

April is  
**Child Abuse**  
Prevention Month



To best protect children in your community, it's important to recognize indicators of abuse or neglect, and be aware of preventative factors.

## Did you know...

In Valley Children's Healthcare region, on average each year...



**88,540**

child abuse and neglect  
cases are reported



That's **one** case of child  
abuse reported every

**6 minutes**



**12,070**

cases of child abuse  
are verified

On average every year...

**20,330**

cases of child abuse  
are reported  
in Fresno County

**3,800**

cases of child abuse  
are reported in  
Madera County

**2,250**

cases of child abuse  
are verified in  
Fresno County

**410**

cases of child abuse  
are verified in  
Madera County

# Signs of Abuse

The first step to help children who have been a victim of abuse or neglect is to learn how to recognize the signs.

## Signs of Physical Abuse might be if the child...

Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes

Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school

Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home

## Signs of Neglect might be if the child...

Is frequently absent from school

Begs or steals food or money

Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses

Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor

Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather

## Signs of Sexual Abuse might be if the child...

Has difficulty walking or sitting

Suddenly refuses to change for gym

Reports nightmares or bedwetting

Shows sudden change in behavior or school performance

Demonstrates unusual sexual knowledge or behavior

## Signs of Emotional Abuse might be if the child...

Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression

Is delayed in physical or emotional development

Presents depressed, withdrawn, voices suicidal ideation or intent to self-harm

Non-Accidental Trauma: (n) 1. Non-Accidental Trauma is an injury that is purposefully inflicted upon a child—in other words, child abuse.

## Did you know each year...

Approximately

800

patients visit Valley Children's Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center

Approximately

100

patients are admitted to Valley Children's Hospital for Non-Accidental Trauma/Child Abuse



According to the California Office of Child Abuse Prevention, 1 in 4 children have experienced abuse or neglect at some point in their lives. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) study and the research it has influenced, has broadened our understanding of the impacts of child abuse and childhood trauma on a person's physical and mental health.

## How is Valley Children's Guilds Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Center making a difference?

In addition to providing comprehensive services to victims of child abuse, the Center provides many outreach and education activities in the Central Valley. The Center participates in a number of multi-disciplinary teams including Human Trafficking Task Forces, Sexual Assault Response Teams, Pediatric Death Review Teams, etc. Over the last year, the center has provided a number trainings to community members, Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services, District Attorney's Offices and other professional groups on a variety of child abuse topics. In FY2020, the center provided approximately 300 hours of education and outreach to the community.

The center reviews approximately

350 cases

of child abuse and neglect annually through their SCAN Team meetings held in five counties in the Central Valley.

## Protective Factors

Protective factors refers to a set of characteristics that can help increase the health and well-being of children and families.

### The five protective factors are:

#### Parental Resilience

The ability of parents to deal effectively with stress, adversity or trauma

#### Social Connections

Positive relationships with family, friends and neighbors

#### Concrete Support in Times of Need

Families can provide or find support within their communities to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, housing, and transportation – and they know how to access essential services such as child care, health care, and mental health services.

#### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:

Family's understand the fundamentals of raising young children and practice appropriate expectations for their behavior at every age.

#### Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Helping children properly label and understand different emotions in themselves and others.

# What Can You Do?

There are ways you can help build up protective factors in your community, ensuring children have positive environments and advocates.



## **Be a mentor to a child or parent**

Help build social connections in your community while strengthening the social connections and knowledge of others



## **Advocate for policies or programs that can make a difference**

By knowing the protective factors, you can identify the gaps in your community and use your voice to help fill them.



## **Report suspected child abuse**

If you suspect child abuse, report it to your local child protective services



## **Increase your awareness.**

Read a book about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or visit [www.acesconnection.com](http://www.acesconnection.com)

For more information on resources in your community, visit [www.valleychildrens.org/childadvocacy](http://www.valleychildrens.org/childadvocacy) or contact the center's coordinator at [JRamos5@valleychildrens.org](mailto:JRamos5@valleychildrens.org)

## **Resources**

<https://preventchildabuse.org/resources/knowning-protective-factors/>

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/signs.pdf>

The Economics Child Abuse Study, 2019 Study of Madera County

The Economics Child Abuse Study, 2019 Study of Fresno County