

## PROCLAMATION

All of California's children deserve to grow up in a safe, stable and nurturing environment free from fear, abuse and neglect. During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we shine a light on the scourge of child abuse and commit ourselves to taking action to protect the youngest Californians.

Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem that affects communities across all demographic groups, income levels and regions in our state. Too many children are robbed of their health and happiness and, in some tragic cases, their lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic we confront today presents unique and serious risk factors for many families. Children are especially vulnerable to the stresses of health risks, school closures, isolation and economic instability in their families. Without the structure and safety of school, children who were already vulnerable to abuse and neglect at home face a greater threat. Similarly, we recognize that many parents who have lost jobs and income due to the COVID-19 pandemic may be feeling overwhelmed and strained.

Finding solutions and keeping our children safe requires input and action from everyone. Right now, reaching out to support a parent who is struggling is a simple action we can all take. In California, we continue to build on our nation-leading work to prevent and detect Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs. In our communities, we must work in partnership – child welfare professionals; education, health, community and faith-based organizations; law enforcement agencies; and businesses and families – to prevent child abuse and protect our children.

Suspected child abuse can be reported to county child protective services or child welfare agencies. If it is an emergency, you can dial 911. If you are a parent who is feeling overwhelmed, you can dial 211, your local county mental health crisis line or any Warm Line service.

We live by the wisdom of Frederick Douglass, that it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults. Now more than ever, we must all do our part to help build strong children and protect them from harm.

**NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM**, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim April 2020, as "Child Abuse Prevention Month."

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 7<sup>th</sup> day of April 2020.

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GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

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ALEX PADILLA  
Secretary of State