



Help **prevent** **child abuse** in Sonoma County

"Thank you" to our year-round community supporters!



COUNTY OF SONOMA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES



North Bay
Business Journal

SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL SECTION | APRIL 14, 2014

Produced in collaboration with CPI, Sonoma County Human Services Department and North Bay Business Journal



*Jerry Dunn, Director
Sonoma County Human Services
Department*

Parenting isn't easy, and it doesn't have to be done alone

Dear Community,

Every child deserves the chance to learn and grow in safe, nurturing environments, and to develop to their full potential while free from harm. The key to child protection is community involvement, and we need everyone's commitment to ensure that all Sonoma County families are strong and supported, and children are receiving the care they need.

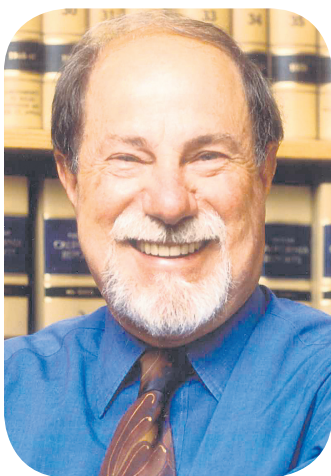
Last year, the Human Services Department investigated 1,880 reports of child abuse in Sonoma County. There are nearly 900 ongoing child protective cases countywide, and over 500 children are in out-of-home care (which includes relatives' homes, foster care, group homes, and extended foster care) because their homes are not safe for them.

Child abuse and neglect can have negative effects on children that last a lifetime, and families may experience consequences for generations. When children are harmed at home, the costs to society are immense. Investing in prevention has been proven to be the best plan for keeping children safe

and benefiting the whole community.

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please call the 24-hour hotline at (707) 565-4304 or (800) 870-7064. While those who work with children are mandated by law to report, we rely on all members of the community to speak up when they suspect a child may be at risk of harm.

Parenting isn't easy, and it doesn't have to be done alone. We can help each other by sharing knowledge, skills, and resources that can make a world of difference in the life of a child. Everyone can help protect children and strengthen families, and I urge you to consider what role you can play to create positive change in our community, so that all children in Sonoma County have the best possible chance at full and healthy lives.



*John "Jack" F. DeMeo, Esq., Partner,
DeMeo DeMeo & West*

Protecting and preserving our most valuable treasure

Dear Business Leaders:

The month of April is National Child Abuse Prevention month. Child abuse prevention should be a subject of concern for all of us throughout the entire year and not just in April. This is such an important subject that it should command everyone's best efforts not only to prevent it from happening, but to continue to study its root causes. Child abuse is not limited to those in the lower financial or social strata. It unfortunately knows no single socioeconomic group, but involves the entire population.

One of the primary goals of the Valley of the Moon Children's Foundation is to "seek ways to continue educating the public about child abuse prevention." As a founding member of the Foundation, I have personally had the unique and rewarding experience of devoting time and energy, as have my fellow Board Members, to this most important subject. We have had the good fortune to combine our efforts with California Parenting Institute and other organizations to protect our most precious resource from abuse. Children are our future. We, at the Foundation level, believe that our Scholarship Program for former foster youth has made a difference. By supporting higher education through this program, we believe that we can help break the cycle of child abuse some of these children have suffered in the past. By enriching their lives with academic experience, or other vocational training, our youth will be better able to understand the values of leading lives that conform to acceptable standards within their own families.

We live in one of the most giving populations in the United States. Charitable giving has become an art form in Sonoma County and I am so grateful, as are my colleagues, that we have such a wonderful, generous, and understanding support group.

April of each year is dedicated to child abuse prevention on a national level. Wear a blue ribbon during April as a symbol of your understanding of the problem and to make others aware of the issue. Continue to be generous with your donations to enable further study of the cause of and prevention of child abuse. Remember that nothing ever happens if we do nothing. Be an advocate to stop this abhorrent conduct. We can all do something to help the cause. If but one child can be spared, it is worth all of the effort and financial resources that can be mustered. Be prepared to reach out to a parent you know is under stress, whether it be financial or otherwise, and lend a hand before the stress is transferred in a bad way to an innocent child. We can all participate in some way to ease tension within a family. Abuse can take many forms. It can be physical, emotional, or both. It nonetheless is abuse and causes painful and lasting memories of the worst kind in those who cannot defend themselves.

As Eugénie De Guerin tells us in her work, "Thoughts": "In order to manage children well, we must borrow their eyes and their hearts, see and feel as they do and judge them from their own point of view. I pray God to make parents reasonable."

Prevent Child Abuse—Sonoma County

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

Robin Bowen
Executive
Director,
California
Parenting
Institute



“Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are experiences in childhood that are hurtful. ACEs often last a lifetime . . . but they don’t have to! The cycle can be broken through supporting safe, stable and nurturing relationships between a parent and a child.”

A Picture of Child Abuse in Sonoma County

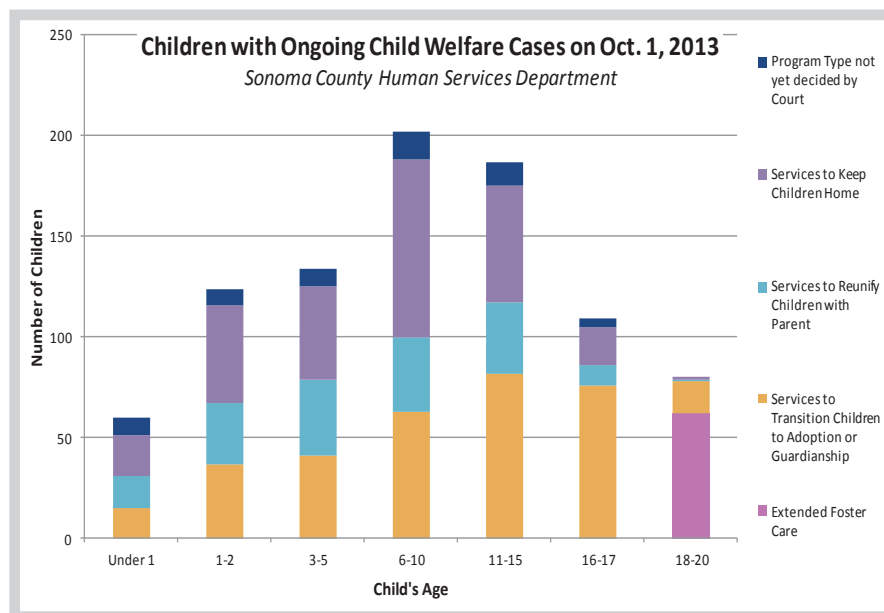
All reports of child abuse are received by Sonoma County Family, Youth, and Children’s Services. Social workers are available 24 hours a day to provide risk assessment and support to callers who are reporting suspected child abuse and to make immediate in-person responses if necessary. If a child’s safety cannot be assured, social workers coordinate with law enforcement to have the child removed from the home and placed, ideally with siblings, in a safe relative home or in foster care.

In calendar year **2013** there were:

- **5,338** reports of child abuse or neglect received through the Child Abuse Hotline
- **1,880** reports of child abuse were assessed as serious enough to require either triage or an in-person investigation
- **195** children were removed from unsafe and abusive homes

Today in Sonoma County, there are:

- **896** active child welfare cases
- **357** children living at home while their families work with a social worker to provide a safe and stable home
- **539** foster children living with a safe relative, in a foster home or in a group home:
 - **146** children living in safe relative/extended family homes
 - **164** children living in licensed foster homes
 - **74** children living in group homes
 - **46** young adults living in transitional housing
 - **34** children temporarily at Valley of the Moon Children’s Home
 - **75** children in other types of placements including guardianship homes, in tribally-approved homes, court-designated homes, etc.
- **61%** foster children with siblings are living with at least one sibling
- **49%** of active child welfare cases involve at least one family member who abuses (or used to abuse) methamphetamine.



Types of Child Abuse Allegations

Child abuse allegations fall into 5 general categories: *physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and at-risk (sibling abused)*. In 2013, there were 1,582 families with allegations of abuse: *

Neglect **60%**

Physical Abuse **16%**

Emotional Abuse **17%**

At Risk, Sibling Abused **4%**

Sexual Abuse **3%**

* Data reflect point in time caseload data as reported on October 1, 2013. For more information, please call Katie Greaves 565-4261.

Supporting healthy, happy children and families



While physical abuse might be the most visible type, other types of abuse, such as emotional abuse or child neglect, also leave deep, long lasting scars. The earlier that abused children get help, the greater chance they have to heal from their abuse and not perpetuate the cycle. Child abuse and neglect affect over 1 million children every year in the United States. This equates to a report of child abuse being made every ten seconds.¹

Economic Costs:

At a time when economic concerns dominate both the headlines and budgets, it is important to realize the cost to our communities when we don't dedicate resources to both prevention and treatment of child abuse. Here are some of the national statistics¹:

- More than **four** children die every day as a result of child abuse
- Approximately **70%** of children that die from abuse are under the age of 4.
- More than **90%** of juvenile sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator in some way.
- About **30%** of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.

The estimated annual cost of child abuse and neglect in the United States is **\$124 billion**.



Child Abuse and Neglect are Preventable:

Investments in prevention support healthy child development and lower the number of children abused and neglected, thus in turn lowering the cost to our nation.

Long Term Consequences of Child Abuse

Lower Graduation Rates

Increased Risk of Drug Addiction

Juvenile Delinquency

Depression and Anxiety

Early Promiscuity

¹National Child Abuse Statistics, Childhelp, www.childhelp.org/pages/statistics, 2014

“Strengthening Families” is focused on what’s strong not what’s wrong

Strengthening Families is a framework developed by the Center for Study of Social Policy (CSSP). Over the past decade this approach has been integrated into child welfare systems, early childhood programs, and other programming in over 30 states in the country. When these Protective Factors are present in a community, the likelihood of child abuse and neglect diminishes. Research shows that these Protective Factors are “promotive” factors that build family strengths and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development.

Protective Factors focus on helping parents identify and build on their own strengths and on empowering them to identify the best strategies to help them enhance their parenting capacity.

In Sonoma County, Prevent Child Abuse is working to integrate the Strengthening Families framework into existing work that is done on behalf of children and families by educating and advocating for this approach.



Building Strong Families and Safe Communities:

The Five Protective Factors

- 1) **Parental Resilience:** The ability to cope and bounce back from challenges.
- 2) **Social Connections:** Friends, family, neighbors, and others who provide emotional support and assistance.
- 3) **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** Accurate information about raising children and appropriate expectations for their behavior.
- 4) **Concrete Support in Times of Need:** Being able to cover day-to-day expenses and unexpected costs that come up from time to time, access to supports such as health services, counseling, and other social services.
- 5) **Children’s Social and Emotional Development:** A child’s ability to interact positively with others and communicate his or her emotions effectively.

CHTOP/FRIENDS www.friendsnrc.org

CSSP/Strengthening Families: www.strengtheningfamilies.net



What is Prevent Child Abuse-Sonoma County?

Locally, Prevent Child Abuse-Sonoma County (PCA-SC) is authorized by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors under the authority of the Welfare and Institutions Code Section 18980, Chapter 12.5, Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council Act, which mandates the establishment of a council whose primary purpose is to coordinate the community's efforts to prevent and respond to child abuse. Since 2005, California Parenting Institute (CPI) has served as the lead in coordinating the countywide efforts of our local child abuse prevention council. PCA-SC provides a consistent forum for inter-agency cooperation and coordination in the prevention, detection, and treatment of child abuse cases.

How does PCA-SC support family strengthening organizations in Sonoma County?

EDUCATION AND COORDINATION: Prevent Child Abuse-Sonoma County (PCA-SC) convenes meetings of the membership and the community to provide networking, education and professional trainings for those involved in child abuse prevention and intervention services. The topics are developed by the Steering Committee Members with community input. Continuing education units are given free of charge to those who attend the PCA-SC trainings.

OUTREACH: PCA-SC strives to increase public awareness about issues relating to child abuse and neglect in the community. This includes: building a community that protects and promotes healthy families; raising community awareness and education to parents, professionals and community members through promoting social marketing campaigns around the prevention of child abuse and neglect; and championing the local "Blue Ribbon" child abuse prevention campaign each April.

How does PCA-SC provide leadership for child abuse prevention in Sonoma County?

ADVOCACY: In order to help create results locally, communities are to become more involved in protecting children and strengthening families. The local council, Prevent Child Abuse-Sonoma County, helps contribute to that outcome by coordinating the community's efforts around child abuse prevention, coordination and awareness. We advocate for policies that support families and protect children.

Interested in becoming a member of our council?

Email Robin Bowen at robinb@calparents.org



Kids Like Anna Need Your Help

All childhood memories should be happy ones.

Please give to prevent child abuse.

Every month Sonoma County Family, Youth, and Children's Services investigates hundreds of new cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Children's Fund provides an ongoing resource exclusively for local non-profit child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs. The Fund allows you as taxpayers to directly provide much needed community-based programs and services. Please donate generously so that the children of Sonoma County receive the necessary resources to help them grow up into strong and dynamic adults.

Donations to the Children's Fund are distributed to non-profit agencies providing child abuse prevention and treatment programs based on Human Services Department recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Please help continue these vital services by writing a separate tax-deductible check to the Children's Fund.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

*Please make a check to the **Children's Fund**. Mail to: Sonoma County Tax Collector, P.O. Box 3879, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. A letter of acknowledgement and receipt of donation will automatically be sent to every contributor. The Children's Fund Tax ID is 94-6000539.*





PARTNERS IN PREVENTION

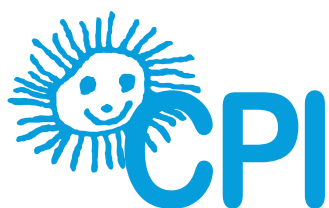
It only takes a minute to...
make a difference in the
life of a child.

It only takes a minute to...

- ♥ Learn a child's name
- ♥ Hug a child
- ♥ Listen to a child
- ♥ Read to a child
- ♥ Take a breath
- ♥ Listen to your heart
- ♥ Talk— not yell
- ♥ Stop a child from being hurt
- ♥ Believe and protect all children

It only takes a minute to...
prevent child abuse.

blueribbonpartners.org



calparents.org

Enough

Prevent Child Abuse - Sonoma County is proud to be part of a Bay Area campaign entitled Enough Child Sexual Abuse. This campaign is designed to raise awareness as well as educate



parents, youth, professionals and other concerned adults in our community about child sexual abuse and how to prevent it. Its symbol, a hand raised outward, indicates an unwillingness to let the problem go unchallenged any longer. Research shows that one in four girls and one in six boys will likely be sexually abused by

the age of 18. The long-term effects, including mental illness and self-destructive behaviors, are devastating for individuals and communities. Despite these facts, an estimated 87 percent of cases are never reported to the authorities.

We have set our goal that by 2015, Sonoma County will be actively engaged in preventing child sexual abuse in our homes and communities. Our commitment: to bring together parents, professionals, adult survivors, concerned citizens, elected leaders, policymakers, and funders to engage them regarding this issue.

Locally we have five trainers, two of whom are Spanish-speaking, to provide presentations and offer classes free of charge. To schedule a workshop or to get more information, please contact anneb@calparents.org.
www.bayareapreventchildabuse.org

Join the Movement



ENOUGH
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

enough silence.

enough shame.

enough secrets.

enough denial.

enough hurt.

enough confusion.

enough child sexual abuse.

**What can
you do now?
Get the
“10 Conversations”**

**1-855-444-EAGB
enoughabuse.org**

Public and Permanent: How to Prevent Cyber Bullying

What many digital citizens do not realize when they harass their neighbors through digital means, is that they are hurting their own reputation. To their family and friends, an individual who wastes

time harassing people online may still be the greatest thing since sliced bread, but to a billion other people, they are going to look like a jerk.

When citizens harass others over a global public platform known as the World Wide Web, they do not just bully their victim, they harass the world. With billions of people interacting online, a bully can never know who will take exception to their remarks.



Richard Guerry,
Executive Director,
The Institute for Responsible Online
and Cell-Phone Communication

Would you walk up to a serial murderer or the relative of a violent criminal or gang member and harass them to their face, or call them a hurtful “four-letter-word?”

Everyone may want to think twice before harassing someone with digital technology.

Targeted victims, their friends or their family members could be the next Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold (the shooters behind Columbine) or the next Charles Manson or Ted Bundy (serial killers). Hurtful remarks may just move bullies to the head of a “kill list” and it is not that hard to find anyone through the Internet.

If citizens author malicious or hurtful messages via digital technology, they are at the helm of the digital device when they draft a malicious message, and they are purposefully setting out to publicly harm and/or humiliate other individuals using a global public platform. Therefore, they are going to have to take the accountability for their actions, and more and more victims of cyber cruelty are taking action against their “bullies” as is illustrated in the following excerpt.

When a Georgia middle school student reported to police and school officials that she had been bullied on Facebook, they told her there was not much they could do because the harassment occurred off campus. So the 14-year-old girl, Alex Boston, is using a somewhat novel strategy to fight back: She’s slapping her two classmates with a libel lawsuit. (TURNER & BLUESTEIN, 2012)

It is incredible how many people in this world will not speak directly to another individual about a problem or issue they have with them, but will, behind closed doors, “bravely” confront or “bully” them over the World Wide Web (yeah, there was a bit of sarcasm there).

So why is this happening so frequently in our digital community?

Digital technology offers the ability for instant gratification and physical separation where digital citizens no longer have to “tell someone off” in their minds or wait to tell them to their face. With digital technology, citizens can tell someone off immediately from their desk, car, bed, wherever they are; whether the person they are upset with is around or not. People can lash out at whomever has upset them, just when they are at their angriest and have the most hurtful and malicious things to say. However, as is the case in any life situation, just because citizens can does not always mean that they should!

Before the ability to instantly vent frustrations via text messages or the World Wide Web, we had a filter. We may have yelled about someone to ourselves or a friend to “cool down” but once we had a chance to vent, the situation passed, and may never have escalated.

Moments of anger will pass internally, but the irresponsibility of documenting it via digital technology ensures a citizen’s hateful words cannot be taken back once their anger subsides. This kind of irresponsibility creates a lasting reputational blemish with potentially negative and haunting consequences!

All digital citizens, but especially adults, must understand this, because it is our responsibility to explain this to our children. The second someone makes us angry is the second we can voice that opinion through digital technology. We can vent that frustration to the world instantly, but I’ll reiterate, just because we can, does not mean we should!

Today, via digital technology we can instantly vent our venom, we can harass or attack immediately without having time to think about what we are doing, and when we act without a Digital Consciousness, we neglect to understand that our reaction is one of permanence and may start a chain reaction of issues that will remain with us and our legacy.

This article is only an excerpt. You can read the full article online at: <http://parentingtodaykids.com/article/part-3-face-to-face-less-harassment/>

Richard Guerry is our 2014 Blue Ribbon keynote speaker. For more information on the event: www.preventchildabuse-sonomacounty.org

How I define my Summit State Bank experience:



“Caring & Local”

- Laura Colgate, President
Valley of the Moon Children's Foundation

 **SUMMIT STATE BANK**
Defining community banking at its best.
www.SummitStateBank.com • Member FDIC

Looking for a 7-10% ROI?



Invest today in

Value In Preschool

Quality preschool education for Sonoma County children living in poverty

A child who attends high quality preschool is:

80% more likely to attend college

70% less likely to be arrested for a violent crime

50% less likely to need special education

For every dollar you invest, Sonoma County will reap 7-10% ROI annually* in increased revenues and decreased costs for education, social services, and criminal justice.

Your \$10,000 investment in VIP will send a child to preschool full-time for one year.

Phone or email Miguel Ruelas at the Community Foundation for more information.

707-303-9619 or mruelas@sonomacf.org

VIP is a program of First 5 Sonoma County—investing in your workforce since 1998.

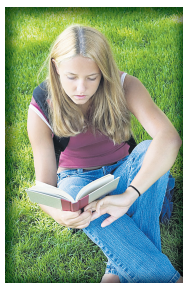
VIP PARTNERS



Santa Rosa
chamber of commerce



*Statistics used come from the Heckman Equation Project at www.heckmanequation.org



Valley of the Moon
CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

Sonoma County's only 24 hour emergency shelter which serves 1200 children per year who have been abandoned, abused and neglected.

The Valley of the Moon Children's Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization established to provide supportive and educational services to Children in the Home and former foster youth

www.vomchildrensfoundation.org

Open Your Heart & Home

Learn more about foster care!

www.sonomafostercare.org

There are children of all ages in Sonoma County who need temporary or permanent care because their own homes aren't safe for them. Whether you have a little time or a lot to give, there are many ways to get involved.

You can help make a difference!

(707) 565-4274



Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

Who are they?

For more information about Mandated Reporters go to <http://www.cdss.ca.gov>

The law mandates that **those who “have knowledge of, or observe a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been a victim of child abuse to report”** the incident to Family, Youth, and Children’s Services. Reports made are confidential. .

Why must you report?

The primary intent of the reporting law is to protect the child.

Protecting the identified child may also provide the opportunity to protect other children in the home. It is equally important to provide help for the suspected abuser. The report of abuse **may be a catalyst for bringing about change in the home environment**, which in turn may lower the risk of abuse. If you suspect child abuse call 707-565-4304. For training or to learn more about mandated reporting of child abuse, please call Teresa Baldassari at 707-565-4325.



10 ways to prevent child abuse

- 1 BE A NURTURING PARENT**
Children need to know that they are special, loved, and capable of following their dreams.
- 2 HELP A FRIEND, NEIGHBOR, OR RELATIVE**
Being a parent isn’t always easy. Offer a helping hand - take care of the kids so the parents can rest or spend time together.
- 3 HELP YOURSELF**
When big or little problems pile up and you feel overwhelmed or out of control, take a time out. Don’t take it out on your kids.
- 4 IF YOUR BABY CRIES**
It can be frustrating hearing your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won’t stop crying. Never shake a baby - shaking can result in severe injuries or death.
- 5 GET INVOLVED**
Ask your local community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families.
- 6 ATTEND AND PROMOTE PARENTING CLASSES IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR PLACE OF BUSINESS-**
For a list of parenting classes call CPI at 585-6108.
- 7 PROMOTE PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS**
Teaching children, parents and teachers prevention strategies can help keep children safe.
- 8 MONITOR YOUR CHILD’S TV VIEWING**
Watching violent films, TV programs, and video games can harm young children.
- 9 VOLUNTEER**
at local child abuse prevention program.
- 10 REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT 707-565-4304.**



Does your child or teen need counseling? Help is available!



**California Parenting Institute
Children’s Counseling Services**

No-cost counseling services for children ages 0-18,
funded by Cal OES CHAT Program and Medi-Cal
Call 707.284.1500 or email intake@calparents.org

Family, Youth, and Children's Services Introduces New Role:

Community Outreach Child Abuse Prevention Specialist

Family, Youth, and Children's Services, a division of the Sonoma County Human Services Department, has increased their capacity to help the community prevent, identify, and report child abuse through the work of Community Outreach Child Abuse Prevention Specialist, Teresa Baldassari. The main focus of this new role is to collaborate with community partners to increase awareness about identifying and reporting child abuse, and to inform organizations and agencies about their roles in preventing child abuse. The Child Abuse Prevention Specialist will help facilitate community efforts toward the goal of operating as an integrated team of law enforcement, educators, faith-based organizations, family advocates, medical personnel, and other stakeholders coming together in an effort to keep children safe at home with their families.

Abuse has long lasting consequences that alter children's health and well-being into adulthood. One report of child abuse followed by successful intervention may be the catalyst for bringing about changes at home and providing children with a brighter, more successful future.

The Community Outreach Child Abuse Prevention Specialist will engage to the community to spread awareness about child abuse and its prevention, provide mandated reporter trainings, educate the community about ways to help strengthen families to reduce the risk of child abuse, and teach the community more about the role and goals of the child welfare system.

Family, Youth and Children's Services is committed to working cohesively with community agencies and organizations to keep children safe.

Interested community members and organizations are invited to contact Teresa Baldassari at 707.565.4325 or tbaldassari@schsd.org to arrange a unique presentation specifically tailored to each audience.



What to do if you see a struggling parent

Start a conversation with the adult to direct attention away from the child. *For Example:*

"She seems to be trying your patience."
 "My child sometimes gets upset like that, too."
 "Children can really wear you out sometimes.
 Is there anything I can do to help?"

Divert the child's attention (if misbehaving) by talking to the child. *For Example:*

"That's a great baseball cap. Are you a Cardinals fan?"
 "I like your t-shirt. Did you get that on vacation?"

Look for an opportunity to praise the parent or child. *For Example:*

"He has nice eyes."
 "That's a very pretty shirt on your little girl."

What to do if you see abuse

If the child is in danger, offer assistance.

For Example:

If the child is left unattended in a grocery cart, stand near the child until the parent returns. If the child is in immediate danger, call the police! If you witness abuse report it 565-4304.

Avoid negative remarks or looks.

Negative reactions are likely to increase the parent's stress or anger, and could make matters worse for the child.





*"our mission is to end child abuse and strengthen
the health of children, parents, and families."*

Building brighter futures for our children and families.

California Parenting Institute is a parent education and children's mental health agency, serving families throughout Sonoma County since 1978. Our continuum of care includes child therapy, family resource assistance, parent education, facilitated supervised visitation, and a non-public school (New Directions) providing adolescent special education/mental health services.

California Parenting Institute- 3650 Standish Avenue Santa Rosa, CA 95407 707.585.6108 www.calparents.org

Coming soon a new name and a fresh look for CPI!



Acknowledgements

The California Parenting Institute and the Prevent Child Abuse- Sonoma County Coordinating Council would like to thank the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and the Human Services Department for their ongoing support in preventing child abuse and neglect in Sonoma County.

Prevent Child Abuse-Sonoma County relies tremendously on the dedication of time and work of its members and would like to thank them for their continued participation and support.

In addition, we would like to especially thank the PCA-SC steering committee for their time and energy. Jessica Bromley, North Bay Regional Center; Karla Fitzpatrick, CPI Intern; Linda Carlson, Exchange Club & Argent Bank; Melinda Velasquez, Redwood Children's Services; Regina De Melo, Sonoma County Human Services Department; Sybil Halloran, Center for Innovation and Resources