



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month



*Julia Day Neighbors, JD
Director, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia
Georgia State University*

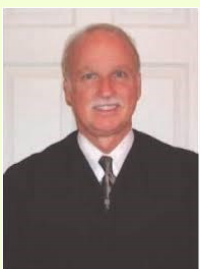
For our collective health and well-being we're staying away from friends, extended family and neighbors; teachers and classmates; and, in many cases, workplaces. But these very necessary public health measures are affecting some of the very conditions that help protect children from abuse and neglect at home.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. And this April, it's more important than ever to make sure we're strengthening the protective factors that keep kids safe. We know that contact with caring adults outside their families can help protect children from abuse and neglect. So can living in a household where parents are employed and able to meet their basic needs.

More broadly, maintaining social connections and living in a community that supports parents and takes responsibility for child well-being can also help protect chil-

See [PREVENTION](#), Page 4

"If You Did Sing, What Song Would You Sing?"



*By Judge R. Michael Key,
Troup County Juvenile Court,
Troup County Adult Felony Drug Court*

While it may be one of those things you actually had to experience to get the full impact, I hope this lifts you up as much as it did me. We are conducting Adult Felony Drug Court and Family Treatment Court by video conferencing, and it is working well.

I use 'speaker view' when talking to the individual participants so that the person with whom I am spending my special time will be center stage on the screen. But in order to get on the screen, they actually have to speak or at least make some noise. In trying to get them to talk, I encourage them to say something, or to at least hum. I asked one of the guys in FADC to talk, hum, or maybe sing. He responded, "I don't sing". I said, "Ok then; but if you did sing, what would you sing"? His response without hesitation was, "**Lean on me**". That lifted me up.

See [SING](#), Page 9

>>> YOUTH VOICE <<<

The unedited voices of young people who have been in foster care and are leading the way to change!

The Georgia EmpowerMENT Policy Council hosted a Twitter chat recently to hear from young people. Check out some snippets from that chat:

GAEPC: How are you being affected by the COVID-19 virus?

Nyeelah: "Personally, it put a pause of a lot of needed transitions. From my peers perspective, the biggest thing is housing insecurity."

Mo: "Like a lot of schools, my college chose to transfer to online classes and close housing. Luckily, students were able to petition to stay on campus because of reasons like housing/financial insecurity, international status, etc. Many FGLI college students like myself (and other former foster youth) are faced with food/housing/financial insecurity right now. I'm lucky that I was able to stay living on campus."

GAEPC: In what way can we use this pandemic to work in our favor? (i.e. working on crafts, goals, etc.)

Gio: "So I am using this time to put my health and diet back in check. I bought veggies and fruits to stabilize my diet. I'm also using this time to create a business plan for my Interior Design business. Creating visuals, website, cards etc."

Mo: I'm using this time to gather stories & creations of people who have experienced foster care, which will culminate in a devised theatre piece in the fall of 2020. (DM me if you're interested!) This is a great time to work on creative projects, etc., but you don't have to!

GAEPC: As you continue to quarantine and chill, let's reflect! Share your experience from where you started from where you are now. Did you imagine your life how it currently is?

Gio: "Honestly, I am blessed to be where I am now. After I aged out, I fell into depression, dropped out of college, moved to LA and really found myself. It was there that I found my passion for Interior Design. Today, I am the lead designer for West Elm in Buckhead. Granted it came

See [VOICE](#), Page 12



ICYMI: Gov. Orders Temporary Suspension of “Child” Definition

Governor Brian Kemp signed an executive order on April 23rd that, in part, states the following: “That, effectively immediately, Code Section 15-11-2(10) relating to the definition of ‘child’ is suspended for the limited purpose of ensuring that persons in the care of the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services who age out of the definition of ‘child’ during the Public Health State of Emergency shall be eligible to remain in their placement and continue to receive services for a duration of ninety (90) days following the termination of the Public Health State of Emergency or any extension thereof. This suspension shall apply to Code Section 15-11-2(10), effective until July 1, 2020, and upon expiration to Code Section 15-11-2(10), effective July 1, 2020. That any Georgia Division of Family & Children Services policies shall also align with this provision.” Click [here](#) to read the full executive order.

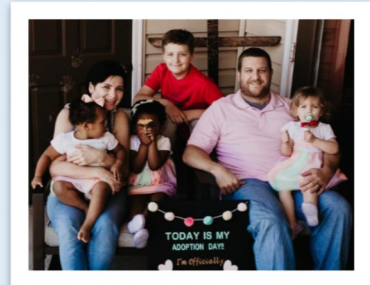
Georgia Courts “Zoom” Forward to Achieve Permanency

While courthouses across the state began the process of closing down to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, there was no slowing down the need to provide services and assistance to children and families. Georgia courts responded to this need by utilizing technology more than before, and the photos below are proof that the courts have been successful in adapting during an unknown pandemic. We applaud the judges, CASAs, GALs, DFCS case workers, and the families involved in these success stories, and encourage all in the child welfare field to be innovative in achieving permanency for children in our care.



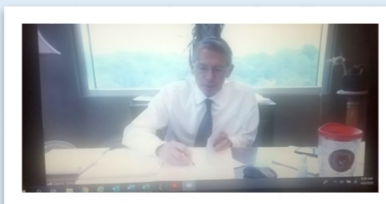
Walker County Family

In Walker County, Superior Court Judge Don W. John finalized an adoption using Zoom and helped two siblings achieve permanency after being in foster care for 9-12 months. Another judge in Houston County also used Zoom to finalize an adoption for a 21-month-old toddler who was in foster care for over 500 days. The toddler (pictured right with her family) joined three siblings in her new family, including her 3-year old biological sister who was adopted into this family in 2018.



Houston County Family

In Cobb County, Judge Reuben M. Green used video conferencing to engage others during his signing of an adoption finalization order as pictured below. And there’s more! Did you hear about Barry Abernathy — Grammy-nominated bluegrass musician — who adopted two siblings? Check out the story [here](#) to read about this heartwarming experience for this family and you’ll see why there is no age or boundaries for love of family.



Cobb County Judge Reuben M. Green

If you have heard similar stories like these around the state, we would love to hear from you and highlight the state’s pursuit and achievement of permanency for our children in foster care. Our contact information and our social media platforms are listed on the last page of this newsletter. Permanency rocks!

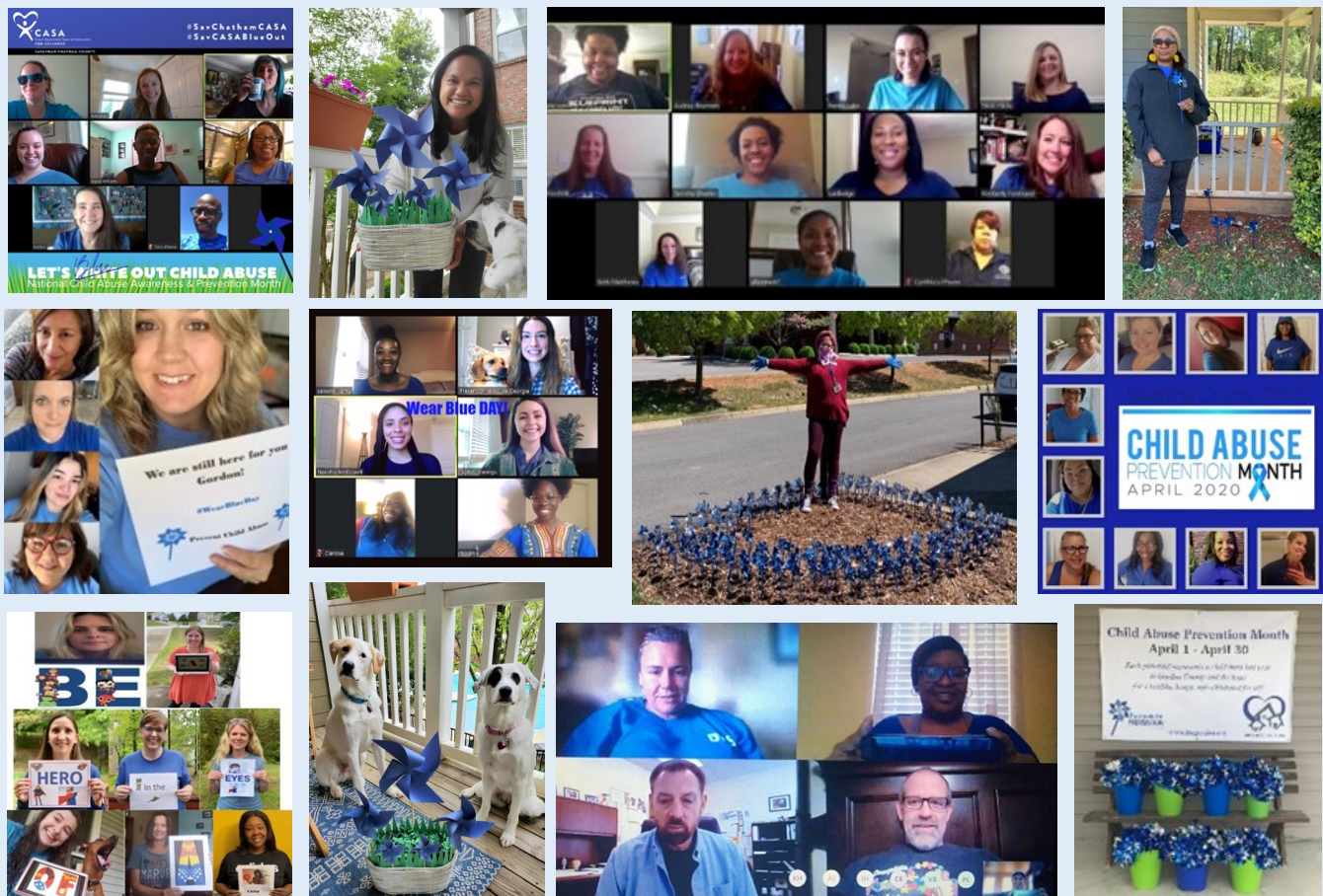


The Abernathy Family



Social Media Spotlight: Georgia Supporting Pinwheels for Prevention

Pinwheels for Prevention is a national public awareness campaign during Child Abuse Prevention Month every April, to communicate efforts and change the way we think about prevention. As seen on social media, the posts and shares of blue pinwheels and all things blue reminds us that awareness is key in prevention! Below are some highlights of how Georgia is spreading awareness! Keep maintaining those connections!



Blue Pinwheels Image from PCA Georgia





ESCAP 2020 Virtual Training

On May 26-29, 2020, the Barton Child and Policy Center of at Emory Law School (“Barton Center”) will conduct a virtual 4-day training session for law and other graduate students who are serving as interns through the Emory Summer Child Advocacy Program (ESCAP) at the Barton Center. For organizations hosting a non-ESCAP intern this summer, the Barton Center invites you to send your interns to ESCAP training. There is no charge to interested organizations, and their interns will start his/her summer with their respective organizations with robust foundational knowledge and skills to get them up to speed quickly. Each day of training will run from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm and will include guest speakers who are experts in the

field of child advocacy. Participants are expected to attend each day of training, and training materials will be provided. If there are special schedule circumstances, however, the Barton Center can work with those.

Please send the following information by May 8th to Michele Papotto at mpapott@emory.edu: (1) intern’s name, (2) email address, (3) phone number, (4) school, (5) type of degree (if non-law student), and 6) anticipated graduation date. The Barton Center will follow-up with the interns with details about Zoom location and finalized agenda. Click [here](#) for more information about ESCAP and the Barton Center.

PREVENTION, cont’d... dren.

My colleagues in the child welfare system and others who have professional contact with children are dedicated to keeping kids safe. But in these unprecedented times, we must shore up protective factors even while we’re maintaining physical distance.

Physical distance does not mean we need to remain socially disconnected or isolated. In fact, individuals, families, and communities can safely maintain the one thing we all need right now...social connections.

I encourage all families to make time to connect.

And parents and caregivers, try to take time to connect with yourself. Whether it’s meditation or yoga, exercising (while keeping a safe distance from others!) or journaling, taking a bath or locking yourself in the bathroom for a few minutes of me-time, you can’t take care of your family if you don’t take care of yourself.

COVID-19 is challenging the factors that protect children from abuse and neglect in many ways. It’s up to all of us to step up and keep kids safe, while trying to keep our communities healthy.

(Note: This article was originally featured in a guest column and in a highlight published by the AJC on April 24th.)

Connect with family. Video call family members using your app of choice or go low-tech and page through family photo albums.

Connect with friends and neighbors. Go outside and greet passersby from a safe distance, talk to neighbors from afar, or play an online game with friends.

Connect with culture. Cook a meal together that reflects your family’s cultural heritage. Or virtually visit more than 1,200 museums around the world via [Google Arts & Culture](#).

Connect with resources. Know where to turn to in times of need. Parents and caregivers can call 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) for help finding local supportive programs.



National Child Abuse Prevention Month



Protecting Children Amidst Crisis: A Mandated Reporter's Role Webinar

On April 14th, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, GaDOE, DFCS, and GCCA hosted a webinar to provide further guidance on a mandated reporter's role during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the agencies and organizations emphasized, the number of reports have decreased drastically since the state's shelter-in-place order took effect, thus forcing many frontline staff to temporarily move their work online or otherwise away from the workplace. Although we are able to do many things online, we are not able to easily identify behavioral and physical signs of suspected child abuse and neglect in the same manner. With that, the webinar encouraged mandated reports to be more cautious and diligent when interacting virtually with a child. It also encouraged everyone else to step up and help protect children who may be or are at risk of abuse. The presentation slides and webinar recording is available at PCA Georgia's website [here](#).

Ensure The Safety of a Child by Reporting Suspected Abuse.

I am a mandated reporter.

I'll call.

I am a VOICE for children.

I don't need all the facts, it's DFCS' job to investigate.

I only need to SUSPECT abuse to report it.

Report concerns or suspected abuse to:
1-855-422-4453

1-855-GA-CHILD

Sometimes a family may just need RESOURCES!

Connect Caregivers with Support
1-800-CHILDREN
(1-800-244-5373)



April 2020

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**A Spotlight on One of
Our Own: Ryan Sanford**

In partnership with DFCS, OCA conducts debriefings related to cases involving child deaths. As part of this process, surveys are given to the participants. One anonymous response shared the following:

"This was the best OCA call that I have participated in. I felt extremely comfortable to provide honest responses. In past OCA calls, there were too many people on the calls to provide honest responses. Mr. Sanford and I have had many calls, but it was really good to have a face to the name. I think that generates better rapport with DHS staff."

The debriefings are designed to garner honest responses such that the feedback will ultimately inform larger system improvements.



OCA Investigator
Ryan Sanford

We are grateful for Ryan's wonderfully patient, compassionate, and reassuring nature and are glad that this participant experienced that during a process that can be otherwise emotionally taxing.

May 1, 2020 marks 8 years of Ryan's contributions to the OCA Team. Congratulations on this anniversary, Ryan! Thank you for all that you do! And thank you to all the others who work alongside him with this complex work!

EmpowerMent Policy Council in Action

Recently, along with multiple stakeholders, Georgia EmpowerMent Policy Council members participated in meetings facilitated by Georgia DFCS focused on well-being and permanency needs for children in foster care. Following is a sampling of their contributions.

As it relates to **Well-Being** and recognizing trauma in children in foster care:

- ⇒ Social and separation anxiety
- ⇒ Trust issues
- ⇒ Mental health issues
- ⇒ Fear of healthcare providers
- ⇒ Fear of beginning your own family

One participant spoke of positive experiences with Amerigroup 360, saying, "I agree that the use of the care coordinator always aided me in any medical authorizations. The app has helped me a lot too! It's helped at least find the providers that use the insurance and it categorizes them as well."

As it relates to **Permanency**:

"We should encourage workers to be honest with youth in regards to their reunification plans."

"Sometimes permanency in the sense of reunification is truly not an option."

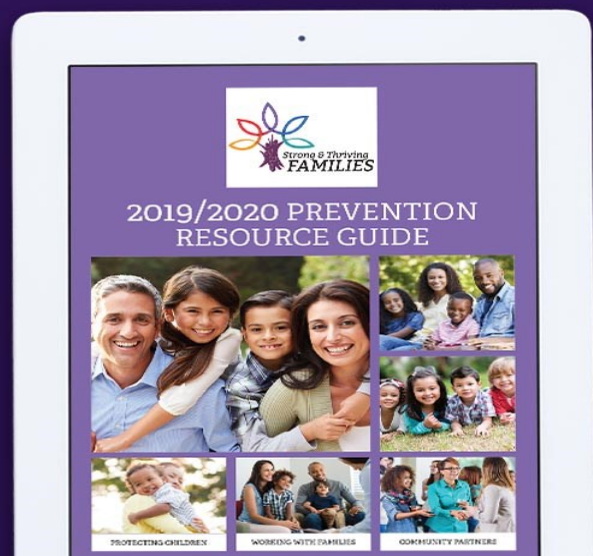
"Genuine youth involvement is a for sure need."

"The system has definitely evolved since my time in care. It's not perfect but I do appreciate the strides the system have made. I think some area of improvements are transitioning youth from foster care to family or adulthood. Ramped up stable connections/supports for young people transitioning. Georgia also have some great policies within Division and elsewhere but the trickle down (i.e. from leadership to staff who conduct direct services) lacks. Once policy truly meets practice, I think Georgia will exceed all goals in improving the system."

Thank you for being at "the table"!

**THE PREVENTION
RESOURCE GUIDE
IS AVAILABLE!**

DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY AT
WWW.CHILDWELFARE.GOV/PREVENTIONMONTH





Hotline Help: Connecting Your Needs to Resources

A Highlight of Many Free Resources Available to Assist You

GA Crisis & Access Line

1-800-715-4225

GCAL is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to help you or someone you care for in a crisis.

**1-855-GA-CHILD
(1-855-422-4453)**

Report concerns or suspected child abuse.

CRISIS TEXT LINE

Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor. Free support is available 24/7.

GA COVID-19

**Emotional Support Line
1-866-399-8938**

The Georgia COVID-19 Emotional Support Line provides 24/7 free and confidential assistance to callers needing emotional support or resource information as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Emotional Support Line is staffed by volunteers, including mental health professionals and others who have received training in crisis counseling.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

Highly trained expert advocates are available 24/7 to talk confidentially with anyone in the U.S. experiencing domestic violence, seeking resources or information, or questioning unhealthy aspects of their relationship.

CARES Warm Line

1-844-326-5400

Call or text the CARES Warm Line for substance abuse challenges every day of the year from 8:30AM - 11:00PM.

Peer2Peer Warm Line

1-888-945-1414

The Warm Line provides Georgians the opportunity to receive peer support over the phone 24 hours a day.

SAMHSA's National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Free, confidential, and available 24/7/365, this service from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) can help you find treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations in your area.

Available Training and Webinars:



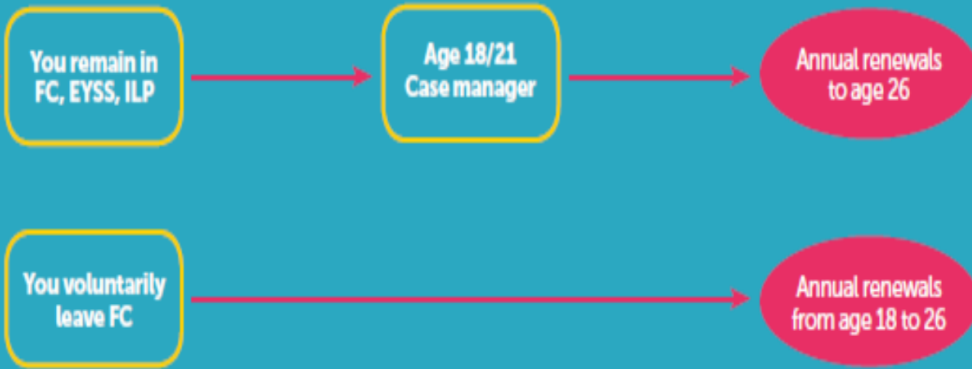
- ✓ Available Now: Advocacy in a Judicial Emergency. Access webinar [here](#). Click [here](#) for presentation slides. Use access passcode: **5s*x+VJ2**.
- ✓ Available Now: Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children Training. Use code **FLIPTHESWITCH** to access training at no cost. More info [here](#).
- ✓ May 1st: Webinar for Youth on Managing Wellness for Youth and Young Adults (14-24) provided by Mental Health America (MHA) of Georgia. More info [here](#).
- ✓ May 6th: Zero to Three Network Webinar on Attending to Risks for Abuse and Neglect During COVID-19 Pandemic Response: Child Welfare Workforce. More info [here](#).
- ✓ May 7th: Children's Mental Health Awareness Day—Virtual Edition by Georgia Parent Support Network. More info [here](#).
- ✓ May 12th: Question, Persuade, and Refer Suicide Prevention Webinar provided by MHA of Georgia. More info [here](#).



Medicaid Guide WHEN YOU TURN 18



**YOU
TURN
18**



WORD KEY

- DFCS – Division of Family & Children Services
- FC – Foster Care
- EYSS – Extended Youth Support Services
- FFC – Former Foster Care
- ILP – Independent Living Program

- **You must be in care on your 18th birthday to be eligible for Medicaid.**
- If you voluntarily exit foster care, notify your case manager immediately, as you will be responsible for your annual Medicaid renewal.
- Rev Max is a specialized unit that ensures former foster care youth have access to health care.
- If you are age 18 to 21, Rev Max will move you to either Foster Care Medicaid or Chafee Medicaid once they receive notification of your current mailing address from your case manager.
- Continued Medicaid eligibility requires that your current mailing address is updated through the Gateway Customer Portal to receive program notices. **You must respond to your annual renewal letter to maintain eligibility.**
- Application for other benefits (TANF*, Food Stamps, Childcare, etc.) can be applied for through the Gateway Customer portal after Medicaid approval.
- If you were adopted, you are not eligible for Chafee or Former Foster Care Medicaid.
- Email healthmatters@dhs.ga.gov for any health-related questions.

*TANF - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families



SING, cont'd...

From someone in a population challenged to the max every day of their lives, much less in these times, the first thing he thought of was being there for others. What an inspiration!

As special as that moment was, I was moved almost to tears when I pulled up the lyrics to the song on the internet and read them. I saw that song for the first time from the perspective of someone with an addiction; and specifically, from the perspective of someone in an accountability court.

The message of that song is the very essence of our programs. All of the lyrics would be too much to include here, but pay special attention to this one verse: *"You just call on me brother, when you need a hand, We all need somebody to lean on, I just might have a problem that you'll understand, We all need somebody to lean on"*. While the song speaks most directly to the relationships between the participants themselves, there is a message in there for all of us.

On a lighter note, the next day in FTC, a similar thing happened. When I asked one of the moms, "If you did sing, what song would you sing"? With some hesitation she said, *"Don't stop believin"*. That also lifted me up. Then, I read the lyrics. The lyrics of that song include things like wine, cheap perfume, and a smile shared in the night. While that may not be the best song content for our population, the title is so inspiring.

The message from the song *Lean on Me* and the title of the song *Don't Stop Believing* combine for a powerful statement. We can never stop believing in the people we are charged to serve, and we can never let them stop believing; people who lean on one another and on us for their very survival and who look to us for hope and resolution. This is hard work, but it has its rewards, like sharing these kinds of moments and seeing inside those courageous, beautiful hearts.



May is National Foster Care Month

Foster Care as a Support to Families, Not a Substitute for Parents
www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth

Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau



Support the Child —and the Family.

National Foster Care Month
www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth

Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau



A recipe for success includes caseworkers, caregivers, and families who prioritize partnership.

National Foster Care Month
www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth

Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau



Everyone's story is unique.

Know the youth you work with. Listen. Advocate.

National Foster Care Month
www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth

Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau



#Essential4Kids

Kids Need All Adults to Report Abuse During COVID-19 Crisis

A resource for all adults describing signs of child abuse and where to report.
Reporting child abuse and neglect is everyone's responsibility.

Kids are Counting on All Adults to Protect Them

This means YOU! This resource is for any adult who interacts with a child. It outlines signs of abuse and neglect and where to report.

In times of crisis and economic instability, child abuse and neglect rates increase. However, reports of child abuse and neglect in Georgia have declined dramatically.

Children are not going to school, activities, places of worship and other public places where adults look out for their safety and well-being.

Trust your Gut

If something does not look safe, sound safe or feel safe – report.

Making a Report is Asking for Help and Services

When you report, you are asking for a professional to help a child and their family. You do not need proof. You are not making an accusation.

You May Be the Only Person to Act

If you reasonably suspect a child is unsafe - report.

Anonymous reports are accepted from anyone. Anyone making a report in good faith is protected against civil/criminal penalty or adverse employment action. Your identity is held confidential and will not be revealed.

Where To Report

24-hour/7 days a week

1-855-GACHILD

(1-855-422-4453)

or online at <https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/>

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Some Signs a Child is Not Safe

Physical abuse

- Child appears frightened of the caregiver.
- Child has burns, bites, broken bones, bruising, black eyes or complaints of pain.
- Caregiver offers no explanation of a child's injury, the parent "blames" the child's behavior or personality for the injury. Ask yourself *"Does the story match the injury?"*

Sexual abuse

- Child attaches very quickly to strangers or new adults in their environment.
- Demonstrates unusual sexual knowledge or behavior for their age.
- Difficulty walking or sitting.
- Witnessing an adult inappropriately touching a child, watching pornography with a child or saying sexual things to a child.

Emotional Abuse

- Child shows extremes in behavior: overly aggressive or compliant.
- Appears emotionally unattached to caregiver and others.
- Caregiver constantly blames, belittles or berates the child and refuses to help the child when needed.

Neglect

- Child begs or steals food, has severe poor hygiene or states that no one at home provides care.
- Witnessing a child using alcohol or other drugs.
- Highly stressful family situations and/or adults in home abusing alcohol or other drugs.
- Unlocked weapons or guns in the home.



Prevent Child Abuse
Georgia

This document was adapted with permission from Missouri KidsFirst www.missourikidsfirst.org.





#Essential4Kids

Kids Need Schools to Continue Reporting Abuse During COVID-19 Crisis

Empowering teachers, counselors, bus drivers and nutrition staff in their role as mandated reporters during the COVID-19 Crisis.

Students Not Being in School Creates Barriers to Reporting Abuse

In times of crisis and economic instability, child abuse and neglect rates increase. However, reports of child abuse and neglect in Georgia have declined dramatically. The ability to speak up for kids' safety is crucial at this time.

To Report Effectively, Explain how the Suspected Abuse has Impacted the Child

Example: (Child) has not engaged in the virtual classroom in 10 days, but has internet access. I have made 5 failed attempts to contact parents. Concerned that (child's) lack of participation is negatively impacting his/her education. (Child) experienced physical abuse one year ago.

Making a Report is Asking for Help and Services

If you reasonably suspect a child is unsafe - report. You do not need proof. You are not making an accusation. You are asking for a professional to help a child and their family.

You May Be the Only Person to Act

If something does not look safe, sound safe or feel safe - report.

Where To Report

24-hour/7 days a week
1-855-GACHILD (1-855-422-4453)
or online at <https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/>

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Children & Youth can speak to a counselor by calling 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) or visiting www.ChildHelp.org to live chat or text.

Helpful Tips for Protecting Children

Continue to let students know you remain a supportive, caring adult in their lives:

- Check in regularly with students and/or caregivers. Provide encouraging messages.
- Ask questions to engage children. Ex: "Give me one word that describes how you feel today?" "How is learning from home different from learning at school?"

Signs of Concerns:

- For students with technology/internet access: lack of virtual attendance or homework not completed over a long period of time.
- If you have had no contact at all with a family after many repeated phone calls/messages.
- If a child communicates they feel unsafe, you see a child in a dangerous environment or you notice a significant change in a child's mood/behavior.

Make an extra effort with children who:

- Have a history of emotional, sexual, physical abuse or neglect, drug use or discussed/attempted suicide.
- Are responsible for the care of other children or live in a highly stressful family situation with limited support systems.
- Require assistance due to physical, mental, behavioral or medical disabilities or delays.

Legal Responsibilities and Protections:

- School personnel are mandated reporters. If you have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, you must directly report it immediately.
- No administrator or supervisor may impede or inhibit any report.
- When you make a report in good faith you are protected against civil/criminal penalty or adverse employment action.



This document was adapted with permission from Missouri KidsFirst www.missourikidsfirst.org.





VOICE, cont'd...

with a lot of internal reflection, difficult moments and tears. But in the end I found my way and what truly makes me happy. Today I am on track to building myself as an established Guatemalan-American Interior Designer."

Michael: "Honestly, no. I didn't plan on being engaged at this age or going to school I don't like. That being said I love my life"

Leslie: "my family of 14 years randomly out me back into the foster care system. i really though i was alone. i had no idea how to "adult". i prepared myself for college and now i'm out here thriving (as much as a 22 year old can). cont'd... i got a great job. and gained internships in the capitol. i had the pleasure of meeting @GovKemp and @GeoffDuncanGA. I strives to beat the statistic that foster care children are limited to often. and so far i'm the outlier in that statistic and it feed great. i'm so proud of me."

Mo: "As someone who grew up in a low-income household, and proceeded to age out of foster care, I was told my entire life that "I can't" because of my circumstances. Now, I go to school @Wesleyan_u to make theatre. There are always struggles, but I know I can triumph."

GAEPC: Let's continue to reflect... what advice would you give your 16 year old self?

Nyeelah: "To stop being angry. Your anger will hold you back more than advancing you in life. Deal with the hurt and allow help. Allow yourself to heal and accept love."

Gio: "Stop avoiding the things that make you uncomfortable. It will never go away so face them head on."

Mo: "You know exactly what you want and what makes you happy. Pursue that. Pursue it tirelessly."

Jamie: "Continue to look on the bright side of things. Never give up, keep going. Things will change in your life either good or bad, but it will make you stronger than ever. Continue to support and love on your family, friends and others. Don't stop giving and helping other. "

Thank you, #GAEPC! Check out more @GAEmpowerMent on Twitter!

**Nominations Open for the
4th Annual Judge Willie Lovett Award**

The Child Protection and Advocacy Section of the State Bar of Georgia invites nominations for the 4th Annual Judge Willie Lovett Award. Awards will be presented at a special ceremony at a time and location to be determined. Judges and lawyers, who have practiced or served in any area or court, meet the criteria for these awards if they have demonstrated a professional career and/or outstanding service and dedication to the protection and advocacy of children and also satisfy the eligibility criteria below.

Eligibility: Nominees must: **(1)** be a member in good standing of the State Bar of Georgia; **(2)** be a member of the Child Protection and Advocacy Section of the State Bar of Georgia; **(3)** have a history of dedication to advocacy for children, children's rights, or child protection; **(4)** have practiced for at least five continuous years; **(5)** exemplify excellence and professionalism as an attorney or judge; **(6)** be active in bar activities or professional associations; and also active in non-law related community service organizations; and **(7)** not be a member of the Selection Committee, or Staff of the State Bar of Georgia or the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Click [here](#) to download the nomination form. Nominations are due by 5 p.m. on June 1, 2020.

Georgia Office of the Child Advocate
Rachel Davidson, Director
7 MLK Jr. Blvd, Ste. 347
Atlanta, GA 30334

For general inquiries, assistance, or to file a complaint, please contact us by phone at (404) 656-4200 or on our website at <https://oca.georgia.gov/webform/request-oca-assistance-or-investigation>

To submit an article, photo, or event for the newsletter, please contact Deputy Director Jansen Head at jhead@oca.ga.gov.

Join us on Social Media!



Facebook: @GeorgiaOfficeoftheChildAdvocate



Twitter: @georgia_oca



Instagram: @georgia_oca



LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/gaoca/>



YouTube: "Georgia OCA"