



PROCLAMATION

Of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors Recognizing April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month

WHEREAS, 2,012 reports of abuse and/or neglect were made to El Dorado County Child Protective Services in 2022, of which 918 were investigated and 163 found to be substantiated; and

WHEREAS, all children deserve great childhoods and should be raised in healthy nurturing homes, free from abuse and neglect. However, abuse and neglect continue to be a serious problem affecting every segment of our community, and finding solutions requires input and action from everyone; and

WHEREAS over 60% of Californians report experiencing at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) before the age of 18. Approximately 1 in 4 Californians reported having 3 or more ACE's. Reducing the number of ACEs can drastically lower the risks of long-term health and wellness issues, allowing children to grow into healthy and productive adults; and

WHEREAS, the two major risk factors leading to child abuse and neglect, family isolation and stress, have been experienced by our families in ways never imagined in recent years from the lasting effects of isolation during the pandemic, the unprecedented evacuations and loss of homes during massive wildfires, the extended winter storms and power outages in our community, and the pressure of relentless inflation; and

WHEREAS, our county has been undertaking the development of a Comprehensive Countywide Child Abuse Prevention Plan over the past 20 months. Community stakeholders, including the Title IV-E agencies, and the voice of those with lived experience in our county, have shared and studied data and trends that affect families and children in El Dorado County. This Comprehensive Countywide Child Abuse Prevention Plan will continue to expand and adapt to invest in primary and secondary prevention of child abuse locally; and

WHEREAS, a 2019 Study of the Economics of Child Abuse found that the cumulative financial impact to the El Dorado County community of 283 victims of child abuse in 2018 was \$79.6 million dollars. Studies show that each death due to child maltreatment has a lifetime cost of \$16.6 million and the lifetime cost for each victim of child maltreatment who lived is \$830,928.66; and

WHEREAS our children are our most valuable resources and will shape the future of El Dorado County; and

WHEREAS child abuse and neglect can put a child's stress system permanently on high alert and prime the brain for future mental health issues. Experiences of physical abuse and neglect early in life can become a cycle and may be passed down through generations. Children who grow up exposed to violence may consider it to be acceptable. Children who have experienced abuse are nine times more likely to become involved in criminal activities; and

WHEREAS protective factors are conditions that reduce or eliminate risk and promote the social, emotional, and developmental well-being of children. The five protective factors have been shown to strengthen families and reduce the likelihood that abuse, and neglect will occur, and can mitigate long-term consequences of experiencing child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, preventing child abuse is everyone's responsibility. Even though El Dorado County is made up of many different families, we are all part of one community. Our community must make every effort to promote programs and activities that create strong and thriving children and families; and

WHEREAS we acknowledge that we must work together as a community to increase awareness about child abuse and promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment; prevention remains the best defense for children and families; and

WHEREAS, we all have a role to play to stand up, speak out, and create communities where every child in El Dorado County has the opportunity to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS prevention remains the best defense for our children and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of El Dorado does hereby proclaim the month of April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month and urge all citizens to come together to build caring connections, supportive environments, and positive experiences for children and families.

Passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of El Dorado at a regular meeting of said Board, held the 4th day of April 2023.

Attest:

Kim Dawson, Clerk of the Board

by:

Deputy Clerk

Wendy Thomas, Chair, Board of Supervisors