



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM
Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



What is Child Abuse Prevention Month?

Ever since April was designated as National Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month in 1983, Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) and its nationwide network of state chapters, along with other child welfare organizations, have recognized it as a time to raise awareness and inspire collective action, so that our country's children can lead their best lives.

What Are Some Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect?

Child Abuse Prevention Month was created because child abuse and neglect was both widespread and too often invisible. "Our children are our future" may be a cliché, but it's still true that the more adults can have a positive impact on a child's experiences, the stronger society will be. A safe, stable, and nurturing environment can have a proven positive effect on brain development. Research shows that children who suffer from the prolonged stress of abuse and neglect tend to struggle in their behavioral, physical, and cognitive abilities. The effects of early trauma tend to continue through generations. In contrast, experiencing support in early childhood can prevent or even reverse the damaging effects of early life stress, with lifelong benefits for a young person's learning, behavior, and health. Whatever seeds have been planted, or not planted, will affect a person's health, ability to learn, and ultimately, earning power.

Child abuse and neglect doesn't stem from just one cause, which is why stopping its destructive cycle is so difficult. Living in a community with a high rate of violence, limited access to social services, poverty, and unemployment are all major factors. Addressing community needs by giving families support has much more impact, and costs much less, than attempting to address the consequences of adversity after a child has grown up.

What Can Be Done?

Increased awareness and collective action is a key factor in conquering child abuse and neglect. These strategies are the mission of Child Abuse Prevention Month every year. PCA's Georgia chapter has several suggestions about specific tactics that could help:

- Business leaders can recognize that supporting families and children will lead to economic growth.
- Policymakers can reduce the hurdles faced by families who need support and resources.
- Faith communities can open up their spaces for parent and youth activities.
- Organizations that host families and young people can train staff on how to recognize, respond to, and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Educators can be more attuned to noticing if something seems wrong with a student and follow-up
- Friends and neighbors can pay closer attention and help with the social isolation some parents may experience.
- Anyone who thinks a parent should seek support can share the 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373) Helpline number.

To read the full article, please visit: <https://preventchildabuse.org/latest-activity/april-is-child-abuse-prevention-month/>

**April
2022**



Month:

Alcohol Awareness Month

National Autism Awareness Month

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Stress Awareness Month

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

National Counseling Awareness Month

National Minority Health Month

Week:

National Family Volunteer Week (Apr. 17-23)

National Infertility Awareness Week (Apr. 24-30)

National Youth Violence Prevention Week (Apr. 25-29)

Day:

Kick Butts Day (Apr. 1)

World Autism Awareness Day (Apr. 2)

World Health Day (Apr. 7)

National Alcohol Screening Day (Apr. 7)

National Stress Awareness Day (Apr. 19)

Day of Silence (Apr. 22)

Denim Day (Apr. 27)

To learn more visit:
<https://sacwellness.com/mental-health-awareness-calendar/?nowprocket=1>



How to Release Anger and Stress

Sometimes stressful situations can seem to stick with us. Most of us find ourselves ruminating or holding onto negative feelings we have about stressors or conflicts in our lives at one time or another.

Unfortunately, this tendency can prolong the stress that we experience and even magnify it. As the tension and frustration build, it can harden into anger—which can make it all the harder to shake. Here are some proven strategies to stop ruminating and finally let go of your anger.

Write It Out -Writing is a relatively simple way to process and let go of difficult emotions. Studies have shown that expressive writing can be effective in reducing symptoms of depression among those with a tendency toward brooding and rumination. There's no right or wrong way of doing this, so try not to self-edit too much or make it hard on yourself. Write down your thoughts and emotions as they come to you. Don't even worry about punctuation. No one is going to see what you've written. It may also be helpful to get in the habit of writing at the same time every day. For instance, you can spend a few minutes before bed each night reflecting and journaling about whatever it is that's disturbing your peace. This practice may even help you fall asleep faster.

Get Physical -Physical activity is one of the best ways to release pent-up frustration. Not only will it take your mind off what's stressing you, but breaking a sweat boosts levels of the feel-good chemical serotonin in the brain. So take a hike. Get on a bike. Go for a run. Flow through some yoga poses. Experiment and see which physical activities work best for you.

Meditate - It seems that everyone from Oprah to Sting is touting the benefits of meditation and mindfulness for stress relief, and for good reason. A key ingredient of meditation is a focus on the present. When you actively focus on the present moment and gently prevent your mind from fixating on past events or future fears, it's much easier to let go of negative emotions surrounding these things. Research confirms that meditation-based stress management practices reduce stress and rumination. These techniques also enhance one's tendency toward forgiveness, which brings its own rewards.

Change Your Perspective -If you perceive a situation to be a "threat," you will have a different emotional (and therefore physical) response than if you viewed the same situation as a "challenge." In fact, research shows you can stop angry feelings simply by viewing a situation through a different lens. So rather than dwelling on the negative, take a different approach and try a bit of cognitive restructuring. Challenge your negative thoughts: "This is frustrating, but it's not the end of the world. Getting angry won't change anything anyway."

Try Therapy - If you'd like to take a more structured approach, you might give psychotherapy a try. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is the most popular form of therapy used to treat anger. CBT combines cognitive therapy and behavioral therapy. It helps you understand negative thoughts and change them. It can also teach you how to react in a healthier way when provoked. Metacognitive behavior therapy is another mainstay of treatment for anger. This form of therapy is especially useful if you have the tendency to dwell on frustrating experiences and recall past anger. It's been found to be up to 80% effective in treating ruminative tendencies.

To read the full article, please visit: <https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-for-letting-go-of-stress-and-anger-3144938>

DID
YOU?
KNOW

**Communication
is often the
biggest
opportunity!**

Here are a few Tips for
Effective
Communication Skills:

1. Active Listening
2. Non-Verbal Communication
3. Asking Questions
4. Being Clear and Succinct
5. Clarifying and Summarizing
6. Being Empathetic
7. Providing Feedback
8. Developing Trust and Rapport
9. Being Present

Remember,
communication is
more than just
words, it also
includes:

- How you say it
- Why you say it
- When you say it
- What you don't say
- Your body language

To read the full article visit:

<https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/9-effective-communication-skills/>

thank
you!

Dear Valued Referral Sources,

As we continue to work towards a future beyond COVID-19, I'd like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU for the crucial role you and your teams have played and continue to play in keeping all of us safe. We hope this spring season present new life and opportunity to you and yours!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Campbell, MSW, LSW

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Greene County Crisis Line: 1-800-417-9460

Washington County 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 1-877-225-3567

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

Greenbriar Treatment Facility: 1-800-637-4673

STTARS Sexual Assault Hotline (Greene & Washington): 1-888-480-7283