



# Protecting Our Children

## Top Five Ways to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

(NAPSA)—At one time or another, most Americans have witnessed child abuse and neglect—in their neighborhoods, schools and grocery stores. They've seen the desperation on the face of a struggling parent or the sadness in the eyes of an abused or neglected child. They've seen it and felt helpless to do anything about it.

According to Prevent Child Abuse America, 32 percent of Americans report having witnessed physical abuse of a child, and 47 percent report observing neglect. Yet, nearly half report having done nothing, in large part because they did not know how to respond.

"People think prevention just means reporting child abuse and neglect, but it doesn't. Prevention means stopping abuse before it ever starts," said A. Sidney Johnson, III, president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America. "With more than 1 million confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect each year, our need for prevention becomes even more crucial. Fortunately, there are many things we can do to prevent child maltreatment in our communities."

Prevent Child Abuse America offers the following five R's for preventing child abuse and neglect:

**1. Reach out.** Anything you do to support kids and parents can help reduce the stress that often leads to abuse and neglect. For example:

- Offer to babysit or run errands for a stressed out parent.
- Give your used clothing, furniture or toys for use by another family.
- Support parenting programs.

**2. Raise the issue.** By educating yourself, and others, you can help your community prevent child abuse and neglect.

**3. Remember the risk factors.** Child abuse and neglect



**There are many things people can do to help prevent child abuse and neglect.**

occur in all segments of society, but the risks are greater in families with economic hardships, isolation from family or community and substance abuse problems.

**4. Recognize the warning signs.** Some of the signs include nervousness around adults, aggression, frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries, and low self-esteem.

**5. Report suspected abuse or neglect.** Call information or contact the department of social services listed under government agencies in the phone book. If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police.

Prevent Child Abuse America is the leading organization working at the national, state and local levels to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation's children. Headquartered in Chicago, it has chapters in 38 states and the District of Columbia. The organization is widely known for its public awareness, education, prevention programs, advocacy and research.

Find out more ways to help at 1-800-CHILDREN or online at [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org).