

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

22-294

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

April 10, 2018

To declare April 2018 as “Child Abuse Prevention Month” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, Child Abuse Prevention Month, first recognized in 1983, acknowledges the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect, and promotes the social and emotional well-being of children and families;

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect can include verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and exploitation that affects children’s health;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia recognizes the impact of bringing awareness to this issue which, unfortunately, many District youth face;

WHEREAS, the long-term effects of childhood trauma and neglect can impact the entire community and can result in medical, mental health, and psychosocial conditions that can shorten one’s lifespan;

WHEREAS, for many years, the Nation’s Capital has held the dire distinction of ranking in the top 5 for per capita child abuse rates;

WHEREAS, while the District’s rate continues to exceed the national average, the 2016 rate was 11.3 per 1,000 children—down from a high of over 28 per 1,000 in 2009;

WHEREAS, Child Abuse Prevention Month brings awareness to the multidisciplinary collaboration between the medical, legal, social, educational, and business communities that work to help heal District children, bring justice to their abuse, and prevent maltreatment in the first place;

WHEREAS, the Council of the District of Columbia recognizes the expertise and support of The Child and Adolescent Protection Center at Children’s National Health System (“CAPC”) and the District of Columbia’s Multi-Disciplinary Team on Abuse and Neglect (“MDT”), which was codified in 1995;

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WHEREAS, Children's National provides the most comprehensive services for child abuse and neglect available in the region, where CAPC focuses on preventing and ending the cycle of abuse, and is recognized for its team of physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, victim services coordinators, and clinical operations representatives who have experience and expertise in the medical and mental health assessment and treatment of victims of child abuse and their families;

WHEREAS, The Child and Adolescent Protection Center is recognized by the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions as a center of excellence, according to its *Defining the Role of Children's Hospitals in Child Maltreatment*;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia's Multidisciplinary Team ("MDT") is a group of entities that work together to serve over 700 children annually and make the criminal justice process less cumbersome for abuse victims and their families;

WHEREAS, the MDT includes the:

- Children's National Health System's Child and Adolescent Protection Center
- United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia (Sex Offense and Domestic Violence Unit and the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit)
- Office of the Attorney General (Family Service Division)
- Metropolitan Police Department (Youth Investigations Branch and Special Victims Unit)
- DC Child and Family Services Agency (Child Protection Section)
- Safeshores, the DC Children's Advocacy Center; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the District of Columbia thanks and recognizes all community partners who work to prevent the tragedy of child abuse before it happens, and help keep the children of the District of Columbia safe.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Child Abuse Prevention Month Recognition Resolution of 2018".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia hereby declares April 2018 as "Child Abuse Prevention Month" in the District of Columbia.

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Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.