

7
4-8-03

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect is a community problem and finding solutions depends on the involvement and commitment of people from throughout the entire community; and

WHEREAS, approximately three million children are reported abused and neglected in this country every year; and

WHEREAS, all children deserve a safe and nurturing environment in which to grow up; and

WHEREAS, organizations such as Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia work to prevent child abuse and neglect through education, public awareness and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria Child Protective Services provides investigations, assessments and services to children identified as victims of abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Child Welfare Partnership, a community advisory committee established in August 2001, whose mission is to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of Alexandria's children by promoting community education, policy development and collaboration to achieve child welfare standards of excellence, continues to show support for children through their dedication to improving child welfare; and

WHEREAS, every member of the community has a responsibility to help children remain safe and raise the community's consciousness; and

WHEREAS, one small way to do this is by participating in the Blue Ribbon Campaign, showing support for children by wearing a blue ribbon throughout the month of April, reminding us of the seriousness of child abuse and neglect and the ways to prevent it; and

WHEREAS, April is also a time to thank Allies in Prevention, including foster parents, child advocates and those who offer their talents in numerous ways to help the public better understand how to protect and keep our children safe;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KERRY J. DONLEY, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2003, as:

"CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH"

in the City of Alexandria, and do hereby call upon our citizens to observe the month by reaching out to parents who may need support or assistance, continuing efforts to strengthen one's own parenting skills and raising awareness by wearing a blue ribbon to show your care and support for children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 8th day of April 2003.

KERRY J. DONLEY **MAYOR**
*On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia*

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk

Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect

If you suspect abuse or neglect may be occurring, report it. If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police.

HOTLINES TO REPORT ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

Alexandria	703-838-0800
Arlington County	703-228-1500
Fairfax County/Falls Church	703-324-7400
Loudon County	703-771-KIDS
Manassas	703-361-8277
Manassas Park	703-335-8880
Prince William County	703-792-7500

**Virginia Child Abuse & Neglect
24 Hour Hotline
800-552-7096**

Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the well-being of children, improve parent-child relations and prevent child abuse and neglect by:

SCAN

STOP CHILD ABUSE NOW
of Northern Virginia

Educating the community about the scope, nature and consequences of child abuse and neglect and the importance of positive, nurturing parenting;

Providing direct parent education; and

Advocating for children in the community, the legislature and the courts.

Learn more online at www.scanva.org



7
4-8-03



How can I PREVENT CHILD ABUSE and neglect?



**Be an Ally in Prevention,
Wear a Blue Ribbon.**

*The Blue Ribbon stands
for the prevention of
child abuse and neglect.*

2210 Mount Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22301
703-836-1820 FAX 703-836-1248
www.scanva.org

SCAN
STOP CHILD ABUSE NOW
of Northern Virginia

Remember the Risk Factors

Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of our society, but the risk factors are greater in families where parents:

- Are isolated from their family or community
- Have difficulty controlling anger or stress
- Are dealing with physical or mental health issues
- Abuse alcohol or drugs
- Seem to be having personal or economic problems

By helping parents who might be struggling with any of these issues, you reduce the likelihood that their children will be abused or neglected. Reach out to the children, too, and show them that you care.

Recognize the Warning Signs

The behavior of children may signal abuse or neglect long before any change in physical appearance. Some of the signs may include:

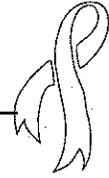
- Nervousness around adults
- Aggressive behavior toward adults or other children
- Inability to stay awake or concentrate for extended periods
- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
- Low self-esteem
- Poor hygiene

If you see these signs in any children you know, reach out to them and to their parents and offer a helping hand.



Reach Out

Anything you do to support kids and parents can help reduce the stress that often leads to abuse and neglect.



Be a friend to a parent you know. Ask how their children are doing. Draw on your own experiences to provide reassurances and support. If a parent seems to be struggling, offer to babysit or run errands, or just lend a friendly ear. Show you understand.

Be a friend to a child you know. Remember their names. Smile when you talk with them. Ask them about their day at school. Send them a card in the mail. Show you care.

Talk to your neighbors about looking out for one another's children. Encourage a supportive spirit among parents in your apartment building or on your block. Show that you are involved.

Volunteer your time with parenting classes, parent support groups, and advocacy programs.

Raise the Issue

By educating yourself – and others – you can help your community prevent child abuse and neglect from happening in the first place.

Wear a blue ribbon, especially during April, and tell people that it stands for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Advocate by contacting your elected officials and asking them to support child abuse prevention programs.

Check out www.scanva.org