a chart that shows all the steps before going to bed, such as taking a bath, brushing your teeth, using the bathroom and reading. Have your child check off each item as they are completed. If your child can't read then cut out pictures for them to look at.
- Create a bedtime pass to use with kids who get out of bed repeatedly. The bedtime pass will allow the child to get out of bed for one more thing. Start with one or two cards. Each time a child makes a request, he or she has to hand over a card. Once all the cards are turned in, no more requests.
- Start a sticker chart where your child can earn stickers for not calling out in the night, staying in bed, or whatever they may be having trouble doing. Awards could be trips to the library or a family bike ride.

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## Tips for Teachers on How to Keep Children Safe

As a teacher, your role in protecting children from victimization is critical. Schools represent the single largest source of reports of child abuse and neglect to state authorities. Why? Because you have daily contact with children, they often feel safe in your classroom and they may trust you enough to tell you if abuse is occurring. Many schools have policies regarding reporting child abuse, but please remember the following when interacting with a child who may have been abused or neglected:

1. Move to a location with as much privacy as possible. Stand or sit next to the child while talking. Help the child feel as comfortable as possible.
2. Listen carefully to what the child is saying. Communicate to the child that you are listening by using good eye contact, nodding your head, or making a gentle comment, etc. Even if you feel shocked, angry or upset, try to focus on being there for the child.
3. Give honest information and answers. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so and indicate you'll try to find the answer.
4. Report the suspected abuse to the DCS Reporting Hotline 1-877-54-ABUSE as soon as possible. Taking action is critical.

### Important Messages to Give Child Victims

- I believe you and what you are telling me.
- You did the right thing by telling me.
- It isn't your fault.
- I want you to be safe. You deserve to be safe.
- Abuse has happened to other children: you are not alone.
- I'm going to get help for you.

### Things to Avoid

- Don't make promises to the child; you might not be able to keep them later.
- Don't ask "why" questions or pressure the child to talk.
- Never tell the child you'll keep a secret, even if the child suggests he won't tell the story unless you pledge secrecy.

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Tennessee Parent Helpline  
1800-356-6767  
24 Hours a Day 7 Days a  
Week



# The oment is NOW...

## Tips To Handle Your Anger

### Things to do instead of blowing up and yelling at your child:

- **Remember** that anger is an emotion. Tell yourself “It’s O.K. to be angry. I choose to use my anger constructively.”
- **Don’t open your mouth** to talk aloud when angry words start to arise.
- **Breathe deeply**, then state your anger in a firm voice, “I feel angry, when you\_\_\_\_\_.”
- **Distract yourself** for a short time before going into problem solving by: reciting the days of the week, counting to ten, taking a walk, etc.
- **Bypass** a negative anger reaction by determining what is needed to correct the situation without trying to blame someone.
- If you continue to get angry with your child, **take a parenting class**.
- If you have lots of stress in your life besides the everyday stress of being a parent, you might want to think about **talking to a counselor**.
- **Take care** to get proper rest. Take a nap or bubble bath while your child naps.
- **Spend quality time with yourself**. Schedule special times with your spouse or your friends. Find time to take a bath, look at a magazine, read a book or talk to a friend. Any of these will give you a chance to take care of yourself and feel relaxed and ready to go.
- If you feel you might hurt your child call the **DCS Reporting Hotline** at 1-877-54-ABUSE

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# The oment is NOW...

## What Can Happen to Children Left in a Hot Car

### What's the danger?

- The temperature inside a car (even with the windows rolled down a little) can quickly rise above 120 to 140 degrees. These temperatures can kill a baby in a matter of minutes.
- Even on a mild day, the temperature inside a car can get above 100 degrees. At those temperatures, kids are at great risk for:
  - heat stroke
  - high fever
  - dehydration
  - seizures
  - stroke
  - death
- If you think you will only be gone a few minutes remember a car sitting in the summer sun quickly turns into an oven, and temperatures can reach a level to hurt a baby in just three minutes. degrees in just three minutes, and to 125 degrees in six to eight minutes.

### Safety Tips

To keep your kids safe:

- take your baby with you every time you leave your car.
- don't leave children in a car, which can quickly heat up, especially on a hot, sunny day.
- always lock your car and secure the keys so that your kids can't get to them.
- don't leave younger children in a car to supervise a baby.
- warn your kids about playing in the car by themselves without adult supervision.
- take your baby with you every time you leave your car.
- know where your children are playing and check on them frequently, calling out to them and listening for a response.

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# The oment is NOW...

## What to Do If Your Baby Won't Stop Crying

- Check to see if the baby is hungry
- Burp the baby
- Check to see if the baby needs a dry diaper
- Hold the baby
- Rock the baby
- Sing to the baby
- Read to the baby
- Swaddle the baby in a blanket
- Take the baby for a walk outside
- Put baby in the car and drive around
- Turn on the vacuum, shower, fan, dryer, ...these noises can often soothe a baby because they mimic sounds from the womb
- Make swooshing sounds
- Skin to skin contact
- Dance with the baby
- Put the baby in a swing

Remember: Babies cry! This is how they communicate with us about what they need. If you find yourself getting stressed out take a break – count to 10, call the Parent Helpline at 1-800-356-6767, get someone to come and watch the baby for you, take deep breaths, rest when your baby is resting, go for a walk. If you feel yourself getting angry or upset, put the baby in a safe place and go to another room. A crying baby doesn't make you a bad parent – sometimes a baby just needs to cry.

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# The oment is NOW...

## When Your Child Acts Out in Public

If you can't get your child under control and you are in a public place, then remove yourselves from the public eye. If you are in a public place then try to find some privacy in an empty room, bathroom, or even your car.

Sometimes taking control and giving everyone some breathing room will defuse the situation, but if not then ask yourself 3 questions:

- 1.) Is there a physical cause for why your child is acting out? (tired, hungry, over stimulated)
- 2.) Is there anything else going on in your child's life that might be causing him stress?
- 3.) Has your child matured or moved into a different phase of development since your last discipline strategy was developed?

After reviewing these three questions then ask your child what is going on. Ask him what he thinks the consequences should be.

### Extra Tips:

- Give the child something to do that he can't do while misbehaving. "Help me pick out six oranges".
- Offer two positive alternatives to stop inappropriate behavior: "Would you like to choose the cereal or select the apples?"
- Talk about them positively to others. When you get home tell someone " You should have seen Johnny at the grocery store. He did such a good job helping me pick out the fruit."
- Talk with them not to them. Focus on two-way communication. Listen as well as talk.
- Instead of yelling and screaming surprise your child by lowering your voice to a whisper. This often gets their immediate attention and helps you stay in control.
- Get on your child's eye level. Look him/her in the eye while talking to them softly.
- Plan to go to the grocery store or run errands around your child's nap time or lunchtime, so they aren't sleepy or hungry when you go.

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# The oment is NOW...

## What to Do if Your Child Acts Out in School

### 1.) Assess the situation.

- spend time in your child's classroom (volunteer as an aide for a day or two)

### 2.) Check out your child's relationship with her teacher.

- this dynamic can make or break a child's experience in the classroom

### 3.) Work with the teacher.

- just having to sit still during class is a big challenge for some children

### 4.) Strategize.

- brainstorm with the teacher about how to make school go well for your child

### 5.) Give your child a break.

- if you can try taking a day off from school and work every once in a while to do something with your child that she really enjoys.

### 6.) Help your child remember that you care about her.

- knowing that she is loved can pull a child out of a downward spiral

### 7.) Tell your child that she can decide where her mind goes.

- if your child is having a miserable day at school, she can think of you, or the fun she will have after school

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# Child Abuse Prevention Month Participation/Packet Evaluation Form

It is important for us to get feedback on the Child Abuse Prevention Month Packet, to find out how you used these resources, and to learn of and acknowledge your participation in this important month-long observance. Please complete the following and return to Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee.

## This year, we participated by:

- Implementing a Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign or holding a special activity.

Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

This was a first time  or repeat  event.

- Sending out press releases announcing activities.

Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

- Submitting or printing newsletter articles about Child Abuse Prevention Month

Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

- Reproducing and distributing materials throughout the community

Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

The packet of materials you received from Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee was:

- Very Helpful       Somewhat helpful       Not helpful

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments or suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City & Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please add me to the Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee network.



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Tennessee

Please submit survey to:

1120 Glendale Lane

Nashville, TN 37204

615-383-0994

615-383-6089 Fax

1-800-356-6767 Tennessee Parent Helpline