



Proclamation: Recognition of April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month

WHEREAS, child maltreatment impacts not just the child, but the family, the community, and society at large. The physical, mental, and emotional effects of maltreatment persist long after child maltreatment occurs and result in ongoing costs to society; and

Department of Benefits
and Family Support

Department of Disability
and Aging Services

WHEREAS, San Francisco had a reported 5091 allegations of child abuse and 561 substantiations in 2023. The preliminary estimations of the cumulative financial impact to the San Francisco community for the 561 verified child victims in 2023 is in excess of \$345 million. Abused children are more likely to experience negative educational, health, and behavioral outcomes, which contribute to many of San Francisco’s challenges, such as homelessness, chronic health issues, and high school dropout rates; and

WHEREAS, rates of both allegations and substantiation of child abuse disproportionately impact BIPOC families, requiring us to address long-standing issues of structural and systemic racism. Society has a moral and ethical obligation to protect families from unnecessary intervention of child welfare and ensure the availability of services and supports that strengthen all families; and

WHEREAS, direct investment in social programs for children and families and community protective factors--such as economic supports, community institutions and services, high quality childcare, and policies and educational campaigns that promote equity and inclusion and change social norms--prevent child abuse and provide short- and long-term benefits, far outweighing the overall cost of downstream interventions to address the costly results of child maltreatment and trauma; and

WHEREAS, effective prevention efforts succeed because of collaboration between community and public organizations, recognition of the strengths, experiences, and wisdom of families, and accessible, non-stigmatizing services. San Francisco has invested in several key prevention strategies, including the Family Resource Center Initiative, jointly funded by the Human Services Agency, First 5, and the Department of Child Youth and Families; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to continue to invest in child abuse prevention and raise awareness about child abuse and the need to support all vulnerable children and their families. Healthy children and families create the foundation for communities to thrive; and



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Mayor

Trent Rhorer
Executive Director
SFHSA

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NOW, THEREFORE, We, the Human Services Commission, join with others, including the Human Services Agency and Safe & Sound, to recognize April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month. We urge all San Franciscans to take shared responsibility for child and family well-being and for ensuring that every family has what they need to be safe, healthy, and strong.

Scott Kahn
President, Human Services Commission

Date

