



Child Abuse Prevention Month



“Our future depends on our children”

In 1974 the first Federal child protection legislation, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was passed to ensure the safety and welfare of children. Today, the Child Abuse Prevention Initiative is an opportunity for communities across the country to keep children safe, provide the support that families need to stay together, and raise children and youth to be happy, secure, and stable adults. Prevention is the best hope for reducing child abuse and neglect and

improving the lives of children and families. Strengthening families and preventing child abuse requires a shared commitment of individuals and organizations in every community. The best way to prevent child abuse is to help parents develop the skills and identify the resources they need to understand and meet their children’s needs and protect them from harm. The first step in helping abused children is learning to recognize the symptoms of child abuse and emotional maltreat-

ment. The types are more typically found in combination than alone. A physically abused child for example is often emotionally maltreated as well and a sexually abused child may also be neglected. Any child at any age may experience any of the types of child abuse. Children over age five are more likely to be physically abused and to suffer moderate injury than are children under age five. Recognizing child abuse alert signs like these may signal the presence of child abuse.



Don’t diet make healthy choices

Don’t Diet– Make a Healthy Choice

Customarily, soon after New Year’s millions of Americans begin a weight loss diet. Unfortunately, by spring-time, earlier resolutions begin to fade

and most will end 2010, weighing more than when they started. In the last decade, hundreds of clinical trials of weight loss diets have been

introduced and, yet, we continue to grow fatter. Sharply reducing calorie intake, regardless of diet composition, will cause weight loss. However,



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“More than 2 million cases of child abuse and neglect are reported each year in the United States.”

The Child:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents’ attention
- Has learning problems that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, an overachiever, or too responsible, or comes to school early, stays late, and does not want to go home.

The Parent:

- Shows little concern for the child, rarely responding to the school’s re-

quests for information, for conferences, or for home visits

- Denies the existence of or blames the child for the child’s problems in school or at home
- Sees the child entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
- Demands perfection or a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve

None of these signs prove that child abuse is present in a family. Any of them may be found in any parent or child at one time or another. But when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination, they should cause the adult to take a closer look at the situation and to consider the possibility of child

abuse. That second look may reveal further signs of abuse or signs of a particular kind of child abuse. Most parents don’t hurt or neglect their children intentionally. Many were themselves abused or neglected. Very young or inexperienced parents might not know how to take care of their babies or what they can reasonably expect from children at different stages of development. Circumstances that place families under extraordinary stress for instance, poverty, divorce, sickness or disability sometimes take their toll in child maltreatment. Parents who abuse alcohol or other drugs are more likely to abuse or neglect their children.

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after a few weeks or months, the body and mind rebel against deprivation and cause the metabolic rate to plummet, pulling willpower down with it! This is not to say that we are doomed to incessant weight gain, on the contrary. Human populations have lived amidst abundance

for long stretches of time with relatively stable body weight, i.e. Americans from the end of World War II until the 1970’s. It is what and how we eat that makes a great deal of difference. But our collective delusion is that ideal body weight can be achieved and maintained with a “short

cut” rather than a lifetime commitment to good health. The facts prove us wrong. This spring resolve not to “diet”. Instead:

- Eat three balanced meals a day. Have a healthy snack when hungry. Stop eating when full.
- Eat only in designated eat-





Blue Ribbons for Kids Help Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

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Below are some ways to help prevent child abuse:

- Be a nurturing parent children need to know that they are special, loved and capable of following their dreams.
- Help a friend, neighbor or relative. Being a parent isn't easy. Offer a helping hand to take care of the children, so the parent (s) can rest or spend time together.

Help yourself When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control take time out. Don't take it out on your child.

- If your baby cries. It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Never shake a baby. Shaking a child may result in severe injury or death.
- Get involved. Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families.
- Monitor your child's television and video viewing. Watching violent films and TV programs can harm young children.
- Volunteer at a local child

abuse prevention program. For information about volunteer opportunities, call 1-800-CHILDREN.
• Report suspected abuse or neglect, if you have reason to believe a child has been or may be harmed, call your local County Department of Children and Family Services or your local police department.

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Close the door on dieting



ing areas and not in front of a screen of any type.

- Eat foods that look like they come from nature, not a factory, with emphasis on vegetables, fruits and whole grains.
- Drink unsweetened or minimally sweetened beverages, including

water, effervescent mineral water, and tea or coffee with no more than one or two teaspoons of sugar.

- Have dessert every night, but keep it light (e.g., fruit, a few nuts or a small piece of something you really enjoy). Limit high

calorie treats to once a week.

- Do something physically active every day. Walk rather than drive and take the stairs rather than the elevator.

Follow items 1 through 6 for the rest of your life.