Child Abuse Prevention Month 2023
#CAPMcle   #CAPmonth   #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

Journey Center for Safety and Healing
Safety    Healing    Breaking Cycles
What is Child Abuse Prevention Month (CAPM)?

Child Abuse Prevention Month (CAPM), held each April, is a time to empower people through awareness and engagement and the impact of child abuse. Journey participates in a month-long campaign dedicated to advocate and educate our community about child abuse and the ways that we can all help those experiencing child abuse.

Journey Center is dedicated to bringing increased understanding to this important issue. Everyone deserves a safe, healthy childhood. We are excited to take this Journey with you as we bring attention to child abuse, and the importance of healthy childhoods, and learn ways to support victims.

Who is Journey Center?

**Journey Center for Safety and Healing** is Cuyahoga County’s most comprehensive domestic violence agency. Formerly known as Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center, Journey Center carries on the same mission, vision, and values. Journey Center provides services that foster safety and healing to those affected by domestic violence and child abuse and prevents abuse through education, advocacy, and systemic change.

Journey Center values Empowerment, Resiliency, Safety, Inclusion, Integrity, and Connectedness. We envision a community where safety and well-being are achieved by empowering people to find a path toward healthy, thriving relationships.

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**Domestic Violence & Child Abuse**

Exposure to violence in childhood increases the risks of injury, future victimization, future perpetration, substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections, delayed brain development, reproductive health problems, involvement in sex trafficking, non-communicable diseases, lower educational attainment, and limited employment opportunities.

- Boys who witness Domestic Violence (DV) are **twice** as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.

- Children who have experienced abuse are **nine times** more likely to become involved in criminal activity.

- Abused children have a **higher risk of exhibiting violent behaviors**. Child abuse victims are more likely to perpetrate youth violence (up to 6.6% for females and 11.9% for males) and young adult intimate partner violence (IPV) (up to 10.4% for females and 17.2% for males).

- Children exposed to maternal intimate partner violence, without experiencing child maltreatment, were **40% more likely** to have behavioral problems than children not exposed.
What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, cause injury, death, emotional harm, or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment including: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, and emotional abuse.

- **Physical abuse** is the non-accidental physical injury of a child; or the inadvertent result of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child.
- **Sexual abuse** is any act of a sexual nature upon or with a child for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator or a third party, including anyone who allowed or encouraged it.
- **Emotional abuse** is chronic attitudes or acts which interfere with the psychological and social development of a child; or when a parent or caregiver harms a child’s mental and social development, or causes severe emotional harm.
- **Neglect** is child-rearing practices which are essentially inadequate or dangerous; or the failure to act on behalf of the child; not providing the care, supervision, affection, and support needed for a child’s health, safety, and well-being.

**Red Flags and Warning Signs of Child Abuse**

It is important to be aware of child abuse and the signs you may see in a child who is experiencing abuse.

- **Warning Signs of Emotional Abuse**
  - Excessively withdrawn
  - Fearful or anxious about doing something wrong
  - Showing extremes in behavior
  - Doesn’t seem to be attached to the parent or caregiver

- **Warning Signs of Physical Abuse**
  - Frequent injuries or unexplained bruises, welts, or cuts
  - Always watchful and “on alert,” as if waiting for something bad to happen
  - Shies away from touch, flinches at sudden movements
  - Seems afraid to go home

- **Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse**
  - Trouble walking or sitting
  - Displays knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
  - Makes strong efforts to avoid a specific person, without an obvious reason

- **Warning Signs of Neglect**
  - Clothes do not fit properly, not laundered, or inappropriate for the weather
  - Hygiene is consistently bad or poor
  - Untreated illnesses and physical injuries
  - Frequently unsupervised or left alone
Impact of Trauma

Although many children who experience abuse do not become violent later in life, there is a substantial risk that violence in the family is transferred from generation to generation. Growing up in a conflicting family environment increases the risk of experiencing DV/IPV as an adult and becoming violent against children.

Impact of Intergenerational Trauma on Families
- Disconnection & detachment
- Denial
- Distance
- Impaired self-esteem
- Trauma bonding
- Estrangement
- Neglect
- Abuse
- Violence

Impact of Intergenerational Trauma on Individuals
- Anxiety
- Depression and suicidal ideation
- Poor sleep
- Heart disease & other health issues
- Substance use disorders
- Shame
- Low self-esteem
- Hyper-vigilance & intrusive thoughts
- Difficulty with relationships

Effects of Trauma on Children

Emotional
- Inability to bond with adults or caregivers
- Inability to trust
- Increased anger or fear
- Over compliance, clingingness, withdrawal
- More accepting of or willing to excuse the use of violence

Behavioral
- Hyperactivity
- Aggressive/impulsive behaviors
- Academic difficulties
- Oppositional defiance
- Detachment & avoidance
- Finger biting, restlessness, shaking, stuttering
- Involvement in violent relationships with peers

Psychological
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Attachment disorders
- Disassociation
- Eating disorders
- Sleeping disorders
- Suicidal ideations
- Increased risk of becoming perpetrators or victims themselves
Understanding ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic childhood events. ACEs include aspects of a child’s environment that may undermine a child’s sense of safety, stability, and bonding. Traumatic events could include neglect and experiencing or witnessing violence. ACEs can negatively impact emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral development and can have lasting effects on a child’s health, well-being, and prosperity into adulthood.

The effects of ACEs can add up over time and affect a person throughout their entire life. Children who repeatedly and chronically experience adversity can suffer from toxic stress, potentially disrupting organ, tissue, and brain development. Over time, this can limit a person’s ability to process information, make decisions, interact with others, and regulate emotions. These consequences may follow a person into adulthood.

Types of ACEs

**Abuse**
- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual

**Neglect**
- Emotional
- Physical

**Household Challenges**
- Domestic Violence
- Incarceration
- Divorce or separation

**Other Adversity**
- Community Violence

ACES Increase Risk for…

**Chronic Health Conditions**
- Coronary heart disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Asthma

**Health Risk Behavior**
- Heavy drinking or alcoholism
- Substance misuse
- Risky sexual behavior

**Social Outcomes**
- Less than high school diploma or equivalent education
- Unemployment

**Mental Health Conditions**
- Depression
- Suicide or attempted suicide

According to data collected 2015-2017 from more than 144,000 adults across 25 states:

- 61% reported experiencing at least one type of ACE
- 16% reported experiencing 4 or more types of ACES

What could happen if we prevent ACEs?

- Fewer cases of depression, heart disease, and obesity
- 15% reduction in the number of adults who are unemployed
- 24-27% reduction in the number of adults with respiratory problems
- 33% reduction in the number of adults who smoke
- 44% reduction in the number of adults with depression

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Risk Factors for Child Abuse and Neglect

- **Individual Risk Factors**
  - Caregivers with drug or alcohol use
  - Caregivers who don’t understand children’s needs or development
  - Caregivers who were abused or neglected as children
  - Caregivers with low education or income
  - Caregivers experiencing high levels or parenting stress and economic stress
  - Caregivers who use spanking and other forms of corporal punishment for discipline
  - Caregivers in the home who are not a biological parent
  - Caregivers with attitudes accepting of or justifying violence or aggression

- **Family Risk Factors**
  - Families that are isolated from and not connected to other people
  - Family violence, including relationship violence
  - Families with high conflict and negative communication styles

- **Community Risk Factors**
  - Communities with high rates of poverty and limited education and economic opportunities
  - Communities with easy access to drugs and alcohol
  - Communities where neighbors don’t know or look out for each other
  - Communities with few community activities for young people
  - Communities with unstable housing and where residents move frequently

Protective Factors for Child Abuse and Neglect

- **Individual Protective Factors**
  - Caregivers who create safe, positive relationships with children
  - Caregivers who practice nurturing parenting skills and provide emotional support
  - Caregivers who can meet basic needs of food, shelter, education, and health services

- **Family Protective Factors**
  - Families with strong social support networks and stable, positive relationships with people around them
  - Families where caregivers are present and interested in the child
  - Families where caregivers enforce household rules and engage in child monitoring
  - Families with caring adults outside the family who can serve as role models or mentors

- **Community Protective Factors**
  - Communities with access to safe, stable housing
  - Communities where families have access to nurturing and safe childcare
  - Communities where families have access to safe, engaging after school programs and activities
  - Communities where families have access to medical care and mental health services
  - Communities where families have access to economic and financial help
  - Communities where adults have work opportunities with family-friendly policies

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Journey Center Programs and Services

- **24-Hour Helpline**
  - Answered 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Advocates can assist callers with resources, referrals, and general information; crisis intervention and safety planning, legal information and/or options, intakes for services; and offer assistance to those experiencing abuse as well as friends/family.

- **Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter**
  - Confidently located, the shelter operates as a safe haven for individuals and families at high risk for re-victimization and stalking.

- **Justice System Advocacy**
  - Court advocacy for domestic violence victims involved in criminal and civil proceedings throughout Cuyahoga County.

- **Latina Domestic Violence Project**
  - Culturally relevant advocacy and support services for Latina victims of domestic violence.

- **Safe & Sound Visitation Center**
  - The only one of its kind in Cuyahoga County helping high-risk, high-conflict families in need of safe, supervised visits and/or safe exchanges.

- **Trauma Services**
  - Therapy services for children, adolescents and adults who have experienced trauma, grief, and loss related to child abuse, teen dating violence, domestic violence and/or stalking.

- **Support Groups**
  - Support groups are available for individuals who have experienced abusive relationships.
  - These free, weekly, facilitated groups offer a confidential setting for discussion, support, and more.

- **Domestic Violence Education Classes**
  - This 7-week program provides education on the dynamics of domestic violence to help those affected by abuse make informed life decisions.

- **Training and Community Education**
  - Training provided for professionals and individuals/groups working with those who may be experiencing abuse. Topics include: child abuse, teen dating violence, domestic violence, and other related issues.
Everyone deserves to feel safe on their Journey to safety and healing. You are not alone. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

At least 1 in 7 children has experienced child abuse and neglect in the last year. Support survivors and speak out against child abuse. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

I support child abuse survivors by spreading awareness of Journey Center for Safety and Healing services so others may reach out for help. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

There are 4 common types of child abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect—none of them are okay. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

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**What is child abuse?**

Child abuse is the physical, sexual, or psychological mistreatment of a child by a parent or caregiver.

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes harm or potential harm. It is any act that does not meet a child’s basic needs.

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**How can you help?**

- Become familiar with indicators of abuse
- Listen, without judgement, if a child disclose an abusive situation- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling
- Communicate in a way that is positive and supportive

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**Suggested Alt Text:**

[Graphic] Blue background. Text: what is child abuse? Child abuse is the physical, sexual, or psychological mistreatment of a child by a parent or caregiver. Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes harm or potential harm. It is any act that does not meet a child’s basic needs.

[Graphic] Two children- child on the right with purple dress and braids has an extended hand helping child on the left, in a blue shirt and purple shorts, kneeling down on the ground. Text: become familiar with indicators of abuse. Listen without judgement. Communicate in a way that is positive and supportive.

**CAPM Social Media Banners**

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Zoom Background
Shareable CAPM Social Media Images and Suggested Messages

**DV & Child Abuse**

Exposure to violence in childhood increases the risks of:
- Injury
- Future victimization & perpetration
- Substance abuse
- Delayed brain development
- Reproductive health problems
- Lower educational attainment
- And other factors

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**Suggested Alt Text:**

**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. I'm joining Journey Center to promote safe, healthy relationships for everyone. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth**

Five or more children die every day from some form of maltreatment. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

Healthy families depend on strong support systems. Support can come from family, friends, neighbors, and others in the community. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth

**If a Child Discloses Abuse**

*Remain calm.* Avoid making facial expressions when the child is speaking.

*Listen closely* to what the child has to say. Limit questions or interruptions, when possible.

*Don’t interrogate.* Let the child explain to you in their own words what happened.

*Reassure the child* that they have done the right thing by telling.

*Help the child feel comfortable.* Telling someone about abuse is difficult.

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**Suggested Alt Text:**
[Graphic] Light purple box in the background. Blue box in the front with text: If a child discloses abuse. Remain calm, avoid making facial expressions when the child is speaking. Listen closely, to what the child has to say; limit questions or interruptions. Don’t interrogate, let the child explain to you in their own words what happened. Help the child feel comfortable, telling someone about abuse is difficult.

**Child Abuse Prevention starts with each one of us. Together we can support families by helping them access support services. Learn the signs. #CAPmonthCLE #CAPmonth #ChildAbusePreventionMonth**
Get Involved

Advocate

- Use the social media hashtags: #CAPmonth2023, #CAPmonthCLE, #ChildAbusePreventionMonth
- Like, follow, and share Journey Center’s posts and videos
  - Facebook: JourneyCenterNEO
  - Twitter: Journey_NEO
  - Instagram: JourneyCenterNEO
- Download and share Journey Center’s CAPM graphics
- Download and share Journey Center’s CAPM Calendar of Events to ensure you don’t miss an event!
- Participate in Journey Center’s Month of Action
- Join and share Journey Center’s newsletter with your friends and family
- Call or text our 24-Hour Helpline if you or someone you know is in an unsafe or abusive relationship: 216.391.4357 (HELP) or live chat at: Journeyneo.org

Learn

- Attend one of Journey Center’s Child Abuse Training’s
  - Protect and Prevent: Thursday, April 13, 12-1p
    - This free, 1 hour training is designed for individuals who interact with children. The training will provide a statistical overview of maltreatment, define the forms of maltreatment and possible indicators of abuse.
  - The Abuser as a Parent: Thursday, April 27, 12-130p
    - This training will discuss the dynamics of male abusers through a research based lens. We will look closely at the characteristics of the abuser as a parent and the potential implications for children in the home.
Get Involved

Donate

- Participate in CAPM Day of Giving
- Participate in Pay it Forward Friday each Friday in April
- Make a donation
- Host a Facebook fundraiser to support Journey Center services and clients
- Use Amazon Smile when you make an Amazon purchase
- Organize a collection of items from Journey Center’s Wish List
- Hold a cell phone drive to collect old phones for those in need
- Create or host a third-party event with your community

Share

- Download and share our CAPM 2023 Toolkit
- Use and share Journey Center’s CAPM Images and Graphics
- Read and share Journey Center’s Blog
- Share on social media and with your community, friends, and family why supporting victims, survivors, and those impacted by abuse is important to you.
- Let your friends and family know that you’re participating in CAPM 2023 and tell them to take action!
**Journey Center Week of Action 2023**

- **Monday, April 10: Message Monday**
  - Write a message of support to a young person experiencing abuse. Let everyone know that they deserve safe, healthy relationships and that abuser is never their fault.

- **Tuesday, April 11: Let’s Talk Tuesday**
  - This Tuesday, and every Tuesday throughout April, join Journey Center on our social media to talk about child abuse and the impact it has on our community.

- **Wednesday, April 12: Ohio Wears Blue Day**
  - Share your images on social media and tag Journey Center to show off your blue Outfit of the Day.

- **Thursday, April 13: Protect & Prevent Training**
  - Join Journey Center for a free, 1-hour training. This training is designed for individuals who interact with children.

- **Friday, April 14: CAPM Day of Giving**
  - Support Journey Center by donating for those who have experienced abuse and domestic violence.

- **Saturday, April 15: Speak up Saturday**
  - Have an intentional conversation with at least one person about child abuse.

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**CAPM Daily Action Calendar**

Join Journey’s **CAPM 2023 Facebook Group** for an entire month of daily action. Each day Journey and our supporters will participate in one action to promote and support safe, healthy relationships for all while taking a stand against child abuse.

- **Self-Care Sunday**
  - Every Sunday we will take one action to promote and practice self-care.

- **Media Monday**
  - Every Monday, Journey will share article(s) about child abuse and its impact.

- **Let’s Talk Tuesday**
  - Each Tuesday, have a conversation with at least one person in your life about one aspect of child abuse.

- **Watch List Wednesday**
  - Every Wednesday, Journey Center will share a movie or documentary to watch.

- **Positive Parenting Thursday**
  - Each Thursday Journey will share a positive parenting tip for grownups promoting safe, healthy parenting.

- **Pay It Forward Friday**
  - One thing we can all do is support Journey through donations. Donate items from our Wish List or make a financial contribution that support clients.

- **Family Funday (Saturday)**
  - Each Saturday, Journey Center will share a fun, positive activity for families to do together.
Everyone deserves a safe, healthy relationship.

Reach out for help.
You are not alone.


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