

# It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

## Community Resource Guide



Pinwheels for  
**PREVENTION®**

Prevent Child Abuse  
New York™

**1-800-CHILDREN**  
[www.preventchildabuseny.org](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org)

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

Dear Friends,

Every kid deserves a great childhood that's carefree and full of promise. Each year, Prevent Child Abuse New York mobilizes Pinwheels for Prevention® campaigns around the state to encourage New Yorkers to take simple actions that can make a big difference in the lives of children.

Pinwheels for Prevention® is a nationwide campaign, created by Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) and its state chapters. The goal of Pinwheels of Prevention® is to engage people in taking "extraordinary ordinary" actions that can reduce stress for families and increase resilience for kids—anything from writing a letter to the editor in support of family support programs to offering to babysit for a neighbor.

As part of these campaigns, New Yorkers make a promise to prevention by distributing pinwheels, "planting" pinwheel gardens, and hosting educational events. The campaign is built around the symbol of the pinwheel. The pinwheel is a happy and uplifting token of childhood. It stands as a symbol of hope and the bright futures we want for New York's kids. Pinwheels for Prevention® are the centerpiece of a growing movement of people and organizations committed to stopping child abuse before it starts.

A great childhood requires a loving and supportive family and community. The theme of this community resource guide, *It's Your Turn to Make a Difference*, highlights simple steps we can take every day to create positive change for families and communities. You can get involved by planting pinwheel gardens in a highly visible public place, wearing pinwheel label pins, displaying car and storefront window clings, hosting events for families, and signing a promise to prevention. Businesses, schools, community-based organizations, civic groups, educators, volunteers, decision-makers and families participate.

Everyone has a role to play in preventing child abuse and supporting families. PCANY offers you tools to take an active role in preventing child abuse. Please contact us to learn more about how to mobilize a campaign in your community. It's your turn to make a difference for a child!

Your partner in prevention,

Prevent Child Abuse New York  
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Some of the information in this packet is drawn from Prevent Child Abuse Florida's Pinwheels for Prevention Advocate Resource Booklet [[http://www.ounce.org/CAP2010/Advocate\\_Booklet.pdf](http://www.ounce.org/CAP2010/Advocate_Booklet.pdf)], Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey's It's Your Turn to Make a Difference Child Abuse Prevention Month Campaign [<http://www.preventchildabusenj.org/cap/>] and Prevent Child Abuse Oregon's 2016 Campaign Guide [<http://ctfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/PCA-Oregon-Campaign-Guide-2016-FINAL1.pdf>]

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# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

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# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### About Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY)

PCANY's mission is to stop child abuse before it starts. Research has long shown that an array of social and economic problems resist solutions if we do not respond to the urgent need to prevent the abuse and neglect of our children.

Widely considered the state's go-to organization for information and resources related to preventing child abuse and neglect, PCANY provides training, education and referral services to nearly 100,000 people each year. Countless more benefit from our legislative advocacy efforts, which have successfully established and sustained proven child abuse prevention programs for at-risk children and families.

Throughout our history, PCANY has worked to ensure the well being of New York's children through statewide leadership and collaboration, bringing together players from non-profit agencies, state government and the business community.

### PCANY's Programs

**Pinwheels for Prevention®** ~ Our signature Pinwheels for Prevention® Campaign began as a grass-roots initiative among our sister chapters in Georgia, Florida and Ohio. As their successful campaigns spread, the pinwheel became the national symbol for child abuse and neglect prevention. As part of these campaigns, New Yorkers pledge to take action to support child abuse prevention by planting pinwheel gardens and hosting educational events throughout the state. Pinwheel displays can be as big as the state capitol lawn or as small as a flowerpot on a front stoop. PCANY offers an assortment of campaign materials, including pinwheels, lawn signs and window clings, and a variety of prevention and parenting materials to supplement educational efforts.

**Healthy Families New York (HFNY)** ~ HFNY is the state's preeminent child abuse prevention program. Research has demonstrated several positive outcomes for families in the program, including healthier parenting attitudes, less harmful parenting practices, and fewer acts of physical abuse, psychological aggression and harsh parenting behaviors. By offering intensive, in-home services to at-risk parents before or shortly after the birth of their children, HFNY has helped thousands of infants and their families get off to a good start. At the heart of these successes is PCANY's Training and Staff Development Team, which provides an array of training, quality assurance, and technical assistance services to the dozens of HFNY program sites across the state.

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**The Parent Helpline/1-800-CHILDREN** ~ The Parent Helpline provides direct help to thousands of struggling families each year through information and referral services focused on strengthening families, resolving problems and preventing situations that could lead to child abuse and neglect. With an extensive statewide database of programs and resources, Specialists help families explore their options and connect with sources of help. Beyond simply making referrals, they call agencies on behalf of families, research alternative courses of action, and help families consider their personal supports that can provide informal help. These measures assure that parents who have taken that critical first step toward help are heading down a path that leads to a solution.

**New York Partnership for Child Sexual Abuse Prevention (NYPCSAP)/Enough Abuse Campaign** ~ NYPCSAP is a public-private collaboration, founded by PCANY, that's implementing a comprehensive child sex abuse prevention program, the Enough Abuse Campaign (EAC), in communities around the state. The EAC focuses on building adult and community responsibility for preventing child sexual abuse, arming parents, youth-serving professionals, and community members with skills and strategies to keep kids safe. The Enough Abuse Campaign is now active in five New York communities—Broome, Tompkins, Rensselaer, Nassau and Cayuga Counties. Campaign communities receive an array of free training and technical assistance services to guide their work to educate parents, community organizations, health care providers, schools and businesses about child sexual abuse prevention.

**Kids Can't Wait** ~ PCANY's legislative advocacy campaign focuses on the prevention of abuse during the earliest year of childhood. Attention is also given to child welfare and related issues. Some of the organization's greatest achievements have come out of this program, including the establishment of Healthy Families New York, an evidence-based child abuse prevention program targeted to new parents at risk for child abuse, and the creation of the NYS Children and Family Trust Fund, which supports family violence prevention programs.

**Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference** ~ Children and families experience far better outcomes when the professionals working with them have the latest evidence-based strategies and techniques at their disposal. Each year, PCANY presents the Child Abuse Prevention Conference to connect services providers with the education, inspiration and solutions they need to better serve families. The Child Abuse Prevention Conference offers three days of skills building, networking and professional development opportunities for the passionate and committed individuals who work tirelessly on behalf of children.

**New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP)** ~ PCANY helped establish and now co-facilitates NYSPEP, a network of colleagues from around the state working together to promote, provide and improve parenting education. NYSPEP is an ongoing collaboration of agencies, providers, and families. Over 1,700 members have joined NYSPEP, from both public and private sectors, reflecting PCANY's belief in achieving greater impact through working together.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### How to Implement the Campaign

If you're interested but wondering what's next, the steps below will help you get started.

1. Read through this Community Resource Guide to get familiar with campaign language, guidelines and required core elements.
2. Brainstorm campaign ideas. You are free to determine the scope of your campaign. A pinwheel garden can be as large as your state capitol lawn or as small as a flowerpot on your front stoop.
3. If you're planning a large event, consider assembling a Pinwheels for Prevention® planning group in your community.
4. Order your pinwheels and campaign materials (lawn signs, window clings, lapel pins, post cards, etc.) through Prevent Child Abuse New York's online store at [shop.preventchildabuseny.org](http://shop.preventchildabuseny.org). You'll find additional free campaign resources, including the campaign logo and coloring sheets, at [www.preventchildabuseny.org/pinwheel-resources](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org/pinwheel-resources)
5. Let us know what you're doing. We would love to help promote your campaign and feature your pictures on our web site and social media. Email details to [info@preventchildabuseny.org](mailto:info@preventchildabuseny.org).

### Campaign Core Elements

Pinwheels for Prevention® is a national campaign created by PCA America. PCA America encourages creativity when implementing campaigns. However, to maintain national consistency and ensure nationwide success, the following strategic elements are required:

1. **Consistent use of the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign name and official campaign logo.** All local campaigns must use the Pinwheels for Prevention® name. The official campaign logo must be used in any graphic depictions of Pinwheels for Prevention®. Creative interpretations, or use of the logo in colors other than those on PCANY's web site, are not permitted.
2. **Consistent use of campaign messaging.** Campaign organizers are expected to deliver messages that are consistent with research on furthering the message of child abuse prevention provided by frameworks. More information about campaign messaging is on page 16.
3. **Use of the national pinwheel.** Purchase or use of pinwheels is not required. However, organizers wishing to use pinwheels for their events are asked to use the official national pinwheel. This maintains necessary consistency and advances the Pinwheels for Prevention® brand. PCANY offers bulk pricing at our online store at [shop.preventchildabuseny.org](http://shop.preventchildabuseny.org).

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Ideas to Engage Your Community

*Individuals, organizations and corporations are invited to participate in the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign. As you brainstorm ways to get others involved, remember that small actions can make a big difference. We don't want anyone to feel overwhelmed. Small actions, such as providing meals for new parents or organizing activities for neighbors, can help families and communities take steps toward creating a loving and nurturing environment for kids.*

#### As an Individual You Can:

- ❖ Write to your elected official about the importance of preventing the abuse and neglect of New York State's children.
- ❖ Purchase a Pinwheels for Prevention® kit and plant your own pinwheel garden. Visit shop.preventchildabuseny.org for campaign materials.
- ❖ Talk about prevention in your community. Use the effective prevention strategies to assist you.
- ❖ Organize a small fundraiser to raise awareness in your community.
- ❖ Write a letter to the editor about the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign and the importance of prevention. You can use the sample letter to the editor in this book on page 21 as a guide.

#### As a Local Organization You Can:

- ❖ Organize your own Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign by purchasing a pinwheels kit and planting a garden. Send out press releases and contact the media about your organization's efforts. We have included tips for talking to the media (page 19) about prevention and the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign as well as a sample press release (page 22) to help get you started.
- ❖ Organize Child Abuse Prevention Month activities in April in your community or collaborate with other organizations in your area on a Pinwheels for Prevention event. The information in this book provide ideas and guidelines to get you started.
- ❖ Contact your town/city/county leaders and ask them to proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in your community. Use the sample proclamation on page 13 as a guide.
- ❖ Consider how you can incorporate child abuse prevention into your work.
- ❖ Discuss child abuse prevention at your conferences and meetings.

#### As a Corporation You Can:

- ❖ Sell paper pinwheels at checkout or other special pinwheel-themed items in your stores.
- ❖ Create a pinwheel garden on your company's premises and invite your employees to show their support by purchasing and displaying pinwheels.
- ❖ Donate or support the purchase of advertising space to help continue getting the word out.
- ❖ Print messages on your bags or insert bill-stuffers to bring attention to the issue of child abuse prevention.
- ❖ Contribute your company's professional expertise to help us advance this campaign and our organization's mission.
- ❖ Sponsor pinwheel activities in New York State.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### More Ideas to Engage Your Community

#### *Talk to your neighbors*

Be willing to look out for one another's children. Encourage a supportive spirit among parents in your community.

#### *Mentor a new parent in your neighborhood*

Sometimes families go from receiving a lot of support when a baby first arrives to getting little or no support just a few months later. This can leave a parent feeling overwhelmed. Check in often with a new parent. Just holding or changing the baby can allow a new mom or dad to finish an errand or take a few minutes for themselves.

#### *Be a friend to the parents that you know*

Ask how their children are doing. Ask them how they are doing! If a parent seems to be struggling, offer to baby-sit, run errands or lend a friendly ear. Remind them that raising children is a difficult job.

#### *Keep your neighbors safe*

Offer to pick up your neighbors' mail when they are out of town and let them know you can keep an eye on their home. When street lights burn out, report the outage to the city to avoid dark places in your neighborhood.

#### *Distribute materials to educate and support families in public places*

Parenting is tough work! It is important to let families know that you support the love, devotion and healthy discipline they offer their children. It's also important to offer information and tips about parenting and child development. You can find information about parenting and child development on our website, preventchildabuseny.org.

#### *Host an event for children*

Inspire them to color pinwheels and post them in a public place. Arrange for the activity to be led by a childcare provider, allowing parents a break and the chance to enjoy conversation with other adults.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### *Plant a pinwheel garden in a community gathering place*

Pinwheels are a sign of happy, carefree childhoods; the kind that every kid deserves to experience. Host a public event to launch the garden. Invite local media or take photos and send them to your local newspaper along with a statement of your support.

### *Decorate and sell \$1 paper pinwheels*

Post them in a visible location within public buildings or local stores. Challenge a neighboring community in a friendly contest to post the most!

### *Be a good role model*

Parents are always looking for new parenting techniques and you can help provide them by setting a good example.

### *Be active in your community*

Developing play groups for new families at community centers, libraries or schools ultimately contributes to the well-being of children.

### *Volunteer your time*

Start a parent support group, spend time mentoring a child, or volunteer at a local child-serving agency.

### *Call or write your elected officials*

Ask your representatives to support funding and legislative initiatives for parent support and child abuse prevention programs.

### *Remember ...*

Anything that supports the children parents, grandparents and caregivers in your community helps strengthen families and reduce the likelihood of abuse.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Community Campaign: Promises for Prevention

Promises for Prevention is a pledge campaign that does not solicit money. Rather, it solicits promises, asking individuals to pledge to do something tangible to help, support or ease the job of parents.

Promises for Prevention campaigns encourage everyone in our communities to take responsibility for providing the support and assistance that all parents need. These campaigns are a strategy for the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The goal of primary prevention is to stop child abuse and neglect from ever happening. Primary prevention strategies create supportive environments that empower parents and help them access the tools they need to raise their children in safe, loving, and nurturing homes. Primary prevention efforts are often found in places where families gather: neighborhoods, workplaces, shopping centers, libraries, religious settings, schools, and clubs.

Promises for Prevention campaigns accomplish primary prevention by increasing understanding of one of the solutions to the problem of child abuse—supporting parents—and by mobilizing citizens to engage in that solution.

As with other pledge campaigns, individuals complete pledge cards indicating what their commitment will be. Pledge cards can be distributed in several ways: at speakers' presentations, at informal gatherings of parents and friends, at community meetings, at public display sites, or through the print media.

Pledge cards can be used as an educational hand-out or pledges can be returned to a Promises for Prevention campaign leader for counting and publicizing.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Community Campaign: Promises for Prevention

#### *Examples of pledges*

- ❖ Offer to baby-sit free of charge, so parents can get a break.
- ❖ Arrange an on-going weekly or bi-weekly meeting with another mother (or a small group of mothers) so that mothers can talk over experiences or problems, while children play together.
- ❖ If you are a grandparent, take care of a different grandchild each week to relieve some pressure on their parents.
- ❖ If you are a supervisor, encourage and support flex and comp-time arrangements so parents may deal with day-to-day situations and children's emergencies without the added stress of repercussions at work.
- ❖ If you are a preschool teacher, establish informal monthly meetings for parents of young children to provide information on parenting and schooling.
- ❖ Canvas members of a social club and seek people available to provide babysitting for children under two years of age.
- ❖ Be a good listener for the parents you have contact with. Let them talk about their trials and triumphs.
- ❖ If you are a doctor or work at a doctor's office, locate and distribute literature on children's health issues and activities.
- ❖ Work with the PTA to bring a parenting class to school and offer babysitting for parents who may otherwise be unable to attend.
- ❖ Offer rides to neighborhood children's activities.
- ❖ Volunteer as a big brother or club leader to help out kids and allow parents to catch up with what they need to do.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Promises for Prevention: Sample Pledge Card

These are the things I can do for the kids and families in my life:

- ❖ **Really listen to a child.** Children need undivided attention when they are talking. Promise to be patient and remember that they need to move at a slower pace in their own little worlds.
- ❖ **Make special time for children.** Singing, talking and positively interacting with children can help develop their growing brains and set the stage for future learning.
- ❖ **Be supportive to parents,** especially new ones. Offer to babysit, run an errand or cook a meal when a family seems stressed out. Give them some alone time to catch their breath.
- ❖ **Acknowledge that parenting is tough work.** Reassure a parent coping with a difficult situation in public. Help amuse a restless child in a waiting room. Listen carefully when the parents in your life tell you they feel overwhelmed.
- ❖ **Be a good neighbor.** Raising a child is a very important and very difficult job. Get to know the families in your neighborhood and point out the special things they do for their children.

Write in your own promises!

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I promise this in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

My signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Sample Child Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation

Whereas, the public cares deeply about child abuse, and a majority report that child abuse is a very important moral issue to them;

Whereas, preventing child abuse and neglect is a community problem that depends on involvement among people throughout the community;

Whereas, child abuse and neglect not only directly harm children, but also increase the likelihood of long-term physical and mental health problems, alcohol and substance abuse, continued family violence and criminal behavior;

Whereas, child maltreatment occurs when people find themselves in stressful situations, without community resources, and don't know how to cope;

Whereas, the majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that are preventable in an engaged and supportive community;

Whereas, child abuse and neglect can be reduced by making sure each family has the support needed to raise their children in a safe, nurturing environment;

Whereas, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships created among social service agencies, schools, faith communities, civic organizations, law enforcement agencies, and the business community;

Therefore, I do hereby proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month and call upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, and businesses to increase their participation in our efforts to support families, thereby preventing child abuse and strengthening the communities in which we live.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Effective Prevention Strategies

*As part of your Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign, you might choose to highlight successful prevention programs and strategies in your community. The following information can be used to emphasize the importance of prevention when writing or talking to your elected officials, media or people in your community.*

When relating stories of successful prevention strategies, it is important to connect the dots from the program to the prevention of child abuse. Given the public's overwhelming tendency to think about child abuse in its worst forms, the term "child abuse prevention" holds little meaning, outside of reporting. Thus, describing a parent support program as an example of child abuse prevention will not make sense to them without some explanation.

Effective prevention strategies are based on the understanding that child well-being hinges on the capacity of local communities to support families and protect children. This approach is built on a framework of collaboration between and among community groups, state and local organizations and local teams who's goals are:

- ❖ raising awareness and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- ❖ developing and expanding effective services that prevent or reduce child maltreatment.
- ❖ informing policymakers about best practices in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The Children's Bureau connects the dots in its Child Abuse Prevention Month Packet. The following is adapted from it:

Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers are increasingly thinking about personal, family, and environmental factors that strengthen families and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect within families. Research shows that while certain risk factors have detrimental effects on children and families, other "protective" factors can mitigate those effects and provide benefits, resulting in greater resilience for parents and children. Successful family support activities and child abuse prevention programs are designed to promote these protective factors.

Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. These attributes serve as buffers, helping parents to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. Research has shown that the following protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- ❖ *Nurturing and attachment*
- ❖ *Knowledge and parenting and child development*
- ❖ *Parental resilience*
- ❖ *Social connections*
- ❖ *Concrete support for parents*

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### Effective Prevention Strategies

Research has found that effective family support and child abuse prevention programs bolster protective factors by:

#### *Facilitating friendships and support*

Offer opportunities for parents in the neighborhood to get to know each other, develop support systems, and take leadership roles. Strategies may include sports teams, pot lucks, classes, advisory groups, board leadership, and volunteer opportunities.

#### *Strengthening parenting*

Develop ways for parents to get support on parenting issues when they need it. Possibilities include classes, support groups, in-home visits, tip sheets in pediatricians' offices, and resource libraries.

#### *Responding to family crises*

Offer extra support to families when they need it, as in times of illness, job loss, housing problems, and other stressors.

#### *Linking families to service opportunities*

Provide referrals for job training, education, health care, mental health, and other essential services in the community.

#### *Supporting children's social and emotional development*

Some programs specifically focus on helping children articulate their feelings and get along with others. When children bring home what they have learned in the classroom, parents benefit as well.

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### Campaign Messaging: Develop Cohesive & Positive Messaging

Research by the FrameWorks Institute for PCAA has identified specific communications strategies that effectively promote child abuse and neglect prevention. Horrific stories of child abuse and neglect may gain short-term media attention; however, research found that this approach is unsuccessful in building lasting public will for prevention. To promote long-term change, campaign messages should focus on exposing underlying causes of abuse and neglect, proposing effective solutions, and engaging the community in positive action. Below are messaging suggestions for developing an effective Pinwheels campaign:

**Avoid numbers.** Statistics may be difficult for all community members to understand and apply to their specific work and investment in prevention. Often “social math” can be more meaningful. For example, instead of saying your program served 800 children last year, you could say your program served one of every three kids in the community or the equivalent of all the students at one local elementary school.

**Spell out your preventive solution at the top of the communication.** People often believe the only solutions to child abuse lie within the legal system. To make a case for prevention—a vague word on its own—we need to describe actual prevention activities and explain how and why they are successful. Connect the dots for people so that prevention programs make sense to them.

**Include a clear definition of the problem, its causes, and solutions while making your case for prevention.** Be careful not to focus on people in the abusive situation, but rather on the predictable situations in which abusive behavior happens: poverty, divorce, addiction, stress, limited education, job loss, social isolation, etc. Instead of referencing parents, talk about the families that children live in and the pressures surrounding them. Prevention programs connect families to needed resources and ensure healthy development of children. Such programs are likely to engage public interest and support more than those perceived to help “bad” parents.

**Focus on success stories.** Don’t fight the fight we’ve already won. Piggy-backing prevention activities and announcements with the release of your state’s annual child abuse statistics will not build support for prevention. Your audience knows that child abuse and neglect is a big problem, but may feel helpless to make a difference. By featuring compelling stories of people who have found ways to make a difference, you can empower others to take action and make a difference in their own families and communities.

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**Avoid vivid, dramatic details.** Don't focus on the worst cases, nor on sexual abuse as the dominant form of abuse. These approaches only serve to reinforce people's understanding of abuse as an exclusively criminal issue. When exposed primarily to dramatic cases (which the media favor), people tend to conclude that abuse is inevitable because it involves bad people who are bad parents. The solution that makes sense to them, then, is to remove children from danger and punish those responsible.

**Focus on the community.** Talk about the community and how it can support children and families in need! Empower people by raising awareness about common situations that can lead to abuse and neglect, such as skyrocketing unemployment, increasing homelessness, lack of affordable quality childcare, lack of mental health services, underfunded schools, libraries and parks, and any issues specific to your community. Avoid communications that imply that abuse is only a family issue, solved by outsiders who "save" or "punish." Try to broaden the discussion to the larger community.

**Talk about the importance of healthy child development.** Child development is a foundation for economic and community development, as our children are the future of our society. Child maltreatment damages the developing brain and leads to learning and behavioral problems, as well as increased risk for long-term physical and mental illness. Effective child development strategies such as home visiting, treatment for maternal depression, Shaken Baby Syndrome awareness, healthy sexual development, and bullying prevention programs, lay a strong foundation for a child's successful development. In addition, healthy child development, reduces long-term costs to society like crime, the cycle of abuse, health care, poor education, etc.).

**Use pinwheels to represent positive messages.** Pinwheels can represent the number of healthy births in your community during a period of time or the number of families served by a local program, etc. The pinwheels can also convey a general message of support for prevention. The pinwheels should never be used to illustrate negative themes, e.g. the number of children injured or killed or the number of abuse reports made. For more information about messaging, please visit <http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/child-abuse-and-neglect.html>

**Give specific examples of actions individuals, non-profits, and businesses can take.** Ask parents, early learning providers, schools, businesses, religious organizations, media outlets and others to participate in specific ways. A detailed list of what people can do is provided in the Community Engagement section of this guide page 7.

**Don't send confusing or conflicting calls to action.** Don't ask outsiders to both befriend and report troubled families. The message should either be about prevention—family support, parent education, family-friendly policies, child development initiatives—or reporting. Promoting support asks the reader for empathy, while issuing calls for people to report asks for vigilance or judgment.

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## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Sample Messages

Below are sample messages you can use in your campaign communications. Some messages reference April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. These can be customized for campaign events taking place at any time of year.

- ❖ Our Pinwheels for Prevention® Campaign is encouraging everyone to take simple, ordinary actions every day that make a difference in the lives of children.
- ❖ “Extraordinary ordinary” actions can be anything from organizing neighborhood activities to offering to babysit for a neighbor or volunteering at child-serving agencies such as our local chapter.
- ❖ If we work to make the ordinary extraordinary not just during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, but every day, we can go a long way toward creating the kind of world where all children have the great childhoods they deserve and abuse and neglect never occurs.
- ❖ Lawns at businesses, schools and public offices across New York will be planted with pinwheel gardens throughout April in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- ❖ The pinwheel represents Prevent Child Abuse New York’s efforts to change the way our state approaches the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- ❖ Pinwheels for Prevention® reminds us of our on-going responsibility to ensure that every child has the equal opportunity for healthy growth and development.
- ❖ The future prosperity of our society depends on the ability of our children to achieve their full potential, which is why we must make investments toward their healthy development.
- ❖ When the entire community mobilizes to create healthy environments in which to raise our children, we lay the foundation for long-term community prosperity.
- ❖ When we focus on healthy development prior to abuse or neglect, it costs less to society, families, and individuals than trying to fix things later.
- ❖ Parenting is hard. Programs and strategies like home visiting, parent education, mutual self-help support, mental health services for new mothers, sexual abuse prevention, expanding the availability of affordable child care programming and substance abuse treatment, all play a role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- ❖ We all have a responsibility to ensure these programs thrive in our communities. We encourage you to promote the healthy development of every child by donating to children’s causes, participating in youth-focused community organizations, creating awareness about the underlying causes of abuse and neglect, and supporting family, friends or neighbors who are under stress.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### General Media Tips

#### *Stay on message*

Narrow your message to one or two central points that you want to get across and stick to them. You do not have to explicitly answer every question a reporter poses. Answer each question in a way that reflects your key messages. Do not repeat something a reporter says that is not part of your point, even to disagree with it. For instance, by saying "child abuse is not just dramatic cases of parents killing children," you remind your audience of parents killing children.

#### *Emphasize that April is about solutions to child abuse*

It's about prevention, but don't leave the work of "prevention" unexplained. Describe the solutions. Keep in mind reporters may try to move you back to drama and tragedy, but you can stress that child abuse is a problem with solutions that don't receive the attention they should. Explain the American public cares deeply about child abuse, but doesn't know what can be done about it.

#### *Reporters will want statistics*

Instead of supplying them with traditional child abuse statistics on reports, substantiations, and fatalities, give them stats on efficacy. What works? How many people does your program or a program you're involved with reach with services? What has been the impact of such services?

#### *Letters to the editor are a great way to reach a general audience*

Keep them short and focused and be sure to include a call to action, whether it is to support specific legislation or to learn more about a program.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### General Media Tips

Below is some sample general language about Child Abuse Prevention Month. If your event is scheduled for a different time of year, simply reference Pinwheels for Prevention® in place of Child Abuse Prevention Month. This applies to all of the sample media materials.

The month of April is devoted to celebrating everything we can do to transform our communities into places that care about—and actively support—families and children. By ensuring that all parents in our community have access to quality childcare, affordable health services, parenting education, and substance abuse and mental health programs, we make progress toward what the month stands for: April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that are entirely preventable in an engaged and supportive community. A community that cares about early childhood development, parent support and maternal mental health, for instance, is more likely to see families nurturing children who are born healthy and enter school ready to learn. Cities and towns that work to create good school systems and who come together to ensure that affordable housing is available in good, safe neighborhoods are less likely to see stressed, isolated families who don't know where to turn.

Child Abuse Prevention Month is about seeing that solutions to child abuse receive the attention of the public. In a recent poll, 89 percent of Americans reported that child abuse was a "very important" moral issue to them. But it's not enough to care about the problem and address its consequences. We have to pay attention to the kinds of efforts that will prevent it from happening in the first place. This April, learn more about what you and your community can do to support child abuse prevention. It's a shared responsibility.

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Sample Letter to the Editor

*This sample letter can be used as a guide when you are writing your own letter. Make sure to provide details about the Pinwheels for Prevention® or Child Abuse Prevention Month events that are going on in your community.*

Dear Editor,

New York participates in a nationwide tradition of observing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Throughout the month, concerned citizens and organizations host public awareness events and educational activities focused on drawing attention to the urgent need to stop child abuse before it starts.

This April, be on the lookout for Pinwheels for Prevention—the signature campaign of Prevent Child Abuse America and its state chapters. Why pinwheels? Pinwheels are a happy and uplifting symbol of the bright future all children deserve. They are the centerpiece of a growing movement committed to stopping child abuse before it starts. This April you'll see them popping up in front yards, at community events and in front of city halls. [You can add specific information about events going on in your community here]

It's your turn to make a difference! Please consider taking action to prevent child abuse. A few specific things you can do in April and throughout the year include planting a "pinwheel garden" in a community gathering place, calling and writing your elected officials to ask them to support funding for child abuse prevention, and being a friend to the parents you know. For more ideas about getting involved, please visit [www.preventchildabuseny.org](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org) or call 1-800-CHILDREN

Sincerely,  
[Your Contact Information]

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Sample Press Release

*This sample press release can be used as a guide for your organization to use when reaching out to local media.*

#### Child Abuse Prevention Month 20\_\_\_\_\_ Pinwheels for Prevention® Sweep Across the State

Your location—Date of Release—They're popping up in front yards, at community events and in front of City Halls. They're spinning in the winds of change blowing around the state and nation this April during Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month. They're pinwheels and thousands of them have been distributed statewide by Prevent Child Abuse New York (PCANY) as a demonstration of the fast-growing belief that we can prevent—not just intervene in—child abuse and neglect.

The Pinwheels for Prevention® movement is bringing prevention to life in a number of ways in communities around the state. The movement is based on the belief that we must do more than simply respond to cases of abuse through prosecution and intervention—we need to provide programs and policies that engage communities and create conditions that allow parents to be the kinds of parents they want to be. These programs and policies include strategies such as home visiting, parent education, mutual self-help support, mental health services and substance abuse treatment.

#### [Insert Information about Your Local Events and Activities]

Pinwheels for Prevention® are the centerpiece of a growing movement of citizens and organizations committed to stopping child abuse before it has a chance to start. According to Prevent Child Abuse America, the economic impact of child abuse and neglect is \$103.8 billion a year. Research documents pervasive and long-lasting effects of child abuse and neglect on children, their families and society as a whole. Effective child abuse prevention programs ensure the health and wellbeing of children and families, allowing children to grow into adults who prosper and contribute to society.

"Overcoming the tremendous imbalance between what we invest on the front end to prevent abuse and neglect before it happens and what we spend as a consequence after it occurs is critical for our children, families and communities," said Timothy Hathaway, executive director of Prevent Child Abuse New York. "Priorities such as intervention and prosecution are important elements in protecting our children, but it is clear that more and more Americans are taking a stand for the early and comprehensive prevention of abuse, not just responding to it after it occurs."

The \$103.8 billion cost of child abuse and neglect includes more than \$33 billion in direct costs for foster care services, hospitalization, mental health treatment and law enforcement. Indirect costs of over \$70 billion include loss of productivity, as well as expenditures related to chronic health problems, special education and criminal justice services.

Pinwheels for Prevention® is the grass-roots signature campaign for Prevent Child Abuse America and its 43 chapters nationwide. The pinwheel has come to symbolize a person's commitment to truly preventative measures, such as home visitation services, parent education and the overall re-prioritization of our policies, programs and resources to ensure that every child is provided with a healthy, safe and nurturing home and an involved, supportive and caring community.

For more information, contact [Your Name] at [Your Number].

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Social Media - Facebook

Below are suggested Facebook posts. When possible post pictures with your tweets. Pinwheel gardens and displays create a stunning visual image and will draw attention to your posts.

Pinwheels represent the great childhoods we want for all children. Show your support by making a donation at [link].

[Your organization name] will plant a pinwheel garden today to promote the great childhoods all children deserve. Show your support by joining us at {location and time}.

Every kid deserves a great childhood that's carefree and full of promise. Each year, Prevent Child Abuse New York mobilizes Pinwheels for Prevention campaigns around the state to encourage New Yorkers to take simple actions that can make a big difference in the lives of children. [Your org] will honor and celebrate great childhoods by planting a pinwheel garden on [location, date and time]. Join us and plant a pinwheel for the special child in your life!

Simple, everyday actions can make a big difference to kids. When you knock on a neighbor's door to see if they need help with baby-sitting or homework, reach out to someone being bullied, volunteer at a local child-serving agency, , or take a stand for a family support program in your community, you're doing something extraordinary. Let us know the "extraordinary" ordinary actions you take to help families.

All children deserve great childhoods because children are our future. How are we going to achieve this? We're going to do it together, one simple, everyday action at a time. We can knock on a neighbor's door. We can help with baby-sitting or running errands. We can organize a parent support group. We can get involved in our neighborhood school or child-serving agency. If you're not sure how to get started, ask us!

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Social Media - Twitter

Below are suggested tweets. When possible post pictures with your tweets. Pinwheel gardens and displays create a stunning visual image and will draw attention to your tweet.

Small actions can make big differences in the lives of families and children. Learn more at [link] #GreatChildhoods #Pinwheel

All children deserve #GreatChildhoods. tell us about the extraordinary ordinary actions you're taking to make that vision a reality. #Pinwheel

Celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month by planting a #Pinwheel to honor those who helped you or your children have #GreatChildhoods

Want to play a bigger role in the lives of families or children? Contact @PCA\_NY to find out how. #Pinwheel

Our #Pinwheel garden represents actions we can all take to ensure #GreatChildhoods for children. Find out more at [link]

Simple, everyday actions are what make #GreatChildhoods a reality. Find out more at [link] #Pinwheel

Do you know someone whose small actions make a big difference in your community? Honor them with a #Pinwheel (link)

All children deserve #GreatChildhoods because children are our future. RT if you agree! [include picture of child with pinwheel]

The #Pinwheel is a symbol of the many small actions that make #GreatChildhoods. This is what it looks like. [pinwheel garden photo].

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Facts About Child Abuse

#### What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

- ❖ **Physical abuse**—an injury to a child that is not an accident. This may include beating, burning, biting, kicking, cutting, shaking, or punching a child.
- ❖ **Emotional abuse**—maltreatment of a child that may involve criticizing, insulting, yelling, swearing, manipulating, rejecting or withholding love.
- ❖ **Sexual abuse**—any sexual contact with a child, including exhibitionism, photographs or films, pornography, prostitution, rape, or fondling.
- ❖ **Neglect**—failure to provide for a child's basic physical, emotional, medical or educational needs.

#### Who Abuses Children?

Most often the abuser is someone the child knows, such as a parent, relative, neighbor or friend of the family.

#### Where Does Child Abuse Happen?

Wherever children are. Where they live, sleep, learn or play.

#### How Often does Child Abuse Occur?

In New York State each year nearly 80,000 children are known to be abused or neglected. Many more cases never get reported.

To report suspected child abuse or neglect call 1-800-342-3720. For more information and resources about child abuse and neglect visit: [www.preventchildabuseny.org](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org)

# Pinwheels for Prevention®

## It's Your Turn to Make a Difference

### Warning Signs of Abuse

Children who are abused may show physical and behavioral signs. You may be a child's only lifeline to safety. Please pay attention to the treatment of children around you. Child abuse is everyone's business.

#### ***Children who have been abused or neglected may be:***

- ❖ Nervous around adults or afraid of certain adults
- ❖ Reluctant to go home (coming to school early or staying late, for example)
- ❖ Very passive and withdrawn or aggressive and disruptive
- ❖ Tired often or complaining of nightmares, or not sleeping well
- ❖ Fearful and anxious
- ❖ Showing sudden changes in behavior or school performance

#### ***Possible signs of physical abuse:***

- ❖ Unexplained burns, bruises, black eyes and other injuries
- ❖ Apparent fear of a parent or caretaker
- ❖ Faded bruises of healing injuries after missing school

#### ***Possible signs of sexual abuse:***

- ❖ Has nightmares or other sleep problems without an explanation
- ❖ Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, insecurity or withdrawal
- ❖ Leaves "clues" that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues
- ❖ Writes, draws, plays or dreams of sexual or frightening images
- ❖ Develops new or unusual fear of certain people or places
- ❖ Refuses to talk about a secret shared with an adult or older child
- ❖ Talks about a new older friend
- ❖ Suddenly has money, toys or other gifts without reason
- ❖ Thinks of self or body as repulsive, dirty or bad
- ❖ Exhibits adult-like sexual behaviors, language and knowledge

#### ***Possible signs of neglect:***

- ❖ Missing school frequently
- ❖ Begging for or stealing money or food
- ❖ Lacking needed medical or dental care
- ❖ Being frequently dirty
- ❖ Using alcohol or other drugs
- ❖ Saying there is no one at home to take care of him or her

#### ***Possible signs of emotional abuse:***

- ❖ Acting overly mature or immature for the child's age
- ❖ Extreme changes in behavior
- ❖ Delays in physical or emotional development
- ❖ Attempted suicide
- ❖ Lack of emotional attachment to the parent

# Prevent Child Abuse New York

Since 1980, Prevent Child Abuse New York has inspired parents, policy makers and community members to put the needs of kids first. Focusing on community activities and public policies that prioritize prevention right from the start, we strive to create a world where child abuse and neglect never occur.

Through statewide leadership and collaboration, our work ensures the health, development and prosperity of New York's children, families and communities.

## ***Contact Us***

Prevent Child Abuse New York  
33 Elk Street, Suite 201  
Albany, NY 12207  
518-445-1273  
[info@preventchildabuseny.org](mailto:info@preventchildabuseny.org)

*Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign Store (purchase pinwheels, lawn signs, window clings, etc.)*  
[shop.preventchildabuseny.org](http://shop.preventchildabuseny.org)

*Free Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign Materials (logo, coloring sheets, education resources)*

[www.preventchildabuseny.org/pinwheel-resources](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org/pinwheel-resources)

## ***Parent Helpline***

1-800-CHILDREN

## ***Visit Us on the Internet***

[www.preventchildabuseny.org](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org)  
[http://preventchildabuseny.typepad.com/prevent\\_child\\_abuse\\_new\\_y/](http://http://preventchildabuseny.typepad.com/prevent_child_abuse_new_y/)

## ***Like Us on Facebook***

[www.facebook.com/preventchildabuseny](http://www.facebook.com/preventchildabuseny)

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