



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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Press Release
April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and an important time for the District Attorney's Office to highlight this issue. Child abuse is an unfortunate reality in our world that cannot be ignored. It is hard to quantify exactly how many children experience abuse (neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological abuse) every year, because a large amount of the abuse goes unreported. However, to give an idea of the scope of the issue:

- From the 2019 Child Maltreatment report from the Administration for Children and Families within the Department of Health & Human Services:
 - There were approximately 656,000 victims of abuse and neglect in 2019.
 - The most vulnerable of children, those in their first year of life, have the highest rate of victimization, and in 2019 there were an estimated 1,840 children who died from abuse and neglect in the United States.
- The organization, Darkness to Light, reports that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before their 18th birthday.

The District Attorney's Office, along with law enforcement, victim advocates, and human services caseworkers collaborate and work diligently to hold the perpetrators of abuse accountable and to get children to a safer place.

There are many non-profit organizations that have been created to combat this problem. One shining example of this is our own local child advocacy center, Blue Sky Bridge.

In the spirit of Child Abuse Prevention Month, our office wants to highlight Blue Sky Bridge and the work that they do. Blue Sky Bridge is an organization that offers therapy for children who have experienced trauma, victim advocacy for children and their non-offending caregivers, as well as a child-friendly place for kids to come and be forensically interviewed about their abuse, which can be used in the investigation and future prosecution of the perpetrators of their abuse. Blue Sky Bridge has also implemented educational programs for children in the schools to

teach them how to recognize and react to abuse they may encounter in their life. They also have educational programs for parents to help them understand healthy sexual development as well as how to recognize signs of abuse in children. The people who work for Blue Sky Bridge are dedicated and hardworking people who immerse themselves in working with children to help them heal and be safe again. They have created a one-stop shop for families dealing with the trauma of child abuse to go to for support and education. Thank you to Blue Sky Bridge for all that you do to protect the children of our community.

District Attorney Michael Dougherty stated, “No one person will put an end to child abuse. It will take all of us. That’s why the outstanding collaboration here in Boulder County is so important. We are lucky to work alongside such amazing non-profit organizations and law enforcement agencies dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. And, when it does occur, we work together to make sure that there are real consequences for those responsible.”

In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, you will see pinwheels in various locations throughout Boulder. One of the projects that Blue Sky Bridge has worked on is Project Pinwheel. Project Pinwheel is a group of agencies who work together to prevent and reduce child sexual assault in the Boulder community. This includes Human Services, the District Attorney’s Office, law enforcement agencies, school districts and non-profit agencies, all working together for this mission. Now when you see the pinwheels, you can be reminded of the many dedicated individuals who are working to keep the children of Boulder County safe.

As a community, we need to work hard and work together to combat all forms of abuse and neglect against children. If you suspect it...report it.

If you want to learn how to better look for signs of abuse, or how to talk to your children about it, please utilize Blue Sky Bridge’s education resources. To learn more, please visit <https://blueskybridge.org/>.

For additional information community members can contact the District Attorney’s Office at 303-441-3700 for additional information or resources.

To report suspected child abuse or neglect, please call your local law enforcement agency or the Colorado Child Abuse Hotline at 1-844-264-5437.