

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | March 29, 2022

Human Services and Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota encourage ND residents to wear blue in support of children and families on April 1 for Child Abuse Prevention Month

BISMARCK, N.D. – Thriving families depend on strong support systems that include family, friends, neighbors and others in the community.

Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota (PCAND) and the North Dakota Department of Human Services invite North Dakotans to join them in wearing blue on Friday, April 1, to show support for children and families during National Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month and to reinforce this year’s theme “Growing a Better Tomorrow for All Children, Together.”

“This is the third year we have observed Child Abuse Prevention Month during the pandemic,” said child advocate and PCAND Executive Director Dan Halverson. “During this time, many families have faced additional stresses and uncertainty, all factors that can put children at higher risk of abuse and neglect. Now more than ever, we need to work together as communities to support and grow safe, stable and healthy, nurturing families so that North Dakota children grow up happy and healthy.”

The nonprofit and department suggest the following ways to help raise awareness and promote positive change in April:

- Show support for children and families by wearing blue on April 1, Wear Blue Day, by posting a picture or video on your favorite social media channel(s) and including #WearBlueDay2022, #BeAConnection, #preventchildabuseamerica or #aprilschildabusepreventionmonth hashtag.
- Be a source for social and emotional connectedness and support for children and families by reaching out to them and sharing information and resources, such as those found online at www.pcand.org.
- Participate in one of the Child Abuse Prevention Month awareness events and community activities sponsored with support from DHS and highlighted on PCAND’s website at www.pcand.org/child-abuse-prevention-month or their [Facebook page](#).
- Help connect families experiencing economic and other stressors by referring them to programs, services and resources available online on helpishere.nd.gov.
- Contact community leaders and show support for family-friendly policies and programs that help reduce stress on parents and caregivers.
- Follow PCAND on [Facebook](#), share PCAND’s posts and encourage friends to do the same. Use the hashtags #PCAND and #aprilschildabusepreventionmonth to show a commitment to helping children, families and communities to thrive.

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The department's Children and Family Services Division contracts with PCAND to implement primary prevention strategies to support children and families and reduce child maltreatment. The division supports and funds numerous statewide child abuse and neglect prevention programs and activities in collaboration with PCAND, the North Dakota State University Extension Service – Parent Education Network and other public and private partners.

During the 2021 federal fiscal year, 1,349 North Dakota children were victims of child abuse or neglect.

The department reminds individuals that if they suspect a child in North Dakota is being abused or neglected, they should call the statewide toll-free Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line at 1-833-958-3500. **If it's an emergency and a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.**

Calls are answered Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CDT (7 a.m. – 4 p.m. MDT). Outside of business hours, there are child protection workers on call in North Dakota's human service zones to respond to emergencies when contacted by law enforcement.

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