Q: What is child abuse and neglect?
A: “Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or maltreatment, or in neglect or refusal to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.” – CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010

Types of child abuse and neglect

Neglect: Failure of a caregiver to provide for a child’s basic needs (physical, medical, educational, emotional)

Physical Abuse: Nonaccidental physical injury inflicted by a person with responsibility for the child (e.g. parent or caregiver)

Sexual Abuse: Activities by a parent or caregiver such as incest, rape, exploitation (e.g. prostitution or pornography)

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month!

Each year in April, the President of the United States issues a proclamation to announce National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Many State Governors also issue proclamations to encourage public awareness of child abuse and neglect, recommit State resources to the cause, and promote community involvement through State and local activities.

Child Abuse Prevention Timeline

1974 – Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was enacted in the United States.

1982 – June 16-12 was designated as the First National Child Abuse Prevention Week.

1991 – “We Can Make a Difference”


2008 – “Increasing Knowledge about Home Visiting”

2016 – “Building Community, Building Hope”

Types of Child Abuse and Neglect: DMV Area

-Sexual Abuse

-Physical Abuse

-Emotional Abuse

-Dependency

-Exposure to domestic violence

-Social Neglect

-Drug and alcohol abuse

Tipes of Abuse and Neglect:

National

-Sexual Abuse

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Want to learn more?

-Child Welfare Information Gateway
-Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline
-Prevent Child Abuse America

How can you help?

-Get to know your neighbors
-Reach out to children in your community
-Teach children their rights
-Volunteer in your community
-Join your neighborhood watch
-Learn signs of neglect and abuse
-Manage your Bureau
-Report suspected abuse or neglect

We Can Overcome: One Family’s Story of Success

I served as guardian ad litem (representing the best interests) for a young girl who was removed from the custody of her mother at age 11. She was left alone by her mother, who suffered from drug addiction, for long periods of time. The child welfare agency removed my client from her mother’s custody and placed her in foster care. Her mother participated in outpatient drug counseling and other rehabilitation services. After a little over one year, my client was returned to her mother’s custody, contingent upon her continued cooperation.

Just before Christmas, the family’s apartment caught fire and the family was forced to reside in a homeless shelter. At that point, the mother relapsed and began using drugs again. My client was placed in foster care once again. The government requested that the case goal change to adoption, given that the federal timelines require permanency after about 18 months in care. The judge denied the government’s request and told the mother that he believed in her, and that given the circumstance that preceded her relapse, he would give her more time. The mother knew she needed more intensive treatment, and she enrolled in a residential treatment facility far from home. The program required a two-year commitment but promised housing and other supportive services after completion.

My client, now entering adolescence, began to get into trouble at school and act out. After the mother returned from her treatment, she attended a family meeting for her daughter at which the team was discussing how to help support my client and avoid expulsion.

The mother turned to her daughter and in a powerful plea, asked that her daughter meet halfway, after her own significant efforts to keep their family together. About six months later, the mother completed the program, obtained employment, and moved into her own home. My client got back on track at school and was returned to her mother’s custody. In a tearful closing hearing, the judge congratulated the mother on her perseverance (C. Liu, personal communication, April 6, 2016).

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