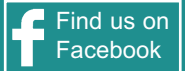




Friends

of the Children's
Justice Center of Maui



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www.mauicjc.org

A Publication by the Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui • April is "Prevent Child Abuse Month"

Why I Protect and Advocate for Abused Children

In a world where innocence should be cherished and childhood should be a time of joy and growth, the reality for many children is heartbreakingly different. They face abuse and neglect, which leaves lasting scars on their hearts and minds. My journey to protect and advocate for these vulnerable souls is a deeply personal mission, driven not only by my compassion and a commitment to justice but also by my own lived experience.

The Origins of My Advocacy

My dedication to protecting and advocating for abused children stems from a profound understanding of the impact of abuse on a child's life. Whether it's physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, the trauma inflicted on a child can have lifelong consequences. I've witnessed the pain and suffering that abuse can cause, not only in the short term but also in the long-lasting ripple effects it creates. It is this understanding that fuels my resolve to make a difference.

The Power of Compassion

Compassion is at the core of my advocacy. I believe that every child deserves to be loved, cared for, and protected. When I see a child in distress, I am reminded of our collective responsibility to step in and offer support. By standing up for abused children, I aim to provide them with the comfort and security they need to heal and thrive. Compassion drives my actions and keeps me motivated to fight for their rights.

Breaking the Cycle

Abuse is often a cyclical pattern, passed down through generations. By intervening and providing support to abused children, I hope to break this cycle. Every child who receives the care and attention they deserve becomes a beacon of hope for a brighter future.



Paul Tonnessen
Executive Director

My advocacy is not just about addressing the immediate needs of these children but also about creating a world where abuse is no longer tolerated and every child can grow up in a safe environment.

Empowering Survivors

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work is seeing the transformation in children who have overcome abuse. These survivors are incredibly resilient, and with the right support, they can go on to lead fulfilling lives. By advocating for abused children, I aim to empower them to reclaim their lives and futures. They inspire me to continue my efforts and remind me of the incredible strength of the human spirit.

Conclusion

Protecting and advocating for abused children is not just a duty; it is a passion that drives me every day. It is a commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of their circumstances, has the chance to experience a childhood free from fear and pain. Together, we can make a difference and create a world where every child is valued and cherished. Supporting abused children is a crucial and compassionate endeavor.

Here are several ways others can help:

1. Educate Yourself and Others

- Learn about the signs of abuse: Recognizing the signs can help in early intervention.

- Spread awareness: Share information about child abuse and its impact to educate others in your community.

2. Report Suspected Abuse

- Know the reporting procedures: Familiarize yourself with local laws and procedures for reporting child abuse.

- Take action: If you suspect a child is being abused, report it to the appropriate authorities immediately.

3. Volunteer Your Time

- Join local organizations: Many nonprofits and advocacy groups work to support abused children. Volunteering with these organizations can make a significant impact.

- Offer your skills: Whether it's tutoring, mentoring, or providing emotional support, your skills can be valuable in helping children recover.

4. Provide Financial Support

- Donate to charities: Financial contributions to organizations that support abused children can help provide necessary resources and services.

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Inside:

- Who are the Friends
- 7 Ways to Prevent Child Abuse
- Much much, more



Who are the Friends?

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The Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui (FCJC) is a private, non-profit corporation, founded in 1989 by a non-partisan group of community and business leaders concerned with the social welfare of children and families who have been traumatized by abuse and severe neglect.

The Mission of the FCJC has three parts.....

To provide support for the healing of abused and neglected children. We do this by receiving requests from over 40 social services agencies and other professions for services or items that will help with the healing of the child. These services could be for education or tutoring, counseling, medical, transportation, social activities, sports activities, after-school programs, self-esteem issues, school needs and everything in between.

Promote prevention of child abuse and neglect. We accomplish this task by creating and distributing a 16-page supplement in the Maui News about child abuse and neglect prevention; by producing and distributing DVD's on "Mandated Reporting"

Continued from front page

- Fundraise: Organize fundraising events or campaigns to raise money for child abuse prevention and support programs.

5. Advocate for Policy Changes

- Support legislation: Advocate for laws and policies that protect children and provide support for abuse survivors.

- Engage with policymakers: Write letters, attend town hall meetings, and participate in advocacy campaigns to influence policy changes.

and "Shaken Baby Syndrome"; by participating in several community-wide forums such as "Keiki Fest"; by distributing two newsletters annually; and by participating in the 2009 PREVENT Institute, the Ho'oikaika Partners prevention committee, the Hanai Coalition for foster children and the Hawaii Children's Trust Fund Prevention Campaign.

To support for the Children's Justice Center of Maui. The CJC is part of the State Judiciary, and is the safe and nurturing facility where suspected victims of child sexual abuse and extreme physical abuse are brought for an interview and possible forensic examination.

We provide funds for training of the police and social workers who are involved in those interviews; snacks for the children being interviewed; snacks for the meeting participants; stuffed toys for the children; and support supplies for the office.

This past year, the FCJC:

- Served 800 children with funding for direct services.
- 1,612 children with Christmas gifts

6. Offer Emotional Support

- Be a trusted adult: Sometimes, just being there for a child and offering a safe space to talk can make a world of difference.
- Listen and believe: When a child shares their experiences, listen without judgment and believe them.

7. Promote Prevention Programs

- Support community programs: Encourage and participate in programs that aim to prevent child abuse through education and support for families.
- Engage in parenting classes: Promote and participate in parenting education programs that teach positive and non-violent parenting techniques.

- Over 24,000 households with our annual 16-page prevention newspaper supplement
- 3,000 readers through two newsletters
- 8,000 children and parents reached through community events

And we do all of this with one paid staff person and many dedicated volunteers. We receive no Federal, State or County funding. Our funding comes from the Bradley and Victoria Geist Foundation, the Teresa Hughes Trust, Sentry Tournament of Champions Golf Tournament and companies and individuals through several fundraisers during the year.

We invite you to learn more about us and to help us through a tax deductible donation. If you have questions, call 986-8634, email us at info@mauicjc.org or visit our website at www.mauicjc.org.

8. Create a Safe Environment

- Foster a supportive community: Build a community where children feel safe and supported.
- Encourage open communication: Teach children that they can always come to you or another trusted adult if they need help.

By taking these actions, individuals can make a meaningful impact in the lives of abused children and help create a safer, more supportive world for all children. Every effort counts, and together, we can make a difference.

“Assisting Maui Keiki for 35+ Years”

For 35 years, the Friends of the Children’s Justice Center has drawn upon the generosity and compassion of our community to help Maui keiki and families who have suffered abuse and neglect. Our business model continues to be simply asking you to “help us help others,” which has resulted in transformative resources provided to help vulnerable children recover, heal, and thrive. Reflecting on our journey over the last 35 years, we remember the many young lives impacted by the Friends.

- For Maui keiki who suffered from abuse and neglect, we found ways to meet immediate needs ranging from financial support to providing therapeutic services to help victims heal from trauma and stop the cycle of abuse.
- When the children of our community faced isolation, sickness, and loss of family members during the Covid pandemic, we provided laptops to help students keep up with schoolwork and counseling services to help survivors process their grief.
- In the immediate aftermath of the 2023 wildfires, we distributed gift cards for Maui families to purchase basic necessities, such as clothing, underwear, backpacks, and toiletries.
- Our original prevention program, “Journey to New Beginnings,” empowers children to understand their value and to use their voice for change. Through the abuse they have endured, our keiki often experience a



loss of innocence and a loss of power. “Journey to New Beginnings” restores survivors’ empathy, compassion, courage, and wisdom, providing a path for them to heal from trauma and grow into successful adults.

In addition to direct resources provided to children and families in need, the Friends seeks to prevent child abuse and neglect. We produced DVDs on “Mandated Reporting” and “Shaken Baby Syndrome,” which were shared with government agencies, non-profit organizations, educators, and families nationwide. Every year, we publish a supplement to the Maui News to increase awareness and share links to local resources, reaching over 24,000 Maui residents.

Looking ahead, we are going to continue to ask for your help. Children growing up today will need support

from the community around them, as familial bonds are threatened by financial stressors, substance abuse and generational trauma. With your support, we can continue collaborating with the Children’s Justice Center (CJC) of Maui County. Part of the State Judiciary, the CJC is the facility where suspected child victims are brought for an interview and possible forensic examination. The Friends help make this place a safe and nurturing environment, providing training support, toys for children, resources for caregivers, and holiday décor.

For 35 years, the Friends have survived and thrived because of people like you. All of these resources are possible due to the generosity of our community, including individuals, organizations, companies, and foundations. As always, the Friends do not receive local, state, or federal government funds. Our work is completed with one paid staff member and dozens of compassionate volunteers.

On behalf of the children we serve and the community we all live in, thank you for supporting our mission.

Mahalo for 35 years of helping us to help others,

Paul and Sheila

Mahalo

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If you suspect someone is at risk for child abuse and neglect...

...do not hesitate to take action. Signs of Child Abuse and Neglect to help you identify if someone may be in danger.

The following are some commonly asked questions.

Who Should Report Abuse?

Anyone may report a suspected case of child abuse. By law, mandated reporters must report possible child abuse and neglect cased to Child Welfare Services (CWS) / Child Protective Services (CPS) or the Police Department immediately. The State of Hawaii Child Welfare Service's "A Guideline for Mandated Reporters" identifies mandated reporters as:

- (1) Licensed or registered professionals of the healing arts and any health-related occupation who examine, attend, treat, or proved other professional or specialized services, including but not limited to physicians (including physicians in training), psychologist, dentists, nurses, osteopathic physicians and surgeons, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, pharmacists, and other health-related professionals.
- (2) Employees or officers of any public or private school.
- (3) Employees or officers of any public or private agency or institution, or other individuals, providing social, medical, hospital, or mental health services, including financial assistance.
- (4) Employees or officers of any law enforcement agency, including but not limited to the courts, police departments, correctional institution, and parole or probation officers.
- (5) Individual providers of child care, or employees or officers of any licensed or registered child care facility, foster home, or similar institution.
- (6) Medical examiners or coroners
- (7) Employees of any public or private agency providing recreational or sports activities. Call Child Welfare Services (CWS) / Child Protective Services (CPS) to discuss the appropriateness of referrals if you're not sure.

How Do I Report Child Abuse and Neglect?

To report child abuse and neglect, contact Child Welfare Services (CPS) / Child Protective Services (CPS) or the Police Department. This may be done anonymously. The police will investigate the suspected crime, and social service agencies will assess the risk to the child. You will need to report the signs and symptoms of maltreatment that you observe, as well as provide the child's name and the name of the person believed to be responsible for the abuse (if you know it). It is very helpful to give your own name and phone number however this report can also be done anonymously.

Emergencies: If you believe the child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) / Child Protective Services (CPS): Oahu: 808-832-5300
Outside of Oahu: 1-888-380-3088

What Kinds of Information Will I Need To Provide?

The social worker will want to obtain as much of the following information as possible before referring the matter for investigation:

- Name and address of the child victim and his/her parents or other persons responsible for his/her care;
- Child's birth date or age;
- Names and ages of other persons who live with the child and their relationship to the child if known;
- Nature and extent of the child's abuse or neglect (including any evidence or indication of previous abuse or neglect);
- Date, time, and location of incident;
- Child's current location and condition;
- Identity of the alleged perpetrator;
- Whereabouts of the alleged perpetrator and any history if available;
- Any other information that may be helpful in determining the cause of abuse or neglect and whether or not there is a family member who can protect the child.

What If I'm Not Sure?

You can consult with the Department of Human Services regarding your concerns or observations. You need not be prepared to prove that abuse or neglect has occurred before making a report. If the child has shared information with you about the abuse/neglect, this is enough for you to call. Except for medical situations where history taking includes asking relevant questions to determine the appropriate kinds of tests or examination needed, the preference is that you make a referral immediately once the information is shared with you. Since the social worker may need to interview the child, it is our goal that the child not be subjected to numerous interviews about his/her abusive or neglectful situation by different people.

What Happens Following My Report?

If the report is accepted for investigation, a social worker will be assigned to investigate the referral to determine if the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The worker will gather as much information as possible by talking to the child, family members and if necessary, others in the community. Within sixty days of the date the report is assigned for investigation, a decision must be made whether the report is confirmed or not. You will be contacted regarding the disposition of your report.

Will The Police Get Involved?

A report of suspected child abuse or neglect or substantial risk of child abuse or neglect must be made to the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services or to the police. Depending on the circumstances of the report and harm to the child, the police may become involved either at the request of the department or by a determination by the police that they need to take immediate action and/or conduct an investigation.

Continued on next page

Continued

Will The Family Find Out Who Made The Report?

The Department makes every reasonable effort to maintain the confidentiality of a reporter who requests that his/her name not be released. Anyone reporting in good faith is immune from liability.

Contact is usually made by the social worker or a representative from the Department of the Attorney General who will provide information regarding the type of testimony needed and the date and time of the court proceedings and other information you may need to know. The Department of Human Services may contact you in order to prepare you further for the proceedings.

Will I Need To Testify In Court?

If the social worker finds that legal intervention is necessary as a means of helping the child and family, a petition will be prepared and filed in Family Court (civil proceeding). We may need your testimony if we believe it is necessary in order to establish the court's jurisdiction to protect a child from abuse or neglect.



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Helping an abused or neglected child

What should you do if you suspect that a child has been abused? How do you approach him or her? Or what if a child comes to you? It's normal to feel a little overwhelmed and confused in this situation. Child abuse is a difficult subject that can be hard to accept and even harder to talk about.

Just remember, you can make a tremendous difference in the life of an abused child, especially if you take steps to stop the abuse early. When talking with an abused child, the best thing you can provide is calm reassurance and unconditional support. Let your actions speak for you if you're having trouble finding the words. Remember that talking about the abuse may be very difficult for the child. It's your job to reassure the child and provide whatever help you can.



Tips for talking to an abused child

- Avoid denial and remain calm. A common reaction to news as unpleasant and shocking as child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down. As hard as it may be, remain as calm and reassuring as you can.

- Don't interrogate. Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't interrogate the child or ask leading questions. This may confuse and fluster the child and make it harder for them to continue their story.

- Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse. Reassure him or her that you take what is said seriously, and that it is not the child's fault.

- Safety comes first. If you feel that your safety or the safety of the child would be threatened if you try to intervene, leave it to the professionals. You may be able to provide more support later after the initial professional intervention.

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We Need to Allow Abused Children to Have a Voice

Learning to empower our children isn't complicated. It really takes the same effort that you apply to any goal with enthusiasm, dedication and a willingness to "set aside" your preconceived ideas, prejudices and personal baggage. A child so wholeheartedly wants to believe that his or her dreams can come true. How can we adults support this concept?

When a child is abused it tends to stem from someone taking away their innocence and power. According to a Department of Justice study statistics indicate that more than 60 percent of abused children surveyed were exposed to violence within the past year either directly or indirectly. Children's exposure to violence, whether as victims or witnesses, is often associated with long-term physical, psychological, and emotional harm. Children exposed to violence are also at a higher risk of engaging in criminal behavior later in life and becoming part of a cycle of violence. Children exposed to violence are also more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; suffer from depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic disorders; fail or have difficulty in school. Society tends to label these children as "problematic" or "juvenile delinquents" when in reality they are children who are having various challenges due to the unwanted trauma that someone else inflicted upon them.

Why listening is the key to protection

Those of us who work or have worked in the child protection arena have powerful, painful memories of the silencing of children. Some children were silenced because they were too young or too damaged, persuaded by family members to recant their disclosure of abuse. Others for fear of retaliation from the perpetrators. We need to empower them and let them know that they do have a voice as most children who have suffered abuse feel they do not have a voice. There are many understandable reasons why a child victim of sexual abuse is not likely to tell anyone about their abuse. Often, the abusive adult will convince the child that they won't be believed or that they are somehow responsible for the abuse and will be punished for it. The child may care about or feel protective of the person who sexually abused them and may feel they'd be

betraying this person by telling about the sexual contact. The abuser will often use this information to help maintain the secrecy. Children frequently remain silent to protect a non-abusive parent from upsetting information.



Sometimes, a child may be confused if they experienced positive physical pleasure, arousal, or emotional intimacy from the abuse. This confusion can make it difficult for the child to speak up. A child may feel that they permitted the abuse and should have been able to stop it. Remember that there are no situations where a child is responsible for any sexual interaction with a more powerful child or adult. They are still only children!!!

People who abuse children may offer a combination of gifts or treats and threats about what will happen if the child says 'no' or tells someone. They may scare the child with threats of being hurt physically, but more often the threat is about what will be lost if they tell e.g. the family breaking up or someone going to prison. In order to keep the abuse secret, the abuser will often play on the child's fear, embarrassment or guilt about what is happening, perhaps convincing them that no one will believe them or that the child will be punished. Sometimes the abuser will convince the child that he or she enjoyed it and wanted it to happen. Children need to learn and understand that they do have a voice and that people will believe them.

We need to teach all our youth empathy, respect and compassion for all people.

We must raise each and every one of our children to respect all life. We cannot pick and choose which people/things deserve better treatment than others, it must be understood and children must be involved in learning that all life is a gift, we are all connected and equally deserving to be treated with compassion. We cannot end child sexual abuse without also impacting other very serious issues - violence against women, racism, gender-equality, discrimination against those with disabilities, the poor, bullying, all forms of crime, war, etc. We can teach, even toddlers, to pay attention to the feelings of others. When they take a toy from another child, hit or purposely scare, how does it affect the other child? As much as we need to protect our children from being abused, we must also protect them from becoming abusive and it starts with empathy.

Being a good person isn't just about not hurting others, it's about helping others.

Your child may witness or suspect abuse of another child, or may even find a friend disclosing abuse to them. Especially when abuse is perpetrated by a peer or in a group setting: e.g. hazing, house parties, youth groups, or at a workplace etc., if one child can find the courage to speak out on the behalf of another child being victimized, (rather than playing the role of a silent bystander, it will most likely help others stand up and do the right thing as well.

It's also important that our children know to come to us, or a trusted adult with their concerns. Abuse prevention is not just about protecting our own kids, but keeping all kids safe from abuse. And as our children become older, we must also empower them with the ability and responsibility to help others.

Childhood Trauma

What is a Traumatic Event?

A traumatic event is a frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses a threat to a child's life or bodily integrity. Witnessing a traumatic event that threatens life or physical security of a loved one can also be traumatic. This is particularly important for young children as their sense of safety depends on the perceived safety of their attachment figures.

Traumatic experiences can initiate strong emotions and physical reactions that can persist long after the event. Children may feel terror, helplessness, or fear, as well as physiological reactions such as heart pounding, vomiting, or loss of bowel or bladder control. Children who experience an inability to protect themselves or who lacked protection from others to avoid the consequences of the traumatic experience may also feel overwhelmed by the intensity of physical and emotional responses.

Even though adults work hard to keep children safe, dangerous events still happen. This danger can come from outside of the family (such as a natural disaster, car accident, school shooting, or community violence) or from within the family, such as domestic violence, physical or sexual abuse, or the unexpected death of a loved one.

What Experiences Might Be Traumatic?

- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse and neglect (including trafficking)
- Natural and technological disasters
- Family or community violence
- Terrorism, mass violence, and school shootings
- Discrimination, prejudice, and racism
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Substance use disorder (personal or familial)
- Traumatic separation (including as part of an immigration journey or incarceration)
- Refugee and war experiences (including torture)
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness
- Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss or injury)



When children have been in situations where they feared for their lives, believed that they would be injured, witnessed violence, or tragically lost a loved one, they may show signs of child traumatic stress.

What Is Child Traumatic Stress?

Children who suffer from child traumatic stress are those who have been exposed to one or more traumas over the course of their lives and develop reactions that persist and affect their daily lives after the events have ended. Traumatic reactions can include a variety of responses, such as intense and ongoing emotional upset, depressive symptoms or anxiety, behavioral changes, difficulties with self-regulation, problems relating to others or forming attachments, regression or loss of previously acquired skills, attention and academic difficulties, nightmares, difficulty sleeping and eating, and physical symptoms, such as aches and pains. Older children may use drugs or alcohol, behave in risky ways, or engage in unhealthy sexual activity.

Children who suffer from traumatic stress often have these types of symptoms when reminded in

some way of the traumatic event. Although many of us may experience reactions to stress from time to time, when a child is experiencing traumatic stress, these reactions interfere with the child's daily life and ability to function and interact with others. At no age are children immune to the effects of traumatic experiences. Even infants and toddlers can experience traumatic stress. The way that traumatic stress manifests will vary from child to child and will depend on the child's age and developmental level.

Without treatment, repeated childhood exposure to traumatic events can affect the brain and nervous system and increase health-risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, eating disorders, substance use, and high-risk activities). Research shows that child trauma survivors can be more likely to have long-term health problems (e.g., diabetes and heart disease) or to die at an earlier age. Traumatic stress can also lead to increased use of health and mental health services and increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Adult survivors of traumatic events may also have difficulty in establishing fulfilling relationships and maintaining employment.

Reminders and Adversities

Traumatic experiences can set in motion a cascade of changes in children's lives that can be challenging and difficult. These can include changes in where they live, where they attend school, who they're living with, and their daily routines. They may now be living with injury or disability to themselves or others. There may be ongoing criminal or civil proceedings.

Traumatic experiences leave a legacy of reminders that may persist for years. These reminders are linked to aspects of the traumatic experience, its circumstances, and its aftermath. Children may be reminded by persons, places, things, situations, anniversaries, or by feelings such as renewed fear or sadness. Physical reactions can also serve as reminders, for example, increased heart rate or bodily sensations. Identifying children's responses to trauma and loss reminders is an important tool for understanding how and why

Continued

children's distress, behavior, and functioning often fluctuate over time. Trauma and loss reminders can reverberate within families, among friends, in schools, and across communities in ways that can powerfully influence the ability of children, families, and communities to recover. Addressing trauma and loss reminders is critical to enhancing ongoing adjustment.

Risk and Protective Factors

Fortunately, even when children experience a traumatic event, they don't always develop traumatic stress. Many factors contribute to symptoms, including whether the child has experienced trauma in the past, and protective factors at the child, family, and community levels can reduce the adverse impact of trauma.

Some factors to consider include:

- Severity of the event. How serious was the event? How badly was the child or someone she loves physically hurt? Did they or someone they love need to go to the hospital? Were the police involved? Were chil-

dren separated from their caregivers? Were they interviewed by a principal, police officer, or counselor?

Did a friend or family member die?

- Proximity to the event. Was the child actually at the place where the event occurred? Did they see the event happen to someone else or were they a victim? Did the child watch the event on television? Did they hear a loved one talk about what happened?

- Caregivers' reactions. Did the child's family believe that he or she was telling the truth? Did caregivers take the child's reactions seriously? How did caregivers respond to the child's needs, and how did they cope with the event themselves?

- Prior history of trauma. Children continually exposed to traumatic events are more likely to develop traumatic stress reactions.

- Family and community factors. The culture, race, and ethnicity of children, their families, and their communities can be a protective factor, meaning that children and families have qualities and or resources that help

buffer against the harmful effects of traumatic experiences and their aftermath. One of these protective factors can be the child's cultural identity. Culture often has a positive impact on how children, their families, and their communities respond, recover, and heal from a traumatic experience. However, experiences of racism and discrimination can increase a child's risk for traumatic stress symptoms.

Source: *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

Learn more about
 The Friends of the Children's Justice Center
 Visit us online at www.mauicjc.org

Mahalo,
Friends of the Children's
Justice Center of Maui.

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7 Ways to Prevent Child Abuse

The burden of prevention has been resting for years on the smallest shoulders in our society: the children who are most vulnerable, least powerful, and least likely to be able to protect themselves from a powerful adult. This is especially true when considering that the majority of sexual abuse (93%) happens at the hands of an adult well known to the child. When children are abused by adults, they are also confused by the fact that this person is supposed to be a protector, a caretaker, and worthy of trust simply by being an adult (after all, we also teach children to obey adults, which can be very confusing). Child abusers are very often "experts" at the emotional manipulation of children, gaining their trust well in advance of the actual abuse. In light of these facts (and many others), it is clear that the time has come for adults to assume responsibility for protecting children. Their shoulders were not built for carrying such weight.

The following facts and the **"7 Steps to Protecting Our Children From Sexual Abuse"** are directly quoted here with the permission of the nonprofit organization From Darkness to Light. This is an invaluable resource that is well worth "bookmarking."

STEP 1:

"Learn the facts and understand the risks. Realities - not trust - should influence your decisions regarding your child."

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will have been sexually abused by their eighteenth birthday. Consider this the next time you walk through a mall or down a street and see several or many children. Whenever you enter a classroom or ball game, look around and do the math. It is a sad reality, but one we can have a positive effect on.

- Only 1 in 10 children report the abuse themselves. Those children who keep the abuse a secret or who tell and are not believed are far more likely to suffer psychological, emotional, social, and/or physical problems that will most likely follow them into adulthood.

- 22% of abused children are under 8 years old.

- The average age of abused children is 9.

Most likely, you know a child who either has been or is being abused.

It is also likely that you know an abuser! Most are not "strangers," but are our friends and family members.

- 34% of victims are abused by family members.

- 59% are abused by people whom the family believes to be trustworthy. In fact, it is a common tactic of abusers to first establish a trusting relationship with the parents of the child.

- Many young children are abused by larger, older children.

- Those who abuse children have no characteristics that "set them apart" for us to identify them as abusers. They look and act just like us and go out of their way to appear trustworthy.

- Those who sexually abuse children are drawn to places where they will have easy access to children (and are often those we judge to be "wonderful" with children) such as sports leagues, faith centers, clubs, and schools. It is important to be sure that the clubs, leagues, etc., where your child is involved has a policy about doing background checks on its volunteers.

STEP 2:

Minimize Opportunity - "If you eliminate or reduce one-adult/one-child situations, you will dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for your child."

- Remember that abusers often befriend the child and the child's family in order to gain their trust.

- Always look for group situations to involve your child in rather than placing your child alone with one adult.

- Strongly encourage policies limiting one-adult/one-child situations in all youth related activities such as faith groups, sports teams, and school clubs. Make sure parents/caregivers can observe or interrupt activities at any time. Also make sure that background checks have been done on all volunteers and others working directly with children.

- insist that personnel (paid and volunteer) receive quality training on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse.

- Drop in unexpectedly when your child is alone with any adult!

- Monitor your child's internet use. The internet has become a favorite means for pedophiles to interact privately with children. Their goal is to lure them into physical contact after gaining their trust.

- Set an example by personally avoiding one-adult/one-child situations with children other than your own.

STEP 3:

Talk About It - Children often keep abuse a secret, but barriers can be broken down by talking about it.

It's important to understand why children don't tell.

- Children are afraid of disappointing their parents.

- Children are afraid of disrupting the family.

- The abuser sometimes threatens the child or a family member.

- The abuser shames the child, points out that s/he let it happen, or tells her or him that their parents will be angry.

- Some children who did not initially disclose abuse are afraid or ashamed to tell when it happens again.

- Some children are too young to understand. Many abusers tell children the abuse is "okay" or a "game." Know how children communicate.

- Children who do disclose sexual abuse often tell a trusted adult other than a parent. Therefore, training for people who work with children in any capacity is very important.

- Children may tell "parts" of what happened or pretend it happened to someone else to gauge adult reaction.
- Children will often "shut down" and refuse to tell more if you respond emotionally or negatively.

- If your child does not talk to you, don't think it's a sign of poor parenting.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Talk openly with your child.

- Teach your child that it is your job to protect him.
- Teach your child it is not their responsibility to protect others.

Demonstrate daily that you will not be angry, no matter what your child tells you about any aspect of his life.

• Listen quietly. Children have a hard time telling parents about troubling events.

• Teach your child about her body, about what abuse is and, as age-appropriate, about sex. Teach her words that help her discuss sex comfortably with you.

• Teach your child that it is against the "rules" for adults to act in a sexual way with children and use examples.

• Start early and talk often. Use everyday opportunities to talk about sexual abuse.

STEP 4:

Stay Alert - Don't expect obvious signs when a child is being sexually abused. Signs are often there but you have to spot them. Learn the signs.

• Physical signs of sexual abuse are not common, although redness, rashes, or swelling in the genital area, urinary tract infections, or other such symptoms should be carefully investigated. Also, physical problems associated with anxiety, such as chronic stomach pain or headaches, may occur.

• Emotional or behavioral signals are more common. These can run from "too perfect" behavior, to withdrawal and depression, to unexplained anger and rebellion.

• Sexual behavior and language that are not age-appropriate can be a red flag.

• Be aware that in some children there are no signs whatsoever.

If you find physical signs that you suspect as sexual abuse, have the child physically examined immediately by a professional who specializes in child sexual abuse.

STEP 5:

Make a Plan - Learn where to go, who to call, and how to react.

Don't overreact. Just as you stay calm when your child breaks an arm and follow a plan you've made in advance for such emergencies, stay calm and follow a plan if your child reports abuse.

If you react with anger or disbelief, the response from the child may be the following:

- The child shuts down.
- The child changes his story in the face of your anger and disbelief, when, in fact, abuse may be occurring.
- The child changes his account around your questions so future tellings appear to be "coached." This can be very harmful if the case goes to court.
- The child feels even more guilty.

Note: VERY few reported incidents are false.

Offer support. It's very important to think through your emotional response before you're in a position where you suspect abuse. Hopefully, you'll never need to use the skills, but you will be prepared to respond in a supportive way if the need arises.

- Believe the child and make sure he knows it.
- Don't ask questions. This could be confusing to the child, make her upset, and could damage criminal prosecution of the offender.
- Assure the child that it's your job to protect him and that you'll do everything you can for him.
- Report in all cases of suspected abuse, whether inside or outside the family. The child's safety is much more important than any emotional conflict you may have to face. Remember: you are the adult.
- Don't panic. Sexually abused children who receive psychological help can and do heal.

Remember: Act on suspicions and report. If the abuse is outside of the family, report to the police or if the abuse happened within the family, report to the Department of Social Services.

STEP 6:

Act on Suspicions.

A child's well-being may depend on it.

If you are in a situation where you suspect abuse but do not have any proof, you may be reluctant to report. Many of us do not trust our "gut" feelings, even though they are most often right. A child cannot afford for you to take the chance that it is wrong. If you are still reluctant, please call one of the following:

- Child Welfare Reporting Line 1-888-380-3088 or your local Police Department

STEP 7:

Get involved.

Volunteer and financially support organizations that fight the tragedy of abuse:

- Your local Child Advocacy Center
- Prevention Programs
- Crisis information and referral services
- Rape crisis centers
- Use your voice and your vote (children do not have this right) to make your community a safer place for children.
- Support legislation that protects children (contact Prevent Child Abuse NC for more information on current legislation. See web address on links page).
- Demand that local government put more money into efforts to fight child abuse.
- Contact members of Congress.
- Write letters to the newspaper in your area.

Break the cycle of silence.

If you were a victim of sexual abuse, consider using your personal story to break the silence and reach others about the effects of abuse. Very often, people will listen to someone they know much more readily than they will respond to "cold" information.

There are 40 million survivors of sexual abuse in America today. May the prevention of further abuse and healing begin. You can make the difference!
SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY!



Do you envision a world where all of our 'ohana are healthy, safe, and supported?

WHO WE ARE

The Ho'oiikaika Partnership is a coalition of community organizations, individuals, county and state agencies dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect in Maui County.

We work together to strengthen supports, foster collaboration, share knowledge and resources, and shape policy to prevent child maltreatment.

OUR GOALS

1. Create a seamless safety net of services to support children & their caregivers
2. Strengthen the prevention & provider workforce
3. Educate & advocate for policy, program, & systems changes to prevent child abuse & neglect
4. Engage the community in the prevention of child abuse & neglect
5. Strengthen the foundation of the Partnership

WHAT WE DO

- Host monthly provider network meetings to coordinate and collaborate
- Offer training and support to build skills and reduce workforce stress
- Help families navigate the system and access support
- Raise awareness of Protective Factors in a public education campaign

Protective Factors help 'ohana feel nurtured, stay informed, build connections, maintain resilience, and access needed resources.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

CHECK OUT *Kalo Boy's Adventure To Make Pono: He Huaka'i 'Ohana*

our children's book that helps to build resilience, strengthen family bonds, break the stigma around seeking help, and foster early literacy.

PARTNER with Us and JOIN a Committee

DONATE to Support Our Work

LEARN More at www.hooikaikapartnership.com





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In-Person & Virtual Parent Child Interaction Groups

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Early Literacy Resources

Navigation Services:

Providing Connection to Community Resources



Take our Survey

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24-Hour Service Line: 1-888-270-9582

Maui Resources for Information and Assistance

Child and Family Service -Crisis Response; prevention and education/parenting/ sex abuse treatment Maui 877-6888
Molokai Branch 808 567-6100
24 Hour Hotline 873-8624

Department of Human Services (CPS)-Maui
Section 243-5143 Intake 888-380-3088 Molokai
Unit - 808 553-1703 / Lanai Office - 808 565-7102

Maui Police Department - 244-6400 or 911

Aloha House 579-9584
Child & Adolescent Outpatient
Mental Health Services 249-2121

Aloha United Way - 24-hour information
& referrals Phone: 211

ATV (Molokai) - TROs/anger management
-all ages 808 553-3202

Aloha House - Outpatient substance abuse treat-
ment & mental health services 579-9584

Big Brothers/Big Sisters - Provides 1-on-1
mentoring - 242-9754

Catholic Charities - 875-2984

Children's Justice Center - Maui 244-7926

Coalition for a Drug Free Lanai
(808) 236-2600 hinamauka.org

Community Clinic of Maui - Medical
outreach services 871-7772

It Takes An 'Ohana - ItTakesAnOhana.org
Children and youth foster care support

DOH-Family Guidance Center
- Mental health services for children - 243-1252

DOH Family Health Services - 984-2136

DOH Public Health Nursing - 984-8206

Hale Ho'omalua - 24-hour hot line & women's
shelter on Molokai 808 567-6888

DHS-Income Maintenance - Financial, medical,
and food stamps - 984-8300

Family Life Center - 877-0880

Good Beginnings - 270-5557

Hui Malama Center - Tutoring GED - 244-5911

Imua Family Services - Children with developmen-
tal delays 244-7467

Ka Hale A Ke Ola Homeless Resource Center
242-7600
Ka Hale Pomaikai - (808) 558-8480
kahalepomaikai.org

Lanai integrated Service System (LISS) Operated
by PACT, services primarily to DHS families for
counseling, visitation, & family strengthening 808-
565-9191 pacthawaii.org

Lanai Women Helping Women - 808-565-678

Lanai Community Health Center - 808-565-6919

Legal Aid Society of Hawaii- Civil (not criminal)
legal assistance to low income persons 244-3731
Malama Family Recovery Center - Substance
abuse education & treatment-women 877-7117

Malama Family Recovery
Women-specific outpatient and residential
substance abuse treatment that targets pregnant
and parenting women. 808-877-7117

Maui AHEC Child Sexual Abuse Crisis Response
- Molokai 553-3623

Maui County Catholic Social Ministry - 244-8106

Maui Economic Opportunity - possible rent/utility
help & child day care program - 249-2990

Maui Family Support Services - In-home family
strengthening services, Teen pregnancy preven-
tion and support Program, Early Head Start,
Healthy Start and Fatherhood Initiative Program
242-0900

Maui Farm - 808-579-8271 - themauifarm.org

Maui Food Bank - 808-243-9500

Maui Humane Society - 877-3680

Maui United Way - Call 211

Maui Youth & Family Services - Adolescent
programs 579-8414 Molokai 808 553-3907

MCAPP - (808) 723-2571 - molokaicapp.org

Mediation Services of Maui - Custody/dispute
resolution - 244-5744

Mental Health Kokua
(808) 986-0059 - mentalhealthkokua.org

Molokai Community Health Center
808-553-5038

Molokai Community Services - 553-3244
Molokai Family Support Services-Family strength-
ening services, 0-5 yr. olds 808-553-3276

Na Hale O'wainee
Lahaina Homeless Resource Center - 662-0076

Neighborhood Place Of Wailuku - 986-0700

Ohana Makamae - 248-8538

PACT- Violence intervention services (men,
women & adolescents), mental health services for
public school students - 244-2330
Pact-Ulupono Family Strengthening Program
244-2330

PATCH - Child care provider referrals - 242-9232

Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center - Services
for children of Hawaiian ancestry 242-8888
Molokai 808 553-5989

Salvation Army - Possible rent/utility help for
homeless - 871-6270

Victim Witness assistance Program -
Court-related services for victims 270-7695

Women Helping Women - Shelter & help for
women victims of domestic violence and their chil-
dren - 242-6600

Nationwide Resources

Child Help National Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-4-A-CHILD or 1-800-422-4453 www.child-
helpusa.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
1-800-843-5678, missingkids.org

National Center for Victims of Crime
1-800-FYI-CALL or 1-800-394-2255 - ncvc.org

National Children's Alliance
1-800-239-9950 www.nca-online.org

National Organization for Victim Assistance -800-
TRY-NOVA or 1-800-879-6682 www.try-nova.org

Office for Victims of Crime Resource
Center 1-800-851-3420 TTY 1-877-712-9279
www.ojv.usdoj.gov/ovc/ovcres/welcome.html

Children's Defense Fund - 1-800-233-1200
www.childrensdefense.org

Darkness To Light -1-866-367-5444
www.darkness2light.org

National Clearinghouse On Child Abuse
& Neglect Information <http://nccanch.acf.gov/>
Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency
Prevention <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

Prevent Child Abuse America
www.preventchildabuse.org

Annie E. Casey Foundation. Serving children and
families.

Child Abuse Prevention Network
www.child-abuse.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway
www.childwelfare.gov

Connect for Kids.
www.connectfor kids.org

Faith Trust Institute
www.faithtrustinstitute.org

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
www.loveisrespect.org

Parents, the Antidrug
www.theantidrug.com

Safe Kids.com Internet safety for kids
www.safekids.com

US Dept of Health & Human Services
www.os.dhhs.gov

Childrens' Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org

Connect For Kids
www.connectforkids.org

Delta Society
www.deltasociety.org

National Center For Victims Of Crime
www.ncvc.org

Child and Family Web Guide
www.cfw.tufts.edu

Center for Diseases Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention

National Child Traumatic Stress Networks
www.NCTSN.org

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
www.dontshake.org

Joyful Heart Foundation
www.joyfullheartfoundation.org



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