

APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



During the month of April, Heartland for Children partners with other child serving agencies to implement the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign for Child Abuse Prevention Month. During the month, initiatives focus on holding family-friendly events, educating the public about how they can help to prevent child abuse and providing resources to advocates and families to help strengthen families.

Building healthy communities takes work. We all have a responsibility to ensure children have positive experiences, and help families have the resources they need, when they need them.



Here are some ways that you can get involved in #ChildAbusePreventionMonth:

- Wear Blue on Friday, April 4th and share on social media about how you support happy and healthy childhoods. Be sure to use #HFCWearsBlue
- Paint one fingernail blue and start conversations wherever you go
- Create awareness with your friends with Social Media Posts
- Share a Child Abuse Prevention Poster
- Share 10 Tips to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect
- Plant a Pinwheel Garden



Upcoming Events

Hardee County School Board Proclamation

Monday, March 17th at 5:00PM

School Board Meeting Room, 230 South Florida Ave, Wauchula, FL

City of Sebring

Tuesday, March 18th at 5:30PM

368 S. Commerce Ave, Sebring, FL

City of Avon Park

Monday, March 24th at 6:00PM

City Council Chambers - 123 E. Pine St. Avon Park

City of Winter Haven Proclamation

Monday, March 24th at 6:00PM

451 Third Street N.W. Winter Haven, FL

Highlands County School Board Proclamation

Tuesday, March 25th at 5:30PM

426 School Street, Sebring, FL

Hardee Board of County Commissioners Proclamation

Thursday, March 27th at 8:30AM

412 W. Orange St. Wauchula, FL

Highlands Board of County Commissioners Proclamation

Tuesday, April 1st at 9:00AM

600 S. Commerce Ave. Sebring FL 33870

City of Lake Wales Proclamation

Wednesday, April 2nd at 6:00PM

201 W. Central Ave Lake Wales, FL

Haines City Proclamation

Thursday, April 3rd at 7:00PM

620 E. Main Street Haines City, FL 33844

Wear Blue Day

Friday, April 4th

Post a selfie of yourself wearing blue and tag Heartland for Children on social media with #WearBlueDay2025.

City of Lakeland Proclamation

Monday, April 7th at 9:00AM

228 S. Massachusetts Ave. Lakeland, FL

City of Bartow

Monday, April 7th at 6:00PM

Commissioner Chambers at City Hall - 450 N. Wilson Ave, Bartow

Talking Points for CAP Month

Why Child Abuse Prevention Matters

- Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing home.
- Child abuse and neglect can have **lifelong effects** on physical and mental health, but **prevention is possible**.
- Strengthening families and supporting caregivers reduces the risk of child abuse and helps children thrive.

How You Can Help Prevent Child Abuse

- **Be a supportive friend or neighbor** – offer encouragement, lend a helping hand, or check in on families in your community.
- **Know the signs of abuse and neglect**, such as unexplained injuries, fearfulness, or changes in behavior. If you suspect abuse, call the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).
- **Support organizations working to prevent child abuse**, like Heartland for Children, by volunteering, donating, or spreading awareness.
- **Advocate for policies and programs** that strengthen families, such as parental support services, early childhood education, and access to mental health care.

The Power of Prevention: Strengthening Families

- Prevention starts with **strong communities**. When families have access to **education, resources, and support**, they are less likely to experience crises.
- **Protective factors** that help prevent abuse include:
 - **Parental resilience** – managing stress and tough situations.
 - **Knowledge of parenting & child development** – understanding a child's needs at every stage.
 - **Social connections** – having a network of support.
 - **Concrete support in times of need** – access to food, housing, and health care.
 - **Social-emotional development in children** – helping kids learn to express emotions in a healthy way.

Symbol of Hope: The Pinwheel

- The blue pinwheel is the national symbol for Child Abuse Prevention, representing hope, joy, and a bright future for all children.
- Pinwheels will be displayed throughout the community in April—when you see them, take a moment to reflect on ways you can help support children and families.

Get Involved in Child Abuse Prevention Month

- Wear **blue** on Friday, April 4th for **Wear Blue Day** to show your support!
- Attend local family-friendly events and awareness activities throughout April.
- Follow and share resources from Heartland for Children to educate others.
- Join the conversation online using #GreatChildhoods, #CAPMonth, #HFCPinwheels.

By coming together, we can **create a world where all children feel safe, loved, and supported**.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Pinwheels for
PREVENTION[®]

Prevent Child Abuse
Florida[™]



SCAN ME

In support of
happy, healthy childhoods

For more information about how you can get involved with child abuse prevention visit:

heartlandforchildren.org
preventchildabusefl.org

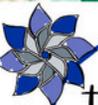




How you can help prevent child abuse and neglect



Be a good neighbor
BEING A PARENT ISN'T EASY. OFFER TO BABYSIT SO PARENT(S) CAN RUN ERRANDS, TAKE A TIME-OUT OR SIMPLY SPEND TIME TOGETHER.



Learn the signs of abuse and neglect.



ENCOURAGE LOCAL SCHOOLS OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO OFFER parenting education.



Start a parent support group

SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK TO WHO HAS BEEN THERE BEFORE.



Take care of yourself

WHEN BIG AND LITTLE PROBLEMS BECOME TOO MUCH, TAKE A TIME OUT! DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON YOUR CHILD.



Know the risk factors.

- SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- SOCIAL ISOLATION
- STRESS
- ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

ALL INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

Learn how to cope with crying.

CRYING IS NATURAL FOR BABIES BUT IT CAN BE VERY FRUSTRATING WHEN YOUR BABY WON'T STOP!



LEARN WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT PARENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND SHARE THE INFORMATION WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS.



Volunteer in your community.

FIND OUT ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED WITH PREVENTION PROGRAMS, CONTACT YOUR

LOCAL CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER, BECOME A GUARDIAN AD LITEM OR USE YOUR VOICE TO ADVOCATE FOR FAMILY FRIENDLY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Help distribute parent education materials.



Make a donation

TO AN ORGANIZATION THAT WORKS TO PREVENT ABUSE.

DONATE YOUR TIME, MONEY OR OTHER RESOURCES TO SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORT PARENTS.



Promote Respect



TREAT CHILDREN THE WAY YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED. THIS WILL SERVE AS A MODEL TO EVERYONE WHO SEES YOU.



Mentor a new parent

CHILDREN DON'T COME WITH INSTRUCTION MANUALS.



Adopt a family.

FAMILIES NEED HELP WITH LOTS OF DIFFERENT ISSUES. BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS CAN HELP GET FAMILIES THROUGH STRESSFUL TIMES.



Report

SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT.



SIX PROTECTIVE FACTORS



Families who can meet their **own basic needs** for food, clothing, housing, and transportation - and who know how to access essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services to address family-specific needs and are **better able to ensure the safety and well-being** of their children.

Concrete Support



Children's early experiences of being nurtured and developing a **positive relationship** with caring adults **affects all aspects** of behavior and development.

Social and Emotional Competence



Research consistently shows children who receive **affection and nurturing from a consistent caregiver** have the best chance of growing up to be happy, healthy and productive. Research also shows these children **do better** academically, behaviorally, and have an **increased ability to cope with stress**.

Nurturing and Attachment



Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Children **thrive** when parents provide **not only affection**, but also respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and **safe opportunities** that promote independence.



Social Connections

Parents with a social network of **emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors** often find that it is **easier to care** for their children and themselves.



Resilience

Parents who can cope with the **stresses of everyday life**, as well as an occasional crisis, have **resilience**; they have the flexibility and inner strength necessary to **bounce back** when things are not going well.



ACEs can have devastating impacts on long-term health.

When a child experiences adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), it can have life-long consequences for physical and mental health. But, one caring adult can make a difference. That's why we know building protective factors in parents, communities and businesses is important.