



The Impact of Implicit Bias on Reporting Child Neglect

Disproportionality in reporting child neglect is well documented and impacts minority families the greatest. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, Black children are reported as victims of child abuse or neglect at approximately twice the rate of white children in the United States. Following a three-year study in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) published a report in 2021 regarding racial inequities within Pennsylvania's welfare

and public assistance programs, including but not limited to the child welfare system, judicial system, and job placement programs.

The study found that many Pennsylvania residents face marginalization due to a combination of factors: race, gender, poverty, disabilities, and sexual orientation.

The study also revealed the disproportionate impact of systemic racism and marginalization on Black children in Pennsylvania's child welfare system. It found that Black children make up 35 percent of the foster care population and represent 21 percent of potential child abuse victims in child protective service reports. These numbers are striking, considering Black children account for only 13 percent of the total child population of Pennsylvania.

ROLE OF IMPLICIT BIAS

This disproportionality is largely due to implicit bias — an unconscious association, belief or attitude toward a social group. Some of the implicit biases that can impact what does and does not get reported include poverty, racial, age, and gender biases. Racial biases, for example, can result in both underreporting white children and overreporting Black children for neglect.

Attribution biases also play a role. For example, people may perceive situations involving a family who looks like them more positively and therefore not suspect abuse and/or neglect. The opposite happens too — people may interpret situations more negatively and assume the worst when the family looks different from them and thus be quicker to suspect abuse and/or neglect.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

We must work together to identify examples of implicit biases — both institutional and personal — and find ways to address them so real, positive change can happen.

Real change begins with each of us examining ourselves and addressing our own personal biases. A great place to start understanding your own implicit biases is taking the Implicit Association Tests available through [Project Implicit](#).



PFSA has also launched a training for mandated reporters on the topic of neglect, which includes a section on how to identify and consider implicit biases more deeply when deciding when to make a report of child neglect.

To learn more about this training and to register for an upcoming session, please check out our website: [Mandated Reporter Training](#).

Together, we can better support PA children and families.

*Follow
along
with us
online!*



PFSA
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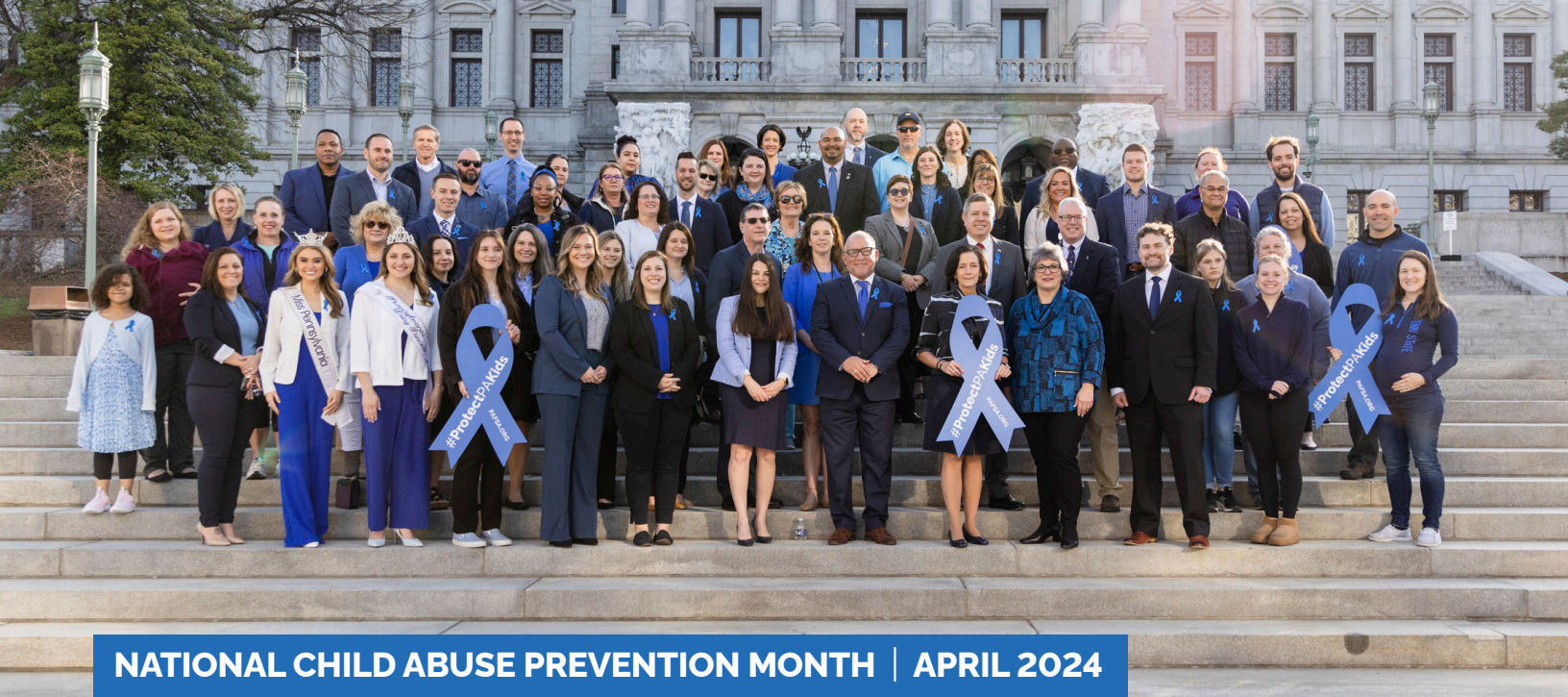
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NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH | APRIL 2024

Join Us in Raising Awareness Across the Commonwealth This April!

Throughout April, PFSA will host events and activities to raise awareness about child abuse prevention as part of **National Child Abuse Prevention Month**. Our events and activities will not only elevate the ongoing work that our organization and child advocates are undertaking, but it will also educate participants so they feel empowered to protect Pennsylvania's children.

From hosting in-person events to engaging virtually, we invite you to work with us and help **#ProtectPAKids!**

FLAG PLANTING ON THE GROUNDS OF THE CAPITOL IN HARRISBURG, PA

On April 2, PFSA will once again sponsor this in-person event. From Front Street to the steps

of the Capitol, PFSA staff members, board of directors, statewide and local advocates, officials, and corporate supporters will plant 4,992 blue flags to represent the number of substantiated child abuse cases and 60 black flags to represent the number of child deaths due to child abuse in Pennsylvania over one year.



PA BLUE RIBBON CHAMPIONS FOR SAFE KIDS AWARD CEREMONY *in the Main Rotunda of the Capitol Complex in Harrisburg, PA*

The PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids ceremony will be held April 2 in the Main Rotunda of the Pennsylvania State Capitol Complex. During the ceremony, PFSA will honor four individuals from across the commonwealth who have gone the extra mile to **#ProtectPAKids**.

These individuals are recognized as our **PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids** due to their exceptional contributions to prevent child abuse and neglect throughout Pennsylvania. These individuals were nominated by their peers, colleagues, and supervisors because they went above and beyond the call of duty to protect Pennsylvania's children.

Along with welcoming award winners, legislative leadership, and elected and appointed officials, we are excited for the Susquehanna Children's Chorale to join this year's in-person event.

Stay tuned for more details and information about events throughout April!

#ProtectPAKids

Help us support families and communities across Pennsylvania by donating to PFSA today. Your gift will help PFSA continue to deliver successful training, education, and ongoing support to PA families and children. Visit pafsa.org to learn more and donate!

PA Child Abuse PREVENTION SYMPOSIUM



NOV 7th

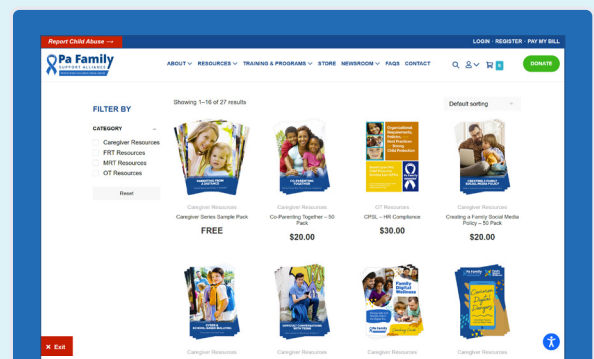
CREDITS
ACT 48 | CEUs | CLEs

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendar and plan to join us virtually on November 7, 2024, for PFSA's annual PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium!

Visit Our Online Store!

PFSA has educational resources available in our online store. You can find informative materials covering a wide range of topics designed to assist caregivers, parents, and professionals in an effort to protect children. Please visit [our website](https://pafsa.org) to learn more!



UPCOMING PFSA TRAININGS

Families in Recovery New Facilitator Training

This research-based program is a great resource for parents, guardians, and caretakers recovering from substance use disorder. The program aims to teach healthy coping and parenting skills while balancing the needs of recovery.

New facilitators of the Families in Recovery (FiR) program will be fully prepared to implement the program and provide training after attending a two-day comprehensive session consisting of content, education, and application instruction of the curriculum. FiR facilitators come together to share program implementation experience, ideas, and insights following initial training.

All organizations interested in implementing the Families in Recovery program are required to enter an agreement contract with PFSA and participate in the evaluation requirements of the program. FiR contracts include ongoing technical assistance, program development, facilitator calls, and assistance with data collection procedures.

Dates: January 23 & 24, 2024 (*virtual*)
April 23 & 24, 2024 (*virtual*)

Time: 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
(*half-hour lunch break*)

Cost: Email Justin Donofrio, Prevention Services Manager, at jdonofrio@pafsa.org for the paperwork or to ask any questions.

Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA has several options for mandated reporter training for staff and volunteers. Certificates are provided to the participants, and, upon request, we will upload confirmation of your training to the Departments of State or Education for CE fulfillments under Act 31 and/or Act 48. CLEs are also available for attorneys.

LIVE IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL

Cost: Free

How to register: Find and register for a virtual session here: pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training

INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

Cost: \$30

Take anytime: pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

This is an opportunity for organizations to develop their own quality, cost-efficient, in-house training program for employees on child abuse recognition and reporting.

Dates: January 17 & 18, 2024 (*virtual*)
April 16 & 17, 2024 (*virtual*)

Time: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
(*half-hour lunch break*)

Cost: \$1,000 per trainer, entering into a three-year contract with PFSA. Email Haven Evans, Director of Programs, at hevans@pafsa.org for the paperwork or to ask any questions.