

PRESS RELEASE

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April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Orange County employees and residents encouraged to wear blue on April 9th and to use #GoBlueForOCKids on social media

Orange County, Calif. (April 9, 2019) – The County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) invited employees and citizens of Orange County to show their support in ending childhood abuse and neglect by wearing blue today, April 9, 2019, for National Child Abuse Prevention Month. In addition, residents are encouraged to take photos of themselves, their friends, coworkers and loved ones while wearing blue and tagging photos using the hashtag **#GoBlueForOCKids** on social media.

Members of the Orange County Board of Supervisors presented a proclamation for National Child Abuse Prevention Month at the April 9th Board meeting and encouraged constituents to speak up if they see child abuse or neglect.

“April serves as a reminder that child safety is not only a concern of parents and families, but one shared by the entire community,” said [Fifth District Supervisor](#) Lisa Bartlett, Chairwoman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors. She continued, “We are all a part of the solution to prevent child maltreatment to ensure our children live happy and healthy lives.”

Currently, there are nearly 725,000 children residing in Orange County. Last year, the Orange County Child Abuse Registry received a monthly average of 4,100 calls, an increase from the year prior. Of these calls, an average of 122 cases per month required Juvenile Court involvement. The remaining cases either did not rise to the level of SSA involvement or the Agency addressed families’ needs through prevention efforts in the community.

“The increased number of calls to our Child Abuse Registry may seem alarming, but this means that the community is watching our children and reporting concerns when they have them,” said [Second District Supervisor](#) Michelle Steel, Vice Chair of the Orange

County Board of Supervisors. “The phrase ‘if you see something, say something’ is especially important when it comes to the safety of our vulnerable children.”

“We all have a responsibility to help ensure our youth feel safe and protected. We ask families, neighbors, community partners and county officials to continue to look out for the safety of our most innocent residents and serve as a voice for those who cannot speak up for themselves,” stated [First District Supervisor](#) Andrew Do.

Research shows that protective factors are present in healthy families. Promoting the following factors is among the most effective ways to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect:

- Concrete Support in Time of Need
- Parental Resilience
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Social Connections
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

“Today we wear blue in solidarity for our Orange County youth as a commitment to helping them enjoy healthy, happy childhoods. Simple actions like donating time or money to prevention organizations, mentoring or offering to help families in our own neighborhoods can create a lasting, positive impact in the lives of our children,” said [Third District Supervisor](#) Donald P. Wagner.

“Our children deserve to grow up in safe and loving homes,” said [Fourth District Supervisor](#) Doug Chafee. He continued, “As we observe child abuse prevention month, we encourage our constituents to be aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect and to call the Child Abuse Registry to report suspected abuse.”

Should an Orange County resident suspect child abuse or neglect, he/she is encouraged to call the Child Abuse Registry at 714-940-1000 or 800-207-4464. The hotline is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

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