



# Child Abuse and Neglect **PREVENTION** *Month Toolkit*

Every April we recognize Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to not only raise awareness about child abuse and neglect in Alaska, but also to support the primary prevention of it. By giving children, youth, families, and communities the knowledge, skills, supports, and resources they need, we can create a thriving Alaska where every child grows up safe and healthy. Because when parents and caregivers have what they need before problems arise, children and youth can thrive.

**Join us throughout April and every month as we start a movement towards lasting change - where Alaska's children, youth, and families can thrive.**



## Table of Contents

- Section 1) Governor's Proclamation
- Section 2) Suggested Radio Ads
- Section 3) Newspaper or Blog Article
- Section 4) Press Release
- Section 5) Social Media Pieces
- Section 6) Email Signature



### A Message from Trevor Storrs

ACT President & CEO

Thank you for taking the time to help your community participate in our annual Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign.

As you know, in Alaska, far too many of our children and families are struggling. They're facing food insecurity, housing instability, mental health needs, a lack of affordable child care, and more. The data shows us that:

- 8%** of Alaska children lack health insurance
- 31%** of Alaska children are Kindergarten ready
- 12%** of Alaska children live in poverty
- 22%** of Alaska teens had planned a suicide attempt in the past 12 months

And yet, I believe that Alaska is strong and that together we can change these numbers by supporting children, youth, and families. Our strength comes from Alaskans' deep connection to each other as a community - an interconnectedness unmatched elsewhere.

#### Your partnership is evidence of that strength.

When you take the tools we've provided and modify them for your community, when you get messages about support and care to those who need them most, you are playing a role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. We are so grateful to you. By linking arms, we're working together to create an Alaska where every child and youth can thrive.

Thank you,

## Contact Our Team



George Kosinski  
Alaska Fellow  
gkosinski@alaskachildrenstrust.org

**Email for info on: mini grants and events across the state, and advocacy actions**



Kaila Pfister  
Director of Communications  
kpfister@alaskachildrenstrust.org

**Email for info on: this toolkit, mailed materials, other comms info**

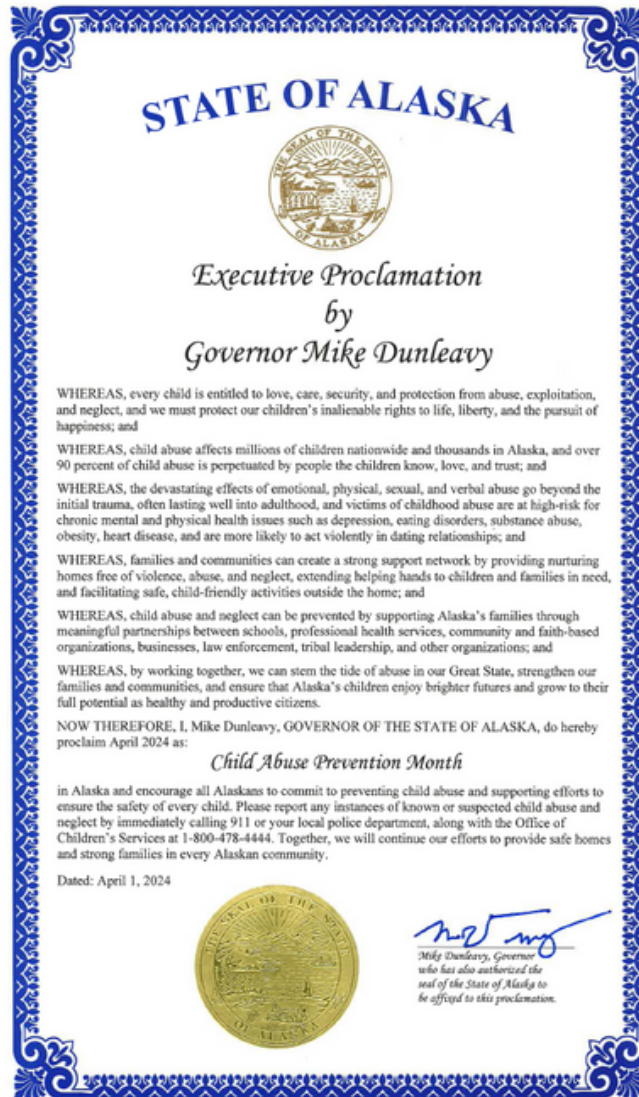


Eliza Posner  
Director of Strategy  
eposner@alaskachildrenstrust.org

**Email for info on: Youth Mental Health First Aid training and child sexual abuse prevention**

# Governor Dunleavy Officially Proclaims April Child Abuse Prevention Month

Thank you to Governor Dunleavy for issuing an Executive Proclamation for April 2024! Working together, we can strengthen families and communities to ensure they have the resources, supports, skills, and tools to thrive!



Download the full PDF

“Whereas, by working together, we can stem the tide of abuse in our Great State, strengthen our families and communities, and ensure that Alaska's children enjoy brighter futures and grow to their full potential as healthy and productive citizens.”



# Radio Ad Language

## 15 Second

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. When we support children and families with resources, knowledge, and tools, we ensure every Alaskan child thrives. Learn what you can do at: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)

---

## 30 Second

When parents and caregivers are overburdened, it can be difficult for them to provide the support their children need. But when we support children and families with resources, knowledge, and tools, we ensure every Alaskan child thrives. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Learn how you can get involved at: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)





# Opinion Editorial to Personalize & Submit to Your Local Paper - or Publish on Your Website's Blog!

## **Mandatory Supporters Before Reporters**

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, experts sounded the alarm that fewer interactions between children and mandatory reporters, professionals including educators and doctors who are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect, could lead to a decrease in reports and an increase in abuse and neglect.

Without a doubt, the pandemic did cause a decline in reports to state child welfare agencies, including a decline in reports to the Alaska Office of Children's Services of as much as 30% in some months of 2020. However, there wasn't a matching increase in child abuse and neglect; national rates of child abuse and neglect actually decreased during the pandemic. Research shows that decrease wasn't just a reflection of decreased reports - other indicators of abuse, including emergency department visits and hospital abusive head trauma admissions also decreased during the pandemic.

A child welfare system with fewer reports of abuse and neglect does not have to mean a system where children are less safe. During the pandemic, increased financial assistance including the expanded child tax credit and direct economic relief payments may have played a role in providing families with the concrete supports they needed to weather the storm and keep their children safe.

When we support families, children thrive. For Child Abuse Prevention Month this April, we call on every Alaskan to be a mandatory supporter.

Our society's emphasis on mandatory reporting may lead many adults to believe that filing a report is the best way to help a child and family in crisis. However, in Alaska and the nation, the vast majority of child welfare reports concern neglect. Many of these reports incorrectly mistake poverty for neglect. While the two are not the same, reporters often mistakenly perceive indicators that a family is struggling financially, like living in a homeless shelter, to be indicators of neglect. When those reports are screened in and investigated, families, especially families of color, who are more likely to live in poverty and more likely to be reported to child welfare, risk facing child removal for issues that could have been solved with the provision of basic concrete supports. When those reports are screened out, those families may still be struggling and in need of help, but they aren't going to receive it through the child welfare system.

Most parents don't intentionally abuse or neglect their children. But left without the knowledge, skills, supports, and resources they need, parents may reach a breaking point. That's when harm can occur. If you see a family struggling, reach out and offer support. Maybe that means lending a sympathetic ear to a parent in need or calling 2-1-1 to connect a family with resources. By offering your support early, you may be preventing that family from ever needing to be reported.

The goal of mandatory reporting is to protect children, not to create more reports. If we all fulfill our moral obligations as mandatory supporters, we can prevent mandatory reporters from ever needing to fulfill their legal ones.

Let's focus on prevention, not just intervention. Be a mandatory supporter, not just a reporter. Learn more at: [www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)



# Press Release to Send to Your Local Newspaper, Radio Station and/or TV Station

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

**YOUR NAME & CONTACT INFO**

## ***April's Child Abuse Prevention Month Highlights What Upstream Prevention Is and How to Help Alaskan Kids & Families***

Plus, Join Us for a Community Event **(Change byline if you are not hosting a community event)**

(**CITY, AK, DATE**) – April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time when [**YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME**] works to connect and inform families, communities, and supporters with the important work of primary prevention in Alaska and emphasize the importance of building a narrative of hope for the future for children, youth, and families.

Children who live in families with access to economic and concrete support are less likely to experience abuse and neglect. And yet, too often our society thinks of raising healthy children as a parent or caregiver's responsibility alone. This simply isn't true. Community support and family-friendly policies can help lighten the burden on families and strengthen communities from the ground up.

"Every family and child should have the access and support to live purposeful lives with hope for the future," said [**NAME, JOB TITLE**]. "Our work is rooted in both aspiration and evidence - with a goal of providing help and hope before crisis occurs. We hope that this month, our community will join us in learning about the importance of upstream prevention and linking arms with us to do the remaining critical work that Alaskan families need."

**IF YOU DO NOT HAVE AN IN-PERSON EVENT, DIRECT PEOPLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)**

We invite you to join us for a family-friendly event focused on upstream prevention!

WHAT:

WHEN:

WHERE:

EVENT LINK TO LEARN MORE:

###

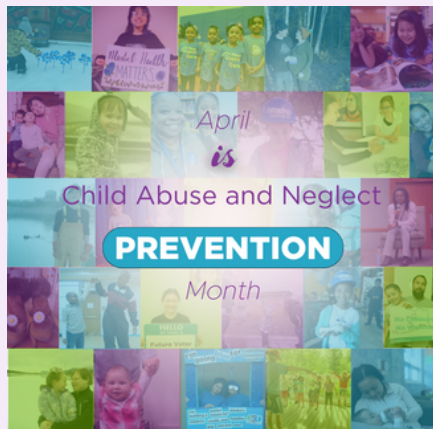
**ADD YOUR LOGO AND A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ORGANIZATION**



About Alaska Children's Trust

Alaska Children's Trust (ACT) is the statewide lead organization focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. For over thirty years, we have invested resources across Alaska to ensure children live in safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

Download these and other images [from Google Drive here](#) or use your Canva account to edit (change the colors, add your logo!) [them here](#).



**POST ON MONDAY, APRIL 1 | Suggested post text:**

☀️ April is Child Abuse Prevention Month! ☀️

This month is dedicated to raising awareness and preventing child abuse and neglect. At **YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME**, we believe in creating a community where all children grow up happy, healthy, and prepared to succeed. Throughout April, expect enlightening posts about prevention strategies, community partnerships, and how you can get involved. Learn more about Child Abuse Prevention Month: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)



**POST the week of April 5 | Suggested Post text:**

SAVE THE DATE! Friday, April 5 is Go Blue Day, a day to wear blue, attend an event in your community, or use the Alaska Children's Trust's Go Blue Activity Kit with your family to bond, learn together, and create positive childhood experiences. Find the free activity kit here: [www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month/#go-blue](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month/#go-blue)

Don't forget- when you do a blue activity, be sure to use #GoBlueDayAK so we can find your photo!



**POST ON THURSDAY, APRIL 4 | Suggested post text:**

🟦 Tomorrow, we wear blue! Join us as we show solidarity across Alaska and the nation in raising awareness of child abuse and neglect and the positive things communities can do to support families.

Share your photos and tag us! Learn more about Child Abuse Prevention Month: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)

**Post of a photo of you/ your organization wearing BLUE!**

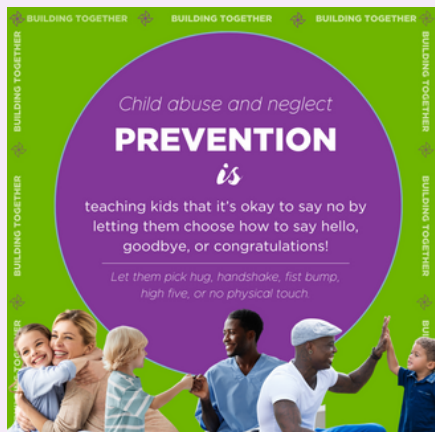
**POST ON FRIDAY, APRIL 5 | Suggested post text:**

💙 Today, we see a sea of blue in our community — a powerful statement against child abuse. Thank you to all who joined in. Your support is more than a gesture; it's a beacon of hope. As Child Abuse Prevention Month continues, we hope you take the momentum of this awareness day and turn it into action! Learn how YOU can help prevent child abuse and neglect in easy ways every day:

[alaskachildrenstrust.org/ways-to-help](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/ways-to-help)

#GoBlueDayAK

Download these and other images [from Google Drive here](#) or use your Canva account to edit (change the colors, add your logo!) [them here](#).



**Suggested Post text:**

Recognize #ChildAbusePreventionMonth this April by letting kids set their own boundaries when it comes to physical touch. If your child prefers not to be hugged, encourage them to set that boundary. Then, make sure that the adults in your child's life (even their family members!) respect that boundary. You'll be teaching everyone a lifelong lesson about the importance of consent.



**Suggested Post text:**

This #ChildAbusePreventionMonth, we encourage parents to teach their kids the proper names for body parts. While it's important to teach kids that there are special rules about privacy when it comes to genitalia, that doesn't mean those body parts should never be discussed! In fact, when we talk about "private parts" in a matter-of-fact, medically accurate way, we teach kids that they should never feel ashamed of their bodies or scared to ask questions.



**Suggested Post text:**

For #ChildAbusePreventionMonth this April, learn the signs of sexual grooming. Child sexual abusers often go out of their way to appear helpful to kids' families. Grooming could look like taking a child on special, solo outings or communicating with a child privately online. If you see one of these behaviors, say something! By speaking out, you could stop sexual grooming and help keep a child safe. Learn more tips for keeping kids safe from child sexual abuse in our booklet for parents and educators: [www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/csa-prevention](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/csa-prevention)



**Suggested Post text:**

This #ChildAbusePreventionMonth, teach kids that secrets are no fun! Make sure your child knows that no adult should ever ask them to keep secrets, especially when it comes to their body. Remind them that safe adults never ask kids to keep secrets, so if someone asks a child to hide something, they're being "tricky." Tell your child that it's always okay to tell a trusted adult if someone does ask them to keep a secret.

Learn more about keeping kids safe:  
[www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/csa-prevention](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/csa-prevention)



Download these and other images [from Google Drive here](#) or use your Canva account to edit (change the colors, add your logo!) [them here](#).



**Suggested Post text:**

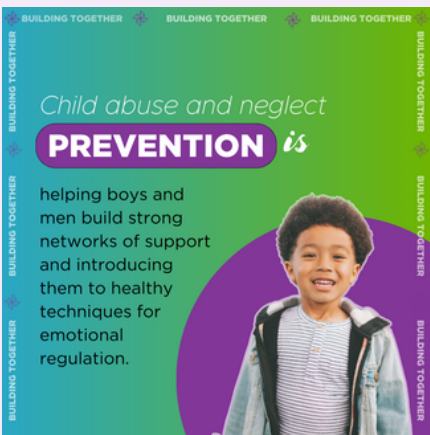
In a world where technology is at our fingertips, it's crucial to ensure our children and youth navigate digital spaces safely. When we have open, honest, and nonjudgemental conversations with our kids about their experiences online, we can co-create healthy boundaries and opportunities for learning. How do you start the conversation? Get tips, resources, and more at: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/online-safety](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/online-safety)



**Suggested Post text:**

For Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, Alaska Children's Trust is hosting a free training for any and all Alaskans!

Sign up for "Youth Mental Health First Aid", a training that introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Register now to save your spot! [www.akafterschool.org/event-calendar](http://www.akafterschool.org/event-calendar)



**Suggested Post text:**

This #ChildAbusePreventionMonth, let's break down stereotypes and barriers for boys and young men by opening up about emotions, finding ways to cope and regulate them, and providing positive male role models for developing minds. When we introduce these ideas early on, we create strong allies in prevention!



**Suggested Post text:**

Did you know that one way to prevent child abuse and neglect is through things your family does already?! Whether it's fishing, berry-picking, dance, outdoor adventures, or something else, doing activities that promote a community-feel and cultural connections help kids get to know mentors and feel a sense of belonging. In fact, being a part of a larger community is a part of the Strengthening Families Protective Factor that protect kids and ensure families thrive! Learn more about Strengthening Families: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/strengthening-families](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/strengthening-families)

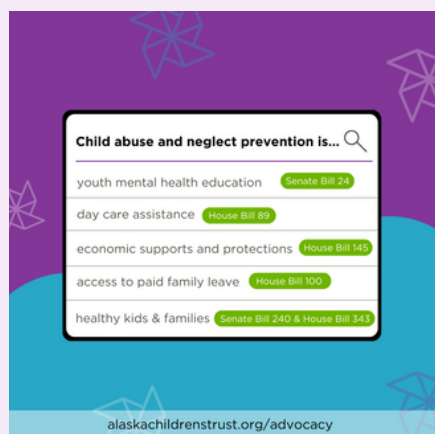
Download these and other images [from Google Drive here](#) or use your Canva account to edit (change the colors, add your logo!) [them here](#).



**Suggested Post text:**

Mental health is part of physical health! In Alaska, far too many of our young people feel sad or hopeless (check the link below to see the data) - we need to give them better support. Mental health education is key to teens knowing where to find help when they need it and identify what to do if a friend needs help.

See the data on Youth Mental Health in Alaska (go to page 24): <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61fef737004f564915c6b3cd/t/648d04a0d6c50d702e795b15/1686963381943/Health+2022.pdf>



**Suggested Post text:**

Primary prevention of child abuse and neglect includes so many different things! Economic support is tied to decreased neglect and abuse, as is access to critical services like day care, mental health support, and medical insurance. Right now, the Alaska State legislature is considering several bills that could contribute to creating a thriving future for kids. Learn more about them or get involved: [www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/advocacy](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/advocacy)



**Suggested Post text:**

When kids have adults they can turn to and trust, they are better set up for success. Make a game of it with your child and name an adult they can trust for each of their fingers. If you can't think of 5 people, brainstorm potential adults that might be good options for your child. This is particularly helpful as they get older and look for adults outside of their parents to talk to!



**Suggested Post text:**

Paid family leave is an economic support employers can offer that ensures parents can bond with their new baby or adopted or foster child, and gives them medically needed rest after birth. Children under the age of 1 are at the highest risk for experiencing child abuse or neglect, including abusive head trauma. Paid family leave takes an economic burden off of families during a stressful time and allows them to focus on their family. The Alaska State legislature's House Bill 100 is focused on paid family leave. Learn more about the bill: <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/33?Root=HB%20100>

Download these and other images [from Google Drive here](#) or use your Canva account to edit (change the colors, add your logo!) [them here](#).



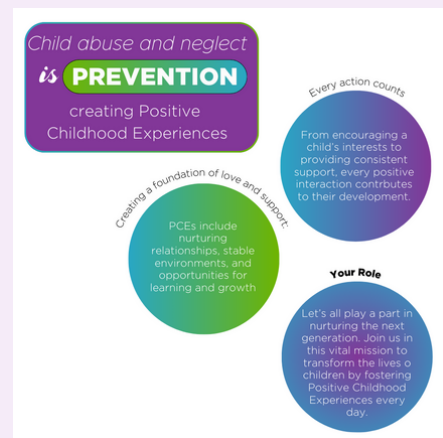
**Suggested Post text:**

When families have fun together and bond, THAT is prevention! It can be easy to get bogged down with life, work, and school, but taking a couple minutes out of each day to spend time together with your child can make a world of difference. Try it for a week - each day ask your child what they'd like to do together, even for just 15 minutes, and see the magic that happens in your relationship!



**Suggested Post text:**

Parents - remember that every. single. parent. struggles! Parenting can be frustrating and not every day feels rewarding. Give yourself grace. Be open to a helping hand from a trusted friend or neighbor so that you can take time for yourself and be the best you can be for your child.



**Suggested Post text:**

☀️ Promoting the Positive ☀️

For many years, research focused on the negative impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) like health issues far down the line. However, science shows us that there is transformative power in Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)! PCEs, which vary from things like connecting with safe adults to pursuing a child's interests, are key in child well-being. It's time to not just prevent harm, but actively build brighter futures. Learn more about Adverse and Positive Childhood Experiences: [alaskachildrenstrust.org/aces-pces](http://alaskachildrenstrust.org/aces-pces)



**Suggested Post text:**

Child care means business! Child care is a part of upstream prevention of child abuse and neglect. For many Alaskan families, bringing in an income isn't a luxury - it's a necessity. That means that child care (with family members or in a center) is an important part of life.

When parents have the piece of mind that their child is well-cared for, they can contribute to society and their family in more meaningful ways.



# Email Signature to Add to Your Emails Throughout April

Consider adding this email signature to your emails to spread the word that child abuse and neglect prevention is everyone's responsibility!

Let's create a thriving future, together! Be sure to link the signature image to our page, [www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month](http://www.alaskachildrenstrust.org/child-abuse-prevention-month)



Instructions for adding a signature in Gmail

Download the image from our Google Drive

Instructions for adding a signature in Outlook

## Thank you for using our toolkit!

If you have any questions or need assistance, email Kaila Pfister, ACT Director of Communications [kpfister@alaskachildrenstrust.org](mailto:kpfister@alaskachildrenstrust.org) or call (907) 248- 7378