**For immediate release**

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**Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska Encourages People to Help Families this April**

*April Is National Child Abuse Prevention Month*

(Lincoln, Nebraska) – April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska and other Bring Up Nebraska partners are encouraging individuals and organizations to participate. Already this year, Nebraska has been nationally recognized for our statewide child abuse prevention work with the Jim Casey Building Communities of Hope award.

“April is a time to promote ways everyone can help build on existing strengths, or Protective Factors, in children, families and communities. Research and experience tells us that increasing Protective Factors improves the safety, strength and well-being of all, even in adversity,” said Kathy Stokes of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the home of Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska.

Equally important is recognizing that **the time to act is now.** COVID-19 has made life difficult for everyone—especially children and families. Although the risk to our children’s physical health from the outbreak itself appears to be low, the risk to our nation’s children for experiencing maltreatment in times of extreme stress and uncertainty increases.

“There are a wealth of opportunities to act collectively and strategically to advocate on behalf of all children and families,” said Dr. Melissa Merrick, CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America. “Locally and across the country, we must devise and deploy a continuum of comprehensive prevention efforts. But small discreet actions can make a big difference, too, and everyone has a role to play.”

Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska wants individuals to understand that small discreet actions can make a big difference in a child’s life and a parent’s as well. It’s possible to help families and communities prosper by recognizing and incorporating some of these simple things:

* **Spread the word and encourage members of your network** to share stories about how they take small but impactful steps to support children and families in their communities.
* **Contact your elected officials** and urge them to support programs that promote safe healthy childhoods and family-friendly policies such as paid family leave and earned income tax credits.
* **Follow Nebraska Children and Families Foundation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and share our posts widely**—and encourage your friends and family to do the same. Use the hashtags #BringUpNebraska and #CAPMonth to let us know you're committed to helping children, families, and entire communities to thrive.

For more suggestions from the Bring Up Nebraska partners on how people can support children and families in their community go to [BringUpNebraska.org](http://www.bringupnebraska.org).

Another great resource is the *2020 Prevention Resource Guide* <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/resource-guide/> This guide is designed for all who work in communities to strengthen families and is a publication of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Administration for Children and Families; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; and Children’s Bureau.

“April is a time to celebrate the important role that communities play in the healthy development of children, youth and families.” said Jennifer Skala, Senior Vice President of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. “Everyone’s participation is important. Focusing on this support is the best thing we can do to prevent child maltreatment and promote the best outcomes.”

**Child Abuse Prevention Month events in Nebraska:**

Over 20 local child abuse prevention councils, coalitions, and other partners will display approximately 20,000 blue pinwheels to symbolize the great childhoods that all kids deserve as well as share information and resources to promote healthy families.

**About Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska:**

The Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund Board (NCAPF Board) sponsors prevention activities through Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska and 17 local child abuse prevention councils and partners across the state. It is also a partner in the statewide prevention initiative, [Bring Up Nebraska](http://www.bringupnebraska.org), which aims to keep life’s challenges from becoming a crisis for many children and families.

[Nebraska Children and Families Foundation](http://www.nebraskachildren.org) is the home of Prevent Child Abuse Nebraska and a Bring Up Nebraska partner. A public-private partnership, Nebraska Children was founded to create positive change for children through community engagement.

**About Prevent Child Abuse America:**

Founded in 1972, Prevent Child Abuse America is the nation’s oldest nonprofit organization dedicated to the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. Through its nationwide chapter network and nearly 600 Healthy Families America home visiting sites throughout the country, it promotes services that improve child well-being and develops programs that help to prevent all types of abuse and neglect. Prevent Child Abuse America is rated as one of the top charities for children by Consumer Reports and charity oversight organizations, including Charity Navigator, GreatNonprofits and GuideStar. Visit [preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org) to learn more.

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