



## The Differences Between Poverty and Neglect

It can be difficult to read statistics related to child abuse nationally, throughout Pennsylvania, or within your community. It can also be a challenge to fully comprehend these numbers as they are reported.

The recently released **2023 Annual Child Protective Services Report** outlines child abuse data throughout Pennsylvania during the 2023 reporting period. These statistics lead professionals, policymakers, and entire communities to intensify their focus on risk

factors, protective factors, and family services in an effort to find linkages and develop solutions to this ongoing issue. Two areas in particular, child neglect and poverty, typically receive a lot of attention and are often conflated with each other by many in the field. But why?

**We know that prevention is the best solution when it comes to child abuse and neglect.** We also know that poverty and child neglect are highly correlated and often impact families simultaneously. But this does not mean poverty causes neglect. In fact, most experts agree that the relationship between poverty and neglect is much more complicated and nuanced than one might initially think.

Hardships that are related to poverty often result in families experiencing high levels of

stress and anxiety, which can impede children's cognitive development and parents' capacity to meet the needs of their children.

However, the incapacity to provide should not be considered the same as an unwillingness to provide. This nuanced distinction is at the core of the entangled connection between poverty and neglect, and the unintended consequences of misrepresenting the relationship between poverty and neglect can further impact families.

When poverty is mistaken for neglect, the result can unintentionally turn into accusing and punishing families for their financial circumstances and may even produce additional barriers and challenges for the family. However, addressing the underlying issue of poverty through concrete supports and services may help to decrease the

likelihood of child neglect, build a foundation of resilience and sustained independence, and begin to promote healthy development and well-being for children and families.

Therefore, it is critical to understand the existing correlation between poverty and neglect without conflating the two as a cause-and-effect relationship.

### TAKE A DEEP DIVE

PFSA invites you to join us for ***Creating Concrete Supports for Families and the Confusion Between Poverty and Neglect*** at our annual **PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium** on November 7, 2024. Visit our **website** to learn more about the event or to register.



# Welcome to Our New CBCAP Network Member Agencies!

PFSA welcomes a new member of the **Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Network: Susquehanna Valley Mediation**. PFSA is proud to partner and collaborate with diverse, dedicated, and committed organizations that advance the important work of preventing child abuse and neglect. Thank you for your commitment and dedication!

To find out more about CBCAP Network benefits or to learn more about becoming a CBCAP Network member, **visit our website**.





*Call for  
Nominations!*

In recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, PFSA will honor several individuals from across the Commonwealth with a **PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids** award, bestowed upon recipients for exceptional contributions to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

**We want to recognize the professionals, volunteers, and everyday heroes among us who keep our children safe.**

PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids award winners are shining examples of people working in Pennsylvania to prevent child abuse and neglect. These awards are an opportunity to honor champions for children across the state who work tirelessly, often without fanfare or recognition, to improve the lives of our most vulnerable residents.

PFSA welcomes nominations for this honor from schools, government agencies, community organizations, private practitioners, churches, and other concerned individuals and groups. We look forward to recognizing each individual in April as a Blue Ribbon Champion for Safe Kids.

**The nomination deadline is November 13, 2024, by 5:00 p.m.**

## Know someone who deserves to be recognized?

Fill out **this form** to submit your nomination today!





## REGISTER FOR THE 2024

# PA Child Abuse PREVENTION SYMPOSIUM

This unique event delivers content and resources that meet the current needs of families while shining a light on new and emerging trends. Participants attending this symposium will have an opportunity to learn, engage and network with expert speakers from across the country presenting on innovative topics that intersect with family support and child abuse prevention practices.



**NOV 7<sup>th</sup> 2024**

**CREDITS**  
ACT 48 | CEUs  
CLEs

The PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium takes place virtually via Zoom. All participants will have an opportunity to attend each session during the event.

## THIS YEAR'S SPEAKERS, SESSIONS & EVENT DETAILS

*Virtual Meeting Room Opens at 8:30 a.m. Lunch break is from 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.*



**KIM ECKEL**

9:00 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

### Creating Concrete Supports for Families and the Confusion Between Poverty and Neglect

**Kim Eckel**

CEO | Footbridge for Families

**Clare Anderson**

Senior Policy Fellow | Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

Concrete supports are essential for families in times of need and are also identified as one of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors. This presentation will walk participants through a deep understanding of how concrete supports can positively impact families and provide a bridge to resources and resilience. Additionally, presenters will examine the differences and confusion around poverty and neglect and the role that concrete supports play in each. Finally, presenters will examine these areas from both a local and state level as well as a national perspective.



**CLARE ANDERSON**



10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

## Introducing the Huntingdon Endangered / At-Risk Youth Response Team (H.E.A.R.T.)

**Charles T. Streightiff**

Chief of Police | Huntingdon Borough Police Department

Every child should have the opportunity to experience a safe and healthy childhood free from exposures to illegal substance abuse and influence, child abuse and neglect, and unnecessary trauma. They should also feel supported in areas of trauma-informed care, mental health, and other environmental influences. The mission of the Huntingdon County Endangered and At-Risk Youth Response Team (H.E.A.R.T.) is to create an early warning “handle with care” alert between Law Enforcement, Children and Youth Services, and local school districts to provide timely and valuable information about concerned youth that otherwise would go undetected and unreported. H.E.A.R.T. works to collaboratively combine the expertise and resources of multiple professionals, agencies, and communities to improve interventions for children and families.



12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

## Prevention Made Possible: Collaborative Strategies for Child Abuse Prevention

**Michelle McDyre**

Director of Prevention Education and Outreach  
Mission Kids Child Advocacy Center (CAC)

This workshop provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of child abuse, what it takes to prevent these crimes and empower children to speak out against abuse. Michelle McDyre founded the CAC’s first-ever prevention education department in 2018 and has since led efforts to educate over 48,000 students in the past six years. Participants will learn evidence-based prevention strategies, the vital role of CACs in community response, and the importance of a multidisciplinary approach involving various stakeholders.



1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

## Race, Social Class and Child Abuse: Content, Strength and Impact of Stereotypes on Medical Decision-Making

**Dr. Cynthia Najdowski, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor | Department of Psychology at the University of Albany

Black and poor children are overrepresented at every stage of the child welfare system, from suspicion of abuse to substantiation. This workshop focuses on stereotypes as a source of bias that leads to these disparities through two studies that examine the content and strength of stereotypes relating race and social class to child abuse as viewed by medical professionals. The first study identified stereotype content by asking doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to list words associated with the stereotype that either (a) Black or (b) poor children are more likely to be abused by their parents. Responses were organized into construct groups. The second study determined stereotype strength by asking a separate sample of participants to rate how strongly the constructs generated by the first study's participants related to either the race-abuse or social class-abuse stereotype. Altogether, this research documents the existence, content and strength of stereotypes that link race and social class to child abuse. The findings also help illuminate how race may lead to different outcomes in cases of potential child abuse while demonstrating potential pathways through which racial disparities in misdiagnosis of abuse and subsequent miscarriages of justice can be prevented.



JUSTIN DONOFRIO

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

## Shifting from Digital Diligence to Digital Wellness

**Justin Donofrio**

Prevention Services Manager | Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

PFSA's Family Digital Wellness initiative is built on the foundation of the Digital Diligence framework, which provides parents, caregivers and families a starting point for creating safe and healthy interactions with technology. However, as more professionals begin working with families around this important mental health topic, they are learning that balancing digital wellness requires going beyond digital diligence skills and focusing on the human side of technology. In this presentation, Justin Donofrio will walk through the process of tapping into how our behaviors and relationships can positively impact our interactions with technology and our family relationships.

## REGISTRATION & PRICING

**NEW THIS YEAR: TWO registration options!** Participants have the option to attend the live session (eligible for continuing education credits) or purchase the recording only (not eligible for continuing education credits). For either option, the recording will be made available the week after the event concludes, and access will be granted for one month.

- ▶ **Live (Virtual) Attendance and Recording Access:** \$125
- ▶ **Access to Recording Only:** \$50
- ▶ **CBCAP Network Member Discount:** 10% discount when using code, which can be applied to either registration option
- ▶ **Continuing Education Credits:** All live attendance registrations are eligible for CEUs, CLEs, or Act 48 credits

## REGISTER & GET INFO!

To learn more about the event sessions and speakers, visit our **PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium webpage**. Please direct any questions to **[info@pafsa.org](mailto:info@pafsa.org)**.

# 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:** October 22 & 23, 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](mailto: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

**Register here for a virtual session.**

### INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

**Cost:** \$30

**Sign up here to take any time.**

### 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:** October 22 & 23, 2024 (*virtual*)  
January 22 & 23, 2025 (*virtual*)

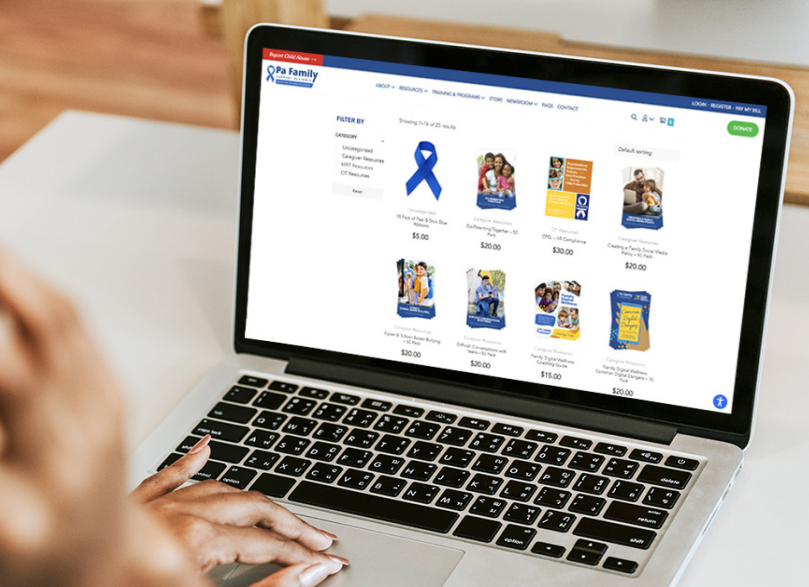
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
(*half-hour lunch break*)

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

*Get involved and follow us on social!*







# #ProtectPAKids

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/donate](https://pafsa.org/donate) to learn more and to donate!

## 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. Visit [pafsa.org/store](https://pafsa.org/store) to browse.



## Read Our Blog

Our blog is the best way to get timely information on ways to help stop child abuse, recent staff developments, and prevention strategies. Read more at [pafsa.org/blog](https://pafsa.org/blog).

