



New York State  
Office of Children & Family Services  
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# News

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Events Across State Focus on Keeping Children Safe  
- April Is Child Abuse Prevention Month -**

From pinwheels to galas, activities to raise awareness about keeping children safe are being held across the state. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The proclamation calls for preventing child abuse through strengthening families and communities, which can be achieved through strong partnerships and cooperation among citizens, organizations and government.

One statewide event is the New York State Child Abuse Prevention Conference being held at the Albany Marriott April 11-13 by Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY), a statewide advocacy group. Event sponsor is the New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS).

OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq., said: "Raising a happy, healthy child is not a one-person effort – we must work to build stronger community ties and neighborhoods where parents and families feel connected. I urge you to talk to your neighbors and encourage a supportive spirit among parents in your community. Consider mentoring a new parent in your neighborhood."

The Prevent Child Abuse New York conference seeks to expand participants' skills and practice to strengthen families, promote optimal child development, and improve outcomes for children and families. It draws human services professionals, advocates, volunteers and parents from across the state. Entitled *Strengthening Families: Connecting Prevention & Intervention*, the conference features nationally known keynote speakers (Deborah Daro, PhD, research fellow at Chapin Hall, University of Chicago; Jodi Pfarr, with Bridges Out of Poverty; and author and motivational speaker Milton Creagh), dozens of workshops, and Community Café Institute training for parent leaders and community partners to participate in and take back to their communities.

To raise awareness of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, PCANY is encouraging groups to mobilize Pinwheels for Prevention campaigns, using pinwheels as a symbol to engage people in taking action to prevent abuse and neglect from happening in the first place. Pinwheel gardens are springing up in community spaces, and Price Chopper supermarkets are participating in a \$1 pin-up campaign, with funds raised going to prevention programs.

OCFS reminds people that a leading cause of abuse-related death among children is head trauma, including a fully preventable abusive behavior known as "Shaken Baby Syndrome," which occurs when a caregiver loses control and forcefully shakes a baby or young child, possibly resulting in loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures or death.

If anyone believes that a child may be at risk of child abuse or neglect, he or she is urged to contact the New York State Child Abuse Hotline (State Central Register) at 1-800-342-3720. Individuals should call 911 or local law enforcement if they believe that a child may be in immediate danger.

Caregivers looking for help or information about child abuse, parenting, or family issues are encouraged to call PCANY's Parent Helpline at 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

For more information on child abuse prevention, visit [www.ocfs.state.ny.us](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us).

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