

National Child Abuse Prevention Month



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and at PFSA, we believe that we all have a role to play in protecting PA's kids.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month was first observed in 1983 by the proclamation of President Ronald Reagan. Since then, a wide range of offices, agencies, organizations, providers, communities, groups, and individuals have participated in countless events and activities focused on the prevention and awareness of child abuse and neglect as well as education efforts. This is a call to action that occurs annually and lasts throughout April across our nation.

However, while we collectively recognize April as the month to raise awareness of child abuse and educate others about its prevention, we know that it is actually a year-round, non-stop effort that requires everyone to carry their load and become accountable

for the well-being of the children around us. Furthermore, the pandemic has amplified this responsibility now more than ever, since so many of the safeguards for our children have been removed due to the ongoing pandemic-mitigating efforts. Safeguards such as schools, extracurricular activities, team sports, teachers, guidance counselors, and family visits have not been accessible to children for an extended period, which increases the risk of situations involving abuse and neglect.

We know that being connected — to family, friends, and community — has been shown to reduce the risk of harm to children. As a community, we need to support families with children and report suspected abuse and neglect, so parents and caregivers receive the necessary assistance to keep their children safe.

During times like these, community awareness, education, and support are vital to help all families continue to thrive



and keep Pennsylvania's most vulnerable neighbors and children safe. Talk with your family and loved ones about ways you can safely reach out to others in your community. By eliminating stress and encouraging caregivers to seek and accept help, you are participating in primary prevention.

In addition to the support that we can provide on an individual level, we can always do more as a system. For many years, experts have focused on the "risk" of child abuse as a starting point for preventing abuse and neglect from occurring. Over the years, education and research have taught us that a more effective and sustainable approach to prevention promotes protective factors for families.

In short, the promotion and building of protective factors help families develop the skills and knowledge necessary for addressing life's challenges more effectively, mitigating the risks of abuse and neglect. While we must work as a system to

effectively move forward in preventing child abuse, we can all take the lead in learning more about protective factors and how we can best support the families and children in our own communities. To learn more about protective factors, check out the following resources:

► **Children's Trust Fund Alliance: Strengthening Families Approach and Protective Factors Framework**

► **FRIENDS Protective Factors**

PFSA is proud to participate in National Child Abuse Prevention Month this year, and we are excited about the opportunities we have organized. We sincerely hope this month can act as a launching pad to help others make a long-term commitment to supporting families and preventing child abuse and neglect. Please see the additional information in our newsletter regarding our virtual month-long event in April and all of the activities that PFSA has scheduled.



PA BLUE RIBBON CHAMPIONS for SAFE KIDS

Virtual Events

In recognition of **National Child Abuse Prevention Month** in April, PFSA will virtually honor Blue Ribbon Champions from across the commonwealth who have gone the extra mile to protect PA children. We recognize these individuals for their exceptional contributions as we continue to make every effort to prevent child abuse and neglect throughout Pennsylvania. This recognition reminds us all that every child needs a champion, and anyone can be a champion.

In addition to honoring our Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids, PFSA will host a variety of other activities throughout April to raise awareness and educate others about child abuse prevention. Scheduled activities and events include our annual flag

planting at the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg, a virtual fundraiser, appearances from various special guests, and an interactive map and memorial representing child abuse fatality data across PA counties. Additionally, information about PFSA's services, programs, and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Network will be featured throughout the month.

PFSA will also host an educational speaker event titled the **Spotlight Speaker Series**, where expert speakers will provide relevant and timely presentations on topics that focus on child abuse prevention. Speakers will share their expertise from the field, highlighting detailed information, evidence, and data related to the topic.

Spotlight Speakers

Click on each speaker to visit their page on our website.



Victor Vieth

April 5 @ 10am

Responding to Child Abuse During a Pandemic



Erin Merryn

April 15 @ 3pm

Erin's Law



Joseph Robinson Jr.

April 19 @ 10am

What Dolls Taught Us About Racism



LaCrisha Rose

April 22 @ 10am

Strengthening Families Protective Factors



William J. Zee

April 26 @ 1pm

Trauma Informed Approach

Registration for this event is **FREE**, and continuing education credits for social workers and CLEs will be available for anyone attending a live speaker session. To register for one or more of the live speaking sessions, visit our website and click on the *Spotlight Speaker Series* tab, or [click here](#).

We invite you to connect with us all throughout April to learn more about what can be done and how you can help prevent child abuse and neglect in your community and across the commonwealth. Please join us in April by visiting our website at pafsa.org and finding us on social media, raising your thumbs to **#ProtectPAKids!**

Donate to PFSA

Help us support the 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 or visit our **Virtual Fundraiser page** throughout April to purchase a digital blue ribbon as part of National Child Abuse Prevention Month.





Meet Crista DeGregorio

PFSA'S Operations Support Coordinator

There is no
greater joy
nor greater
reward than
to make a
fundamental
difference in
someone's
life.

Mary Rose McGead

PFSA welcomes our newest staff member, Crista DeGregorio! Crista joined PFSA in February as our Operations Support Coordinator. We are so excited to have Crista as part of the PFSA team!

Crista supports, plans, and organizes the program and operational duties within the organization. In this role, Crista helps to coordinate program events and activities while streamlining operational procedures to advance PFSA's mission. Crista works directly with PFSA staff and stakeholders to drive successful programming and service delivery.

Crista's passion for children and strong belief that children should be provided with opportunities to grow and learn resulted in 10 years of experience working in education. Her teaching career began as a reading specialist and then as a school administrator.

Most recently, she spent over two years working in member services for a statewide, nonprofit organization, where she managed affiliated entities. In this role, she worked closely with members, developed annual plans, coordinated meetings, and planned content for conferences and events.

Crista is a graduate of Clarion University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in reading. Outside of the office, Crista enjoys reading, spending time with her family, and watching her kids' sporting events. She is an avid Pittsburgh Steelers fan.

Crista's email address is cdegregorio@pa-fsa.org.



Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA has several options for you and your staff to receive training on how to recognize and report suspected child abuse. This training is for those mandated by law to report suspected child abuse, as defined in the Child Protective Services Law.

Curriculum is approved by the Departments of Human Services, Education, and State and meets all requirements for mandated reporters to receive training in recognizing and reporting child abuse (including ACT 126). Certificates are provided to the participants and (upon request) we will upload confirmation of your training to the Department of State or Education for CE fulfillments under ACT 31 and/or ACT 48. New this year — this curriculum has also been approved for CLEs for attorneys!

LIVE IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL

Cost: Free

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

INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

Cost: \$30

Take Anytime: <https://pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training>

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER (TTT)

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. With the three-year contract, PFSA provides two days of initial instruction for approved applicants, reporting of CEs directly to PA Departments of State and Education, and ongoing technical assistance.

Cost: \$1,000 per trainer entering into a 3-year contract with PFSA (payment can be broken down by year — \$400/year 1, \$300/year 2, and \$300/year 3)

How to Register: You must pre-register for this training. Email Haven Evans at hevans@pa-fsa.org for the paperwork or to get answers to any questions.

Dates: **May 25 & 26, 2021** (Virtual)
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. both days
(half-hour lunch break)

July 28 & 29, 2021 (Virtual)
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. both days
(half-hour lunch break)

Sept 14 & 15, 2021 (Virtual)
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. both days
(half-hour lunch break)

Nov 9 & 10, 2021 (Virtual)
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. both days
(half-hour lunch break)

Families in Recovery

In late April, PFSA will host a two-day Train-the-Trainer (TTT) session for our *Families in Recovery* program. 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.

Organizational trainers will be fully prepared to provide training after attending a two-day comprehensive session consisting of content, education, and application instruction of the curriculum. TTT contracts include ongoing technical assistance, program development, coaching webinars, and assistance with outcomes-driven data collection. TTT cohorts remain in contact with each other to share program implementation experience, ideas, and insights following initial training.

Cost: \$1,000 per trainer per year, entering into a three-year contract with PFSA

Date: April 20 & 21, 2021 (*virtual*)
8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
(*half-hour lunch break*)

Register: You must pre-register for this virtual training by emailing Justin Donofrio, Program Services Manager, at jdonofrio@pa-fsa.org.

Front Porch Project®

The Front Porch Project is a community-based prevention initiative grounded in the belief that everyone can — and should — become more aware of how to help protect children and support families in their own communities.

This program provides community members with the knowledge, training, and encouragement they need to take an active role in preventing abuse and neglect before it occurs.

To learn more about this program and how it can be offered, please join one of our upcoming overview sessions by using this link to pre-register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461212693>