



## Family Strengthening Toolkit

Each April, people join the national movement to promote Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month to raise awareness that child abuse is preventable. At the Child Abuse Prevention Center (CAP Center) and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), we prevent child abuse and neglect effectively through safety, education, health, and advocacy. We invite you to join us in promoting CAP Month with a voice loud enough that unifies us all this April and will be heard all year long.



## In This Toolkit

In this toolkit, you will find resources, talking points, and other family-strengthening tips and activities to enhance and elevate your engagement throughout April.

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## Target Audiences

Everyone in the community plays an important role.



Parents, Guardians, & Caregivers



Local Businesses & Partners



Faith-based Communities

At The CAP Center and the OCAP, we recognize that everyone plays an important role in the fight to prevent child abuse and neglect and create a family well-being continuum. We also understand the importance of providing concrete supports to address neglect. We want to pave the way to changing how neglect is determined; we want to **#SupportBeforeReport.**

## Prevention Works

In 2023, California communities incurred a total economic burden of \$16.5 billion for the lifetime costs of survivors of child abuse and neglect (Safe & Sound). To put this figure into context, approximately 1.37 million children could be sent to preschool for the same amount.



[Click here for the Safe & Sound Economics of Abuse Report](#)

Treatment costs 100 times more than prevention - and it is after the harm has occurred. Invest in your children, your family, and your community with prevention.

# It Takes a Village

## A Multi-layered Approach to Prevention Efforts



### *"It takes a village to raise a child"*

This African proverb describes how it takes many people to support a child's development and ability to thrive. It is how a community works together in service of healthy, happy childhoods for all. At The CAP Center and the OCAP, we recognize that no one person can do everything alone when it comes to caring for the well-being of children in the community. Thriving children requires connection, community togetherness and support, and collective responsibility. In commitment to being part of our village, we can all help children thrive.

### *When it comes to coping with stressful situations, supportive relationships are important*

According to Live Beyond, "we thrive when we have meaningful connections. they lower our blood pressure, boost our immune system, release the brain chemical oxytocin, and reduce stress hormones. This response helps us stay calmer when stressful things happen."

[Find Supportive Relationships at the Live Beyond website here](#)

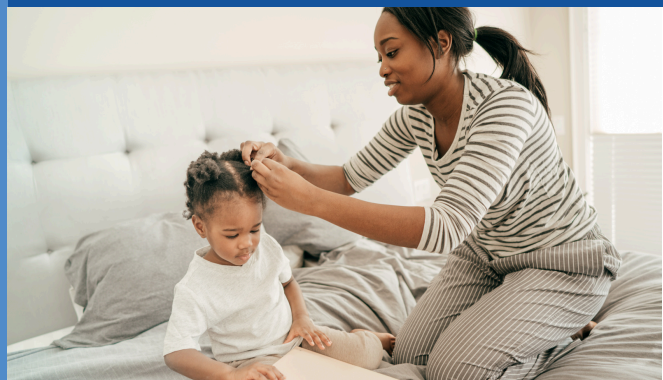


### *Happiness Calendars*

[Click here to explore Happiness Calendars from Greater Good Magazine, offering "science-based insights for a meaningful life."](#)

### *Love is Respect*

[Click this link to explore the interactive Relationship Spectrum by rating different scenarios as healthy, unhealthy, or abusive. Find tips and learn skills for building healthy relationships.](#)



### *Protective Factors*

Knowing the Protective Factors can help reduce the risk of Adverse Childhood Experiences and increase the health and well-being of children and families.

[Click this link for more information on protective factors from our national partner, Prevent Child Abuse America.](#)

# Shifting from Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting

## *The Time is Now*

The Mandated Reporting to Community Reporting (MRCRS) Task Force was created to review California's mandated reporting system that lead up to, but not into, child protective services.

The MRCRS Task Force is grounded in its "North Star," which is to keep children and families together, safe, well, and strengthened by the resources they need to thrive. It's work is guided by the following strategic priorities:



1

**Eliminate  
disproportionality  
in mandate  
reporting**

2

**Increase  
precision in  
reporting abuse  
and neglect**

3

**Remove  
incentives that  
lead to over-  
reporting**



4

**Focus  
on connections  
that support  
families**

5

**Invest  
in ongoing  
reform of  
mandated  
reporting**

# Recommendations to Transform California's Mandated Reporting System

1

The California Child Welfare Council (CWC), through its Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Committee, shall establish a Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) to ensure the transformation of Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting continues and disparities in the child welfare system are eliminated.

Request the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in collaboration with the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC), to continuously monitor disparities in the child welfare system.

2

3

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) shall ensure the implementation of AB 2085 in all California Counties and Tribes until such time that Recommendation #5 is implemented, and General Neglect is removed as a Mandated Reporting requirement.

In alignment with the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) report, California's Child Welfare System: Addressing Disproportionality and Disparities, encourage the LAO to continue analyzing disparities in the Mandated Reporting system to determine if narrowing mandated reporter categories in the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) negatively impacts child safety.

4

5

Support the amendment of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) to remove the reporting requirement of General Neglect for Mandated Reporters.

# Recommendations to Transform California's Mandated Reporting System

6

Support the amendment of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) to revise and clarify the definition of Severe Neglect to be aligned with the definition of Severe Neglect utilized in the California Structured Decision Making (SDM) Tool.

Encourage the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in collaboration with the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) and Counties, to implement a two-year pilot that provides Mandated Reporters with immunity from liability.

7

8

Support the amendment of Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) to require all Mandated Reporters in California receive standardized training on child abuse and neglect.

Require the CDSS Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) to develop, with participation of individuals with lived expertise, a standardized curriculum for Mandated Reporters.

9

10

Encourage the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in collaboration with the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC), to develop a Mandated Reporter web page specific to Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting.

# Recommendations to Transform California's Mandated Reporting System

11

Require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to incorporate an assessment of the capacity of community supports and services.

Consistent with the PEI Community Pathway Recommendations, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) shall be required to ensure Counties' Comprehensive Prevention Plans (CPP) incorporate information and education specific to Mandated Reporters regarding the implementation of and access to Community Pathways and/or community resources available to support families in their communities.

12

13

Require the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) to ensure recommendations from the Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting (MRCS) Task Force and any subsequent policy reforms related to Mandated Reporting are enacted, and efforts necessary to ensure continued transformation of the Mandated Reporting system are advanced. child abuse and neglect.

Ensure the creation and implementation of a statewide narrative change initiative.

14

# Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Resources



A future system is motivated by child safety and a belief in all families, not by fear or structural racism. Utilize these resources and become part of the movement to keep families safely together.

## MRCs Task Force Report

[Click here to read the full report from the MRCs Task Force on "Shifting from Reporting Families to Supporting Families"](#)

## California Training Institute

[Click here to view the California Training Institute website, offering free professional development and extended learning to child abuse prevention leaders](#)

## California Child Welfare Council

[Click here to view the California Child Welfare Council website, which houses reports, meeting information, and other resources](#)

## CalPrevents

[Click here to join CalPrevents to connect and share with other prevention leaders about the shift from mandated reporting to community supporting in your community.](#)

California is Part of a Movement to Keep Families Safely Together





# Parents, Guardians, & Caregivers

## Tips & Activities <<<

Children and families make up a large part of the community. We provide parents and guardians the tools and resources needed to raise children in an environment in which they can thrive and succeed.

Please consider implementing some of these tips throughout National Child Abuse Prevention Month and revisit them often throughout the year.

- Volunteer your time: help at your child's school, read to children at the library, donate to foster youth programs.
- Organize a play day at the local park for the children and families in your area to get to know one another.
- Invite your children to share ideas and implement them to help your community.
- Think safety (home/car/sports) to prevent accidental childhood injuries.
- Get to know new neighbors or new families at your child's school.
- Organize a "Baby Supplies" drive to collect diapers, formula, car seats, and other supplies for new parents and/or families in need.
- Share Safe Sleep Baby information with families with newborns.
- Learn and share the ABC's of Safe Sleep Baby (SSB): [Click here for more information on SSB.](#)
- Watch and share the SSB video: <https://youtu.be/wiiDiKwa538>

# Local Businesses & Partners

## ➤➤➤ Tips & Activities

Please consider implementing some of these tips throughout National Child Abuse Prevention Month this April and revisit them all year long.



- Change corporate protocols to support parents and positive parenting.
- Promote safety (home/car/sports) to prevent accidental childhood injuries.
- Explore and utilize the Safe Beginnings educational and outreach toolkits for unintentional childhood injury prevention. [Click here for more information on Safe Beginnings.](#)
- Raise awareness of child abuse and neglect by setting aside a day in April to observe Child Abuse Prevention Month and celebrate your community's commitment to children and families.
- Train your employees to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect and to make appropriate referrals.
- Publish a series of articles on child abuse prevention, awareness, and reporting in your business newsletter or blog.
- Share information on child development, parental stress, and local community resources and supports for parents during counseling sessions with your employees.
- Organize a "Baby Supplies" drive to collect diapers, formula, car seats, and other supplies for new parents and/or families in need.
- The CAP Center provides Mandated Child Abuse Reporter Training for free to the public, or can provide training to an organization for a fee. This workshop teaches mandated reporters their legal responsibilities to report known or suspected child abuse and neglect in California and how to make a Suspected Child Abuse Report. [Learn more on The CAP Center's website by clicking here.](#)

# Faith-based Communities

Faith based groups play a crucial role in reaching members and helping families and children thrive within the community. At risk families are more likely to seek guidance from spiritual leaders whom they trust. Spiritual leaders can use their voice to share important family strengthening messaging. Please consider implementing some of these tips throughout National Child Abuse Prevention Month and revisit them often throughout the year.



## ➤➤➤ Tips & Activities

- Change social norms to support parents and positive parenting.
- Enhance parenting skills to promote healthy child development.
- Promote safety (home/car/sports) to prevent accidental childhood injuries.
- Raise awareness of child abuse and neglect by setting aside a day in April to observe Child Abuse Prevention Month and celebrate your community's commitment to children and families.
- Train leaders and child care volunteers to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect, to work with victims and their families, and to make appropriate referrals.
- Hold support groups and parent/guardian education events at your faith community's facilities.
- Host an event for kids and families and provide trivia games, board games, card games, etc.
- Encourage members to introduce themselves to new members, neighbors, or families at their children's school.
- Publish a series of articles on child abuse prevention, awareness, and reporting in your church newsletter or blog.
- Share information on child development, parental stress, and local community resources and supports for parents during counseling sessions with your members.
- Organize a "Baby Supplies" drive to collect diapers, formula, car seats, and other supplies for new parents and/or families in need.
- The CAP Center provides Mandated Child Abuse Reporter Training for free to the public, or can provide training to an organization for a fee. This workshop teaches mandated reporters their legal responsibilities to report known or suspected child abuse and neglect in California and how to make a Suspected Child Abuse Report. [Learn more on The CAP Center's website by clicking here.](#)

# Talking Points

## »» Talking Points

- Children that are raised in loving and supportive environments are more likely to grow up and help create secure, healthy communities and be more productive, prosperous community members.
- Children that are raised in stable families do better academically, are shown to be more financially successful and contribute more to society.
- Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, sometimes all.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) include things like child abuse (including physical, sexual, and emotional), neglect, parental stress, divorce, parental unemployment, parental mental illness, or addiction. Greater than one in four people have experienced at least one ACE, and one in eight have experienced at least four or more ACEs during their childhood. The greater number of ACEs increases the risk of long term adverse consequences. Reducing ACEs leads to positive long-term outcomes for children and communities, including lowering risk for serious health complications and helping children grow into more prosperous and productive adults. [Learn more about ACEs and access trainings on the ACEs Aware website by clicking here.](#)



[Click here  
for The CAP  
Center's  
Tip-Sheets  
for Families](#)



# Statewide Campaigns



## Wear Blue Day

First Friday in April



Download and share these postcards.

Use #WearBlue4Kids in your social posts.



CAP Month  
Zoom background



## Children's Memorial Flag Raising



Every year we honor young lives lost with a moment of silence while raising the Children's Memorial Flag on the last Friday in April and you can too.

Review the [Children's Flag Raising Toolkit](#) here and get ideas for your own flag raising event. Purchase a flag by [clicking here](#).

For further details, visit [www.thecapcenter.org](http://www.thecapcenter.org)



# Statewide Campaigns



## Pinwheels for Prevention

Order Pinwheels for Prevention and plant a pinwheel garden in your community this April. Show your community that It Takes a Village to protect children and we're Powered by Hope!

[CLICK HERE  
TO ORDER](#)

[Learn how you can use  
Pinwheels for Prevention  
in your community with  
this Campaign Toolkit.](#)



Download and have fun with these Pinwheel activities

[How to Make a Pinwheel](#)  
[Pinwheel Coloring Sheet](#)  
[Sidewalk Chalk Art Project](#)



For further details, visit [www.thecapcenter.org](http://www.thecapcenter.org)

# Social Media Engagement

Take part in these **#CAPMonth2025** campaigns or create your own!



## #WearBlue4Kids

On Friday, April 4, 2025, post a photo of you and your colleagues, friends, or family wearing blue and share what prevention and/or child and family well-being means to you!



## #PassThePinwheel

Make your own pinwheel and post photos throughout April of you and your colleagues, friends, or family with a brief explanation of what they mean to you, and encourages others to make pinwheels too!



## #SupportBeforeReport

Invest in and raise awareness of reforming mandated reporting. Shares stories of transformation and the ways that we work together to preserve and support families to create child and family well-being and prevention child maltreatment.



## #ItTakesAVillage

Everyone in the community plays an important role, and a community is needed to raise a child in a safe and healthy environment. Build the village, be the village, and sustain the village in your CAP Month efforts!



## #PoweredByHope

Share stories of hope and promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families.



## Join CalPrevents!

Join CalPrevents to engage with other prevention leaders across California!



NEW DATA

# Sacramento County Child Death Review Team & Fetal Infant Mortality Review

## Five-Year Report (2017–2021)



The Sacramento County Child Death Review Team (CDRT) reports on the causes of child deaths within Sacramento County. While most child death review teams across the nation focus primarily on the investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect fatalities, Sacramento County's CDRT reviews all child deaths regardless of cause.

Sacramento County CDRT & FIMR Five-Year Report: Review data, key findings, & recommendations



The primary function of the Sacramento County CDRT has been to identify how and why children die to facilitate the creation and implementation of strategies to prevent future child deaths. [Click here to read the Sacramento County CDRT and FIMR Five-Year Report.](#)

The California Citizen Review Panel on Critical Incidents released the California Child Death Review Team Toolkit in September 2023. The Toolkit offers best practices to assist county-level agencies interested in creating or reviving CDRTs in their jurisdictions. [Click this link to view the toolkit.](#)



CDRT Toolkit: Connect with Child Death Review in Your County



# Websites & Social Media Pages



- **OCAP/Kids Day website:**

- <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ocap/cap-month>

- **The CAP Center website:**

- <https://www.thecapcenter.org/help/events/child-abuse-prevention-month-april>

- **The CAP Center Facebook:**

- <https://www.facebook.com/TheChildAbusePreventionCenter/>

- **California Department of Social Services Facebook:**

- <https://www.facebook.com/p/California-Department-of-Social-Services-100063625101416/>



Questions or comments?

Contact us at  
[capcdevelopment@thecapcenter.org](mailto:capcdevelopment@thecapcenter.org)  
or [kidsday@dss.ca.gov](mailto:kidsday@dss.ca.gov)