

It's your turn to make a difference.



## Take a Look at the Facts:

- Youth who have positive mentors are more likely to stay in school and earn high grades and less likely to smoke, use drugs or carry a weapon.
- Children who are read to at least three times a week start school ready to learn and are able to master reading and language skills more quickly. *(Early Childhood Longitudinal Study)*
- An adult's attitude is key to a child's successful learning. A recent study shows that when adults approach children in a spirit of equal partnership and respect, the child learns more quickly, is more involved in learning and is more creative about problem solving. *(National Teacher Research Panel)*
- Youth who have positive family role models and good family communication are 2.5 times less likely to use alcohol than youth without these assets. *(Oman, Vesely, et.al.)*
- Singing, talking and playing with young children activates the construction of their developing brain and has a positive impact on their future learning and career success. *(Carnegie Foundation)*
- Kids who regularly eat dinner with their family are healthier, better adjusted emotionally, and have high self-esteem. *(Nemours Health and Prevention Services)*

## Getting Organized

~ Continued from previous

The **"It's Your Turn" campaign** asks adults to remember a special teacher, mentor, family member or coach who made a positive difference in their lives – and encourages them to pay it forward by supporting children and youth in their community.

It is a theme that encourages good citizenship as a means to keep children free from abuse and neglect.

The **"It's Your Turn" campaign** also incorporates Prevent Child Abuse America's symbol for prevention – the pinwheel, and the Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign.

You'll want to put together a dedicated team of people to plan your Child Abuse Prevention Month events. You should start meeting prior to your event or planned activities. Here are some helpful hints for working well together.

### Get a plan.

Decide what you want to do and make sure your goals are achievable. Identify resources, persons responsible and a timeline to stay on track. This is your most important planning tool.

### Engage the community

Your number one goal should be to engage people in your community from all walks of life. Make sure that you aren't "preaching to the choir" and think outside of the box when planning your events and activities. Reflect

your community's heritage and values in what you plan to do.

### Utilize free resources

Prevent Child Abuse America, Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources all provide free materials of excellent quality for communities implementing child abuse prevention month activities. *(see page 4)*

### Involve the media

Define the media's role in your efforts. Are they helping you promote activities or reporting on them after the fact? Are they engaged with you in planning? Make sure the media understand your positive message about families and communities.

## Community Activities

### Pinwheel Fundraiser

You can use pinwheel shapes as a fundraiser, by asking local grocers or department stores to sell them for \$1. On the pinwheel, leave a place for the donor to thank an adult who was important to them in their youth.

### Pinwheel Gardens

You can create pinwheel gardens to represent the number of births in your county in a year. Pinwheels are to represent prevention and point to solutions. Prevent Child Abuse America does not permit the connection of pinwheels to child deaths.

### Make a Presentation

You can host a workshop, community discussion, or presentation using the "Good Beginnings Last a Lifetime" toolkit, the "How Do We Keep Our Children Free From Abuse and Neglect" discussion & action guide, or our "Circles of Caring" DVD,

available from Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia by calling 1-888-4KIDSWV.

### Community Fair

Host a community fair that focuses on family strengthening and community building. Offer parent seminars and pinwheel crafts and activities for children.

### Whirlwind of Change Award

Create a "Whirlwind of Change" award for someone in your community who has gone above and beyond the call of duty for children.

### Host a Training

You can host a community training using our "Making a Difference: Mandate to Report, Responsibility to Prevent Child Abuse" mandated reporter curriculum or the "Stewards of Children" child sexual abuse prevention curriculum. Information about trainers in your area is available by calling 1-888-4KIDSWV.

## Find Us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/pcawv](http://www.facebook.com/pcawv)





# A Movement Takes Shape

Across the country, April is recognized as Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month. State and local agencies and concerned citizens all work toward the common purpose of preventing child abuse and deliver a powerful, collective message about the importance of protecting children, supporting families and strengthening communities.



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## Child Abuse Prevention Month Community Action Guide

# A Positive Message About Prevention

These messages are most effective at the community level, where specific actions can be identified and effective networks mobilized. Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia works to support communities in their important efforts by providing information, materials, assistance and message guidance. This guide is a brief summary of the resources available to your community and also provides some helpful hints for getting organized.

More information is available on the Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia website at [www.preventchildabusewv.org](http://www.preventchildabusewv.org).

In the past, Child Abuse Prevention Month was a very sad time, as communities everywhere memorialized children who died from abuse and neglect and highlighted dramatic statistics and photographs that emphasized the horrors of abuse. While these events were very successful at raising awareness of the problem and getting media attention, they were not successful at catalyzing the kind of community and political support needed to prevent child abuse from happening in the first place. This was supported by research conducted by Prevent Child Abuse America and the Frameworks Institute that showed the necessity of changing the message to a more positive, proactive approach designed to engage communities and promote solutions.

Positive outcomes that we seek for children

and families are all products of effective communication. We want to engage communities in creating a cultural climate where children are valued and families strengthened. As you reach out to your community during child abuse prevention month, using a positive, proactive approach to engage others helps community members recognize the role they can play in helping our children grow up healthy, safe and loved.

Communities that have adopted this new messaging have found that it is successful at beginning a new dialogue about the prevention, rather than the problem, of child abuse and neglect. It is also inspiring individuals and groups who once thought that preventing child abuse was impossible to take more active roles in their communities.



For more information about Child Abuse Prevention month contact:

**Genny Ferri**  
Community Partnerships Coordinator  
Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia

P.O. Box 1653, Huntington, WV 25717  
1-888-4KIDSWV  
genny@teamwv.org

## Sharing Your Success

Communities can improve their efforts by learning from each other. Be sure to document your success by saving media coverage, taking photos and collecting stories. Send them to Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia or share with others.



# Resources for Child Abuse Prevention Month

**Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia**  
"It's Your Turn Campaign"

Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia offers fact sheets and posters to communities planning activities as well as a number of downloads that can be used in your local efforts.  
[www.preventchildabusewv.org](http://www.preventchildabusewv.org)

**Prevent Child Abuse America**

Pinwheels for Prevention  
Prevent Child Abuse America has a number of materials available free for download that includes pinwheel fundraisers and coloring sheets.  
[www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Community Resource Packet  
This packet includes a number of printable fact sheets and other useful tools such as talking points and press releases.  
[www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/index.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/index.cfm)

