



## **Families and Communities Together: Preventing Child Abuse**

**A Note from the Director**



Greetings,

It's heartbreaking to see a child abuse case in the news. It's even more frustrating and infuriating when they interview the neighbor or family friend who says, "I thought something was off."

Speaking up can be uncomfortable, as it's not always clear when it's appropriate to make a report. What if you misunderstood something you saw? Just remember, it's far better to be wrong than miss an opportunity to protect a child. If you're

asking yourself whether you should report suspicions of maltreatment, chances are you should. You can call the [\*\*National Child Abuse Hotline\*\*](#) and remain anonymous.

April is [\*\*National Child Abuse Prevention Month\*\*](#), and individuals, families, and communities all share a responsibility to protect children by preventing abuse and reporting suspicions of maltreatment. It's **estimated** that over 700,000 children are abused annually. Victims of child abuse often face long-term consequences, including an **increased risk** for cognitive and behavioral issues, adult criminality, and alcohol and drug abuse.

One of the most important things we can do is recognize high-risk situations and the **signs** of maltreatment. Some of the most common signs in children include sudden changes in behavior or school performance, unexplained signs of physical trauma, expressing a disinterest or fear of being at home, and a lack of supervision. I hope the tips and resources in this newsletter are helpful to you and the families you serve in preventing and intervening in the abuse of our children.

Best Regards,

*Robyn Cenizal*

Robyn Cenizal, CFLE  
Project Director

## Tip of the Month

Your monthly tips to strengthen the relationships of those you serve. Share it - Post it - Pass it on!

Through our actions in and around families, we can all play a role in preventing child abuse. There are many protective factors that have been shown to lower incidence of child maltreatment. Below are several tips that highlight these attributes and conditions:

- **Strengthening families.** The bond a child shares with their parent(s) is hugely impactful on their mental and physical wellbeing. When children and parents routinely **share and express compassion** and support for one another, children develop a trust that their parents will provide those things that they need to thrive. A lack of secure attachment in the home has been **shown** to put children at risk for abuse.
- **Strengthening support for families.** Parents and caregivers may face a number of difficult decisions and stressors on a daily basis. **Parental**

**resilience** is an important part of being able to effectively cope with challenges while continuing to care for children with patience and compassion. Check out some of these **organizations** for ideas on how to build and promote resilience.

• **Strengthening communities.** One of the most important things we can do to reduce child abuse in our communities is **raise awareness**. Host an informational meeting, hang fliers in local businesses, give a presentation at a town hall meeting, and partner with other community members. The more people who can identify **signs** of child abuse, the more children we will protect.

## Featured Resources

The Resource Center's **Virtual Library** has collected more than 3,000 materials in a variety of formats including fact sheets, research-to-practice briefs, brochures, pamphlets, training resources, program reports or evaluations, and research materials.

- **Family Violence Prevention Toolkit**

This toolkit provides information and resources to assist stakeholders in incorporating domestic violence and child maltreatment awareness into service provision, including information that will increase service provider's understanding of these issues and will also help them identify other beneficial resources or referrals in the community.

- **National Child Abuse Prevention Month Website**

This website, run by the Child Welfare Information Gateway, has a number of resource guides, toolkits, publications, and multimedia materials available to help educate your community and spread awareness about child maltreatment.

- **Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence**

This research brief addresses the impact of intimate partner violence (IPV) on children, approaches to serving children exposed to IPV, and symptoms of exposure to IPV. It explains the dynamics of IPV and explores factors that can influence the level of impact a child experiences. Implications for providers, including "red flags" and resources, are also included.

# Newly Released Resource Center Product

- **[Intimate Partner Violence \(IPV\) Perpetrators: What the Research Suggests](#)**

This research brief from the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families provides an overview of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), perpetrator typologies, and the effectiveness of Intimate Partner Violence intervention programs. View the full resource [here](#).

## Events

The Resource Center's **Events Calendar** offers a listing of Resource Center events and other national, regional, and community-wide events that might be of interest. Upcoming events include:

- **[National Association of Workforce Development Professionals, May 6-8, 2019, San Antonio, TX](#)**

For nearly 30 years, workforce development professionals have gathered at NAWDP's Annual Conference to enhance and maintain their skills through continuing education, network with peers, mentors, and leaders, share ideas, experiences and metrics about promising practices, and discover new and innovative programs, products and services.

- **[National Health and Human Services Summit 2019, May 19-22, 2019, Arlington, VA](#)**

This year's National Summit is designed to showcase transformation efforts underway across the nation focusing on: Operational Optimization, Healthier Communities Through Prevention, Policy and Practice Solutions for Family and Community Well-Being, and Equity.

## Feedback and Technical Assistance

To learn more about the Resource Center, visit us at [www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org](http://www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org).

The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families supports human service providers as they integrate healthy marriage and relationship education skills into service delivery systems as part of a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, family-centered approach designed to promote self-sufficiency.

If you have suggestions or wish to speak with a Resource Center staff member, please [contact us](#) and we will be happy to assist you. To learn more about free training and technical assistance available to human service agencies, visit our [Training and Technical Assistance page](#).

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