



Department of Social Services  
Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council  
2125 S. Centerpointe Parkway, • Santa Maria, CA 93455  
(805) 346-8222 • FAX (805) 346-8366

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **News Media Contact:**

Joy Thomas  
Outreach and Education Specialist  
(805) 346-8356 office  
[j.thomas@sbcsocialserv.org](mailto:j.thomas@sbcsocialserv.org)

April 13, 2010  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**

At its April 12, 2011 meeting, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution, sponsored by 2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor Janet Wolf, designating April 2011 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Santa Barbara County. This local effort unites the county with national efforts to shine light on the importance of strengthening families and building safe communities to protect children and help them thrive.

In 2010, over 4,000 Santa Barbara County children were reported to the Child Abuse Hotline and over 3,300 families were investigated based on these reports. The majority of these cases were due to child neglect, which is true of over half of all substantiated child abuse cases both locally and nationwide.

“Research clearly shows that child abuse and neglect are preventable, both by reducing factors that place children at risk of harm, and by strengthening families to help build protective factors,” emphasizes Child Abuse Prevention Council chair, Barbara Finch, “but we all need to pitch in to make it happen. The best thing our community can do to protect children is to help strengthen families.”

In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Child Abuse Prevention Council is asking everyone to consider how they can help share the responsibility of caring for Santa Barbara County’s children. There are many ways to help protect children, nurture families and build strong, safe communities that only take a few minutes a day.

Everyone has a role in preventing child abuse and neglect, from professionals who work with children to the friends and family members who are often the first line of support for families. Prevention can be achieved by ensuring that families in need can access services that address underlying risk factors, such as substance abuse, mental health issues or parental stress; by creating safe spaces and opportunities for parents and guardians to form strong bonds with their children and with other parents; by learning and teaching about parenting and child development; and by providing resources so that families know where to go for help and support in meeting their basic needs.

Santa Barbara County’s goal is to intervene early with services and supports for families to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring. To that end, non-profit agencies, volunteers, parents and County departments work together as the Child Abuse Prevention Council to educate the community and coordinate services.

For more information on preventing child abuse and neglect, community and parenting resources, or to find out how to get involved, please visit [www.PreventChildAbuseSB.org](http://www.PreventChildAbuseSB.org), or contact the Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council at **805.346.8222**.

###