



## Child Abuse During the Pandemic

Child abuse is a reality for far too many children in the United States. According to the **2019 PA Child Protective Services Annual Report** (the most recent data we have), there were 4,865 cases of substantiated child abuse in Pennsylvania in one year. Fifty-one of these children did not survive the abuse. Another 93 children were considered near fatalities because their injuries were so severe. They would have died without medical intervention.

As the pandemic unfolded in 2020, many child advocates grew alarmed as the number of reports of suspected child abuse sharply declined. In PA, we saw a 50% drop at the beginning of the pandemic, and overall in 2020, there was a 19% decrease in

suspected child abuse cases and almost a 12% decrease in general protective cases (mainly neglect). Although the reported cases declined, known factors that increase child abuse (surging levels of stress and loss of financial and social supports) were heavily present due to the pandemic. The logical assumption is that many cases of child abuse went unreported.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reported concerning national child abuse trends in its **Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report**. Its research shows that nationally, reports to child protection agencies dropped 20% to 70% in 2020, and the percentage of hospital visits resulting in hospitalizations due to child abuse rose compared to 2019. This means that although doctors saw fewer cases of child abuse, when the children were seen, more of them required medical intervention due to abuse.

This supports the theory that while child abuse has risen during the pandemic, fewer cases are being recognized and reported due to decreased in-person contact between children and mandated reporters (teachers, social workers, physicians, etc.).

Child abuse is preventable, so it is important for all of us to be aware of these trends and do our part to implement known strategies to reduce child abuse. The CDC recommends strategies that strengthen household economic support and create family-friendly work policies to lessen stress during these difficult times.

These strategies increase children's opportunities to thrive free from abuse and neglect. As individuals, we can be more aware of the children in our community and ready to report when we suspect child abuse or neglect.

**You can report by calling ChildLine 24/7 at 800-932-0313. Your call could save a child from further abuse or neglect.**

Not sure how to recognize child abuse or neglect? Sign up for one of our virtual trainings at no cost through this link: <https://pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training>.

## CBCAP Highlight: Pinebrook Family Answers

Pinebrook Family Answers is one of PFSA's Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Network members, and it is doing great work for its community!

Just recently, Pinebrook Family Answers announced it would hold Grandparents Raising Grandchildren groups every Friday from 1 p.m.-2 p.m., beginning on March 5. Topics will include money management, working with the school, personal well-being,

and much more! These groups are held at no cost and will be conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams.

To register or to learn more, contact Pinebrook Family Answers by email at [grandparents@pbfalv.org](mailto:grandparents@pbfalv.org) or by phone at 484-427-2723.

Thank you, Pinebrook Family Answers, for the great work that you do!



## WE ARE THANKFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Help us to support the families and communities across Pennsylvania by making a donation 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](https://pafsa.org) to learn more and donate!

# PA BLUE RIBBON **CHAMPIONS** for **SAFE KIDS**

## *A Virtual Month-Long Event*



PFSA invites you to join us in April for our 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.

Additionally, PFSA will host a variety of virtual activities and events throughout April to raise awareness and educate others about child abuse prevention in Pennsylvania.

### **Virtual Event: Spotlight Speaker Series**

One of PFSA's virtual events scheduled for April will be our *Spotlight Speaker Series*, where expert speakers provide relevant and timely presentations on topics that

cover child abuse prevention from a variety of viewpoints. The purpose of this series is to raise awareness of the importance of child abuse prevention across systems and educate other professionals on the impact child abuse prevention efforts can have for individuals, organizations, systems, and communities. Speakers will share their expertise from the field, highlighting detailed information, evidence, and data related to the topics.

Registration for these speaker sessions will be made available on PFSA's website soon!

Please consider joining us in April by attending this event and many others throughout the entire month! Visit our website at [pafsa.org](https://pafsa.org) for more details on how you can #ProtectPAkids!



**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





# UPCOMING PFSA TRAININGS

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## 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*)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
(including a 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](mailto: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/84451200000>

## 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.

The curriculum is approved by 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](mailto:hevans@pa-fsa.org) for the paperwork or to answer any questions.

**Date:** May 25 & 26, 2021 (Virtual)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. both days (including a half-hour lunch break)